

Court acquits 11 activists
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Thursday discharged 11 PTI workers in a case registered with regard to violent protest near Sangjani. ATC Judge Abul Hasnat Muhammad Zulkarnain heard the case against the accused. During the hearing, 11 PTI workers were presented in the court after completing their 4-day physical remand.



@thefrontierpost

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

Raja Basharat arrested
F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Police in Rawalpindi on Thursday arrested Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) leader Raja Basharat and shifted him to New Town police station. Basharat had come to an election tribunal to attend the hearing of NA-55. Reacting to his arrest, the PTI leader said that his bail was confirmed in all cases and that he could not be browbeaten through such cowardly tactics.

The Frontier Post

Vol. XXXIXII

No. 173

Regd. No. 241

MUHARRAM 29 1447 -- FRIDAY, JULY 25 2025

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30

Tribes always made immense sacrifices for security, peace

Govt taking steps for development of merged districts: PM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Thursday assured that the federal government was taking all possible steps for the economic development of the merged districts and welfare of its people. He was speaking to a delegation of tribal elders of the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa led by Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) President Maulana Fazlur Rehman who visited the Prime Minister's House.

The jirga discussed in detail the improvement of public order in the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the construction and development of these areas. While welcoming the delegation, the prime minister announced the restoration of the quota of the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in medical colleges and engineering universities.

The tribal elders welcomed the decision, expressing happiness over restoration of the quota. The prime minister said, "I am very happy to host the tribal elders at the Prime Minister House on Thursday." During conversation with the delegation, he said, "You belong to those areas of Pakistan that are the guardians of the glorious historical heritage and traditions."

"Tribes have always made immense sacrifices for the security and peace of Pakistan," he said adding, "Establishment of law and order in the merged districts is the top priority of the government." He said Pakistan's security forces, police and law enforcement agencies were embracing martyrdom while fighting bravely against terrorists.

He urged that leaders of all schools of thought will have to play their role together to make Pakistan a cradle of peace. "Providing equal and best opportunities for education, health, skills and employment to the people of the merged tribal districts, especially the youth, is our priority," he stressed.

He said "The federal government has allocated a huge amount in this year's development budget for the improvement of FATA University and police infrastructure in the merged districts." He directed to expand the scope of the committee established under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and Frontier Regions Engineer Amir Muqam on the issues of the merged districts.



Shehbaz forms committee for improving civil service structure

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday formed a committee under the chairmanship of Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal to develop recommendations for aligning the civil services with modern-day requirements and improving the civil service structure.

The prime minister directed the committee to present comprehensive reform-based recommendations after detailed consultations within one month. Presiding over a meeting regarding civil services reforms here, the prime minister directed to develop recommendations regarding merit-based recruitment of top talent, development of KPI-based performance targets for promotions, and improvement of the ACR (Annual Confidential Report) system and suggestions for effective alternatives.

The recommendations should also include a plan to enhance officers' capacity through modern technology and systems, he said, stressing that recommendations must aim at laying the foundation for a sustainable system, ensuring improved governance, and establishing a continuous mechanism to align the civil services with contemporary demands. He said reforms that aimed to simplify the lives of ordinary citizens and make the civil service more people-friendly were among the top priorities of the government. The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Azam Nazeer Tarar, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Sardar Awaiz Khan Leghari, Ali Pervaiz Malik, Advisor to PM Rana Sanaullah, Minister of State Bilal Azhar Kayani, Special Assistants Haroon Akhtar, Tariq Bajwa, Dr. Jehanzeb Khan (Secretary Apex Committee, SIFC), and other senior officials.

"Tribal elders of merged districts are also being represented in this committee," he noted. The delegation expressed gratitude for expanding the scope of the committee, giving representation to tribal elders and for restoration of quota of merged districts in medical colleges and engineering universities. The delegation paid tribute to the courageous strategy of the Pakistan Army during the recent Pakistan-India conflict and for giving a befitting reply to the Indian aggression.

The delegation thanked the prime minister for the consultative session regarding peace and order, development and prosperity in the merged districts. The prime minister said more such consultative sessions will be held with the tribal elders regard-

ing the improvement of the merged tribal districts.

Federal Ministers including Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazir Tarar, Minister for Economic Affairs Ahmad Khan Cheema, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Minister for Power Division Sardar Owais Ahmed Leghari, Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and Frontier Regions Engineer Amir Muqam, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, Advisors to the Prime Minister Perviz Khattak, Dr. Tauqir Shah, Minister of State for Finance and Railways Bilal Azhar Kayani and relevant senior government officials attended the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Jiang Zaidong, presenting a birthday message from President Xi Jinping to President Asif Ali Zardari, conveying warm wishes on his upcoming birth day, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Chinese envoy calls on President

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday appreciating China's role in Pakistan's socio-economic development, highlighted the vast potential for increasing bilateral collaboration in the areas of trade, economy, culture, and regional connectivity.

The president, in a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, who called on him here, said that Pakistan attached utmost importance to its relations with China and was keen to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest. He emphasized the need to work together for the promotion of peace, security, and prosperity in the region.

The president said that China had always stood by Pakistan in times of need, and the people of Pakistan remained grateful to their iron-clad brother country for its consistent support and role in Pakistan's socio-economic development. On the occasion, the Chinese ambassador conveyed a special birthday message from President Xi Jinping, extending warm wishes to President Zardari on his upcoming birthday.

Army Major, two jawans martyred

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Security Forces conducted an intelligence based operation in Mastung District, on reported presence of terrorists belonging to Indian Proxy, Fitna al Hindustan.

During the conduct of operation, own troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location and resultantly, three terrorists were sent to hell. However, during the intense fire exchange, Major Zeeyyad Salim Awal (age: 31 years, resident of District Khushab), a brave officer who was leading his troops from the front, fought gallantly, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced shahadat along with another brave son of soil Sepoy Nazam Hussain (age: 22 years, resident of District Jhelum).

Sanitization operation is being conducted to eliminate any other Indian sponsored terrorist found in the area, as the security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of Indian Sponsored Terrorism from the country, and such sacrifices of our brave men further strengthen our resolve.

President Asif Ali Zardari Thursday commended security forces for eliminating three terrorists in an intelligence-based operation against Fitna-tul-Hindustan in Mastung. President Zardari paid tribute to Major Zeeyyad Salim Awal and Sepoy Nazam Hussain, who were martyred in the operation and saluted them for their sacrifice.

Pakistan ready for talks with India on issues: FO

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office Spokesperson, Shafqat Ali Khan on Thursday said Pakistan's foreign policy remained anchored in peaceful diplomacy, regional stability, and multilateralism. The Foreign Office Spokesperson outlined a comprehensive overview of the country's recent diplomatic activities during his weekly press briefing, emphasizing Pakistan's strong commitment to multilateralism, peace, and international cooperation.

Shafqat Khan detailed the high-level engagements of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar during his ongoing visit to the United States, which coincided with Pakistan's Presidency of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The Spokesperson noted that DPM/FM Dar chaired signature UNSC events in New York, including a high-level open debate "Promoting International Peace and Security through Multilateralism and Peaceful Settlement of Disputes".

The event also saw the unanimous adoption of UNSC Resolution 2788 under Pakistan's presidency, urging greater reliance on diplomatic tools and inclusive diplomacy outlined in Chapter VI of the UN Charter, he said. He reiterated Pakistan's principled stance on global peace, highlighting the DPM/FM's powerful address at the General Debate of the UN High-Level Political Forum, in which he advocated for a just and inclusive international financial system to support sustainable development goals (SDGs) for developing countries.

The Spokesperson underscored Pakistan's continued and unequivocal condemnation of Israeli aggression in Gaza and Syria. "The systematic targeting of civilians and humanitarian infrastructure in Gaza is a flagrant violation of international law," he said, describing the humanitarian crisis there as an "anthropogenic starvation." He reaffirmed Pakistan's call for an immediate ceasefire, lifting of the siege, and establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state based on pre-1967 borders with Al-Quds-Al-Sharif as its capital.

Regarding Syria, he condemned Israel's recent strikes, terming them "dangerous escalatory actions" that undermine regional peace. Responding to queries on Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's recent visit to Kabul, the Spokesperson said security cooperation, including concerns over sanctuaries for TTP militants in Afghanistan, remained a central theme. "Discussions are ongoing. The Afghan side is increasingly

receptive to Pakistan's concerns," he added.

He also confirmed progress on trilateral cooperation with Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, especially in the context of the Uzbek-Afghan-Pak (UAP) Railway Project, reinforcing regional connectivity and economic integration. The Spokesperson further confirmed that the visit of Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi is under discussion, while declining to speculate on the question of formal recognition of the Taliban-led interim government.

He shared details of the DPM/FM's bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the UN visit with senior officials from Austria, the UK, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand. He also confirmed the 10th EU-Pakistan Political Dialogue and the 7th Pakistan-UK Arms Control Dialogue, covering topics ranging from counter-terrorism to peaceful nuclear use. On the humanitarian front, Khan noted Pakistan had dispatched 26 aid consignments for Gaza and remains committed to sending more, despite Israeli-imposed obstructions.

Responding to a question on the Iranian President's anticipated visit, Khan clarified, "There was no finalized date for July 26. Discussions are ongoing and an announcement will be made when details are finalized." He also addressed reports of visas by some employees, stating that internal procedures are underway and relevant authorities are being consulted.

On reports about passports for Rohingya refugees, Khan deferred details, promising to provide information after checking with the concerned ministries. Khan reiterated Pakistan's openness to dialogue with India. "Diplomatic engagement is not a favor — it is in the mutual interest of both nations," he stated, once again thanking the US for its role in past de-escalation efforts. Asked about President Trump's recent remarks about credit for defusing a near-nuclear crisis in South Asia, Khan said: "We have repeatedly acknowledged the role of friendly nations, including the US. The facts of that crisis are well known."

Regarding reports of the US-Pakistan dialogue including discussion on Jammu & Kashmir and the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), the Spokesperson confirmed these issues remain central to Pakistan's diplomatic agenda and are expected to be raised in the DPM/FM's meeting with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio. He concluded by affirming Islamabad's active pursuit of global engagement amid evolving geopolitical challenges.

S&P Global lifts Pak's credit rating 'B-' from 'CCC+', outlook stable

ISLAMABAD (Reuters): S&P Global raised Pakistan's sovereign credit rating to 'B-' from 'CCC+' and placed it on a 'stable' outlook on Thursday, saying the country's finances and reserves had been stabilised by International Monetary Fund support.

"The stable outlook reflects our expectations that continued economic recovery and government efforts to enhance revenue will stabilize fiscal and debt metrics," ratings agency S&P said in a statement on the move. "We also expect that sustained official financing will support Pakistan in meeting its external obligations, and that the country will continue to roll over its commercial credit lines over

the next 12 months."

Pakistan's longer-dated international bonds rallied after the upgrade, with the 2051 maturity gaining 1.6 cents to be bid at 84.85 cents on the dollar, according to Tradeweb data. The 2031 and 2036 maturities also gained around 1 cents, while shorter-dated maturities posted smaller gains.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed satisfaction over the improvement in Pakistan's credit rating by S&P Global Ratings, saying that it reflects the country's economic stabilization. He noted that the upgrade will enhance Pakistan's access to international capital markets and reduce pressure on external debt repayments. The prime minister

added that Pakistan's macroeconomic indicators are steadily improving and this positive momentum is being acknowledged by global financial institutions and credit rating agencies. Highlighting the broader impact of the rating improvement, the prime minister said it would help restore investor confidence in the Pakistani economy.

He also praised the government's economic policies, saying they are now receiving international recognition. Prime Minister Shehbaz commended the efforts of the government's economic team, describing their performance as commendable and a key factor in this positive development.

KP govt will no longer tolerate presence of so-called 'good' Taliban: Gandapur



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has stated that the province will no longer tolerate the presence of so-called "Good Taliban," and a decision has been made to eliminate them entirely from the region.

Speaking at the provincial All Parties Conference (APC) held in Peshawar, Gandapur expressed strong concerns over the security situation and federal policies. He made it clear that no kind of military operation would be accepted in the province moving forward. Gandapur said, "Today, I acknowledge that 'Good Taliban' do exist in the province. We have now decided to eradicate their presence. Anyone seen carrying weapons under the name of any institution will face immediate action—whether an individual or a group. The concept of 'Good Taliban' is now over and will no longer be tolerated."

He criticised past military operations, saying they yielded no significant results and instead harmed the province and its people. Strongly opposing drone strikes, he said such operations in civilian areas have resulted in the loss of innocent lives and will no longer be allowed.

Gandapur also alleged that some state institutions have been supporting extremist groups labeled as 'Good Taliban', but the province will no longer accept this. "They must be eliminated and removed from the province immediately," he asserted.

The APC decided to recruit 300 locals into the police force in every tribal district to help maintain peace at the local level.

Sending a clear message to the federal government, the chief minister stated that border security is the responsibility of the centre, but if it fails to fulfill this duty, the provincial government will take charge of security with its own police force. He further emphasised that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has full rights over its mineral resources and will not hand over this authority to the federal government.

He also opposed the imposition of federal taxes on tribal areas, stating that the provincial government would not support the center on this issue. Gandapur concluded by declaring that no federal force will be allowed to operate in the province without first taking the provincial government into confidence.

Earlier, the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur hosted an All Parties Conference (APC) convened here at the Chief Minister's House in Peshawar on Wednesday. The conference brought together members of the provincial cabinet, lawmakers, and representatives from a broad spectrum of political parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (S), Pakistan Muslim League (N), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Qaumi Watan Party, and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians. Former governors of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engineer Shaukatullah and Shah

Farman were also in attendance.

During an in-camera session, participants were briefed on the province's current law and order situation and the steps being undertaken by the provincial government to restore peace. Officials highlighted the challenges posed by militancy and outlined the administration's strategy to counter emerging threats.

At the conclusion of the conference, a unified course of action was announced, reflecting a rare display of political consensus. The participants expressed deep sorrow over the sacrifices of martyrs and conveyed solidarity with their families. The joint declaration underscored the urgency of initiating comprehensive and coordinated measures to establish lasting peace in the province.

The APC called for targeted intelligence-based operations to dismantle militant networks and eliminate extremist elements. In a show of unity, all political parties, tribal elders, the public, the provincial government, administrative authorities, and law enforcement agencies pledged to act collectively and without discrimination to root out terrorism.

The leaders reiterated their resolve to rid Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of militancy, declaring peace as a precondition for regional prosperity and sustainable development. They further emphasized to maintain close coordination at the district level, assuring full support to the administration and security forces in their efforts to ensure long-term peace and stability in the province.

ISSI partners with ICIMOD, Nepal, for research collaboration on climate-induced disasters

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Further strengthening its international partnerships, the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) is has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal. ICIMOD plays a pivotal role in combating climate change by promoting regional collaboration among the eight-member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan.

The MoU was signed by Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General, ISSI and Dr Pema Gyamtsho, Director General, ICIMOD. The signing was attended by Ambassador Abrar H Hashmi, Pakistan's Ambassador to Nepal, and senior colleagues from ISSI and ICIMOD.

As a precursor to this collaboration, the Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at ISSI hosted a fruitful in-house session with Dr. Pema Gyamtsho, Director General, ICIMOD. The discussion entailed an in-depth exchange of ideas on shared research priorities, regional challenges, and opportunities for institutional collaboration. This engagement helped further outline the contours of future collaboration, reaffirming the strong alignment between ISSI's focus and ICIMOD's mission.

Specifically, the two sides shared an overview of the priorities of both institutions, aligning them with national climate priorities of not only Pakistan and Nepal but the whole region. The deliberations by two sides focused on the urgent need for regional cooperation to address the escalating impacts of climate change, particularly in Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH). Both sides acknowledged the importance of enhancing institutional capacities to respond to challenges such as glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), air pollution, and Indus river basin degradation.

The discussion also emphasized the critical role of knowledge-sharing and data exchange. The two institutions agreed to collaborate on joint research, policy dialogues, and capacity-building programs targeting climate risk mitigation. Special attention was given to the need for inclusive engagement by bringing together not only governments and institutions, but also civil society, academic networks, and regional stakeholders.

The meeting concluded with the understanding that there was an urgent need for moving beyond national silos to adopt a transboundary approach, and recognize that climate change and environmental threats do not respect political boundaries. Recommendations included integrating and adopting to early warning systems, disaster preparedness, and introducing culturally-relevant preventive strategies into national and regional planning.

Launching ceremony of PNS SAHIWAL Gun Boat held

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Launching ceremony of PNS SAHIWAL (Desig) Gun Boat was held at Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works (KS&EW). Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

PNS SAHIWAL (Desig) Gun Boat has been indigenously designed by Platform Design Wing (PDW) of Pakistan Navy and is under construction at KS&EW. This state-of-the-art vessel will be equipped with high-performance, long-range semi automatic guns, enhancing its operational effectiveness in maritime missions.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Guest appreciated joint efforts of Platform Design Wing (PDW) of Pakistan Navy and KS&EW in furthering Pakistan Navy's policy of indigenization. He extended his gratitude to the Ministry of Defence Production for its continued support to KS&EW.

He also highlighted that the Gun Boat will be equipped to perform diverse maritime security tasks. He also stated that Pakistan Navy is considering additional production of Gun Boats. It would eventually boost both indigenization process and uplift of KS&EW. The launching ceremony was attended by high-ranking officials from Pakistan Navy including representatives from MODP, KS&EW and Shipbuilding Industry.

Dialogue spotlights labour rights violations

F.P. Report

SANGHAR: A Citizen Dialogue held in Sanghar has brought to light severe labor rights violations and a lack of corporate accountability in the district, a major center for cotton production and resource extraction. The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) organized the event to address critical issues related to Business and Human Rights (BHR).

SHRC Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Detho underscored the commission's mandate to protect human rights and incorporate BHR principles, aligning with Pakistan's international obligations. He highlighted the importance of local legal structures and inter-agency collaboration to protect vulnerable employees.

Stakeholders, including labor unions, civil society organizations, and government representatives, voiced serious apprehensions about inadequate working environments, salary discrepancies, and insufficient worker protections, particularly for women in agriculture and home-based employment.

FES representative Mr. Abdullah Dayo emphasized the necessity for ethical supply chains and legally sound employment agreements. He stressed the importance of ensuring minimum salaries, employee social security registration (EOBI), and independent oversight to maintain decent working conditions in Sanghar.

District officials, including Deputy Commissioner Ms. Sara Javed and SSP Mr. Abid Hussain, expressed their support for rights-based initiatives. Mr. Hussain also recognized the SHRC's contribution to addressing wider human rights issues, such as forced religious conversions and underage marriages.

Resident blames cops for robbery & violence

F.P. Report

LARKANA: A resident of village Saathi Umrani near Larkana, named Saddam Hussain along with his family members, protested in front of the Press Club against police brutality, on Thursday.

On this occasion, he cried out that he had returned the motorcycle after accusing the serving policeman Nazir Hussain Umrani of robbing him along with his friends. He further said that the said police official is trying to rob us again many times, against which I have also filed a report against him at the Taluka Police Station.

On the petition filed in the Larkana court against the atrocities of Policeman Nazir Umrani, the court issued an order to register a case against the said police official. When I brought it to the Taluka Police Station, the head munshi of police station demanded Rs 50,000 as a bribe from me. On refusing, the head munshi is threatening that if I do not withdraw the petition filed in the court against Policeman Nazir Hussain Umrani, he will kill me by pretending to be a witness.

He demanded from the IG Police and the Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court that to do justice to me, action should be taken against the head constable and police officer Nazir Hussain Umrani soon, otherwise they will kill me innocently.

Almost 65% female students enrolled at AIOU

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Regional Director of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Gujranwala Dr. Basheer Ahmad Sameem has stated that the university's total enrollment has now exceeded 0.55 million students, with female students making up 65% of the population. He highlighted that AIOU is not only the leading distance learning institution in Asia but also holds the distinction of being the second-largest Open University in the world.

He expressed these views during his visit to various educational institutions in Hafizabad, Vanike Tarar, Jalalpur Bhattian, and Pindi Bhattian as part of the university's Autumn 2025 admission campaign. During meetings with local teachers and academic staff, Dr. Sameem emphasized that AIOU has played a pivotal and commendable role in enhancing literacy across Pakistan.

According to Dr. Sameem, the university's core mission is to deliver education to every household and to ensure the availability of quality education throughout the country. He announced that admissions for Autumn 2025 are now officially open, and for the first time in the university's history, Associate Degree programmes in 11 disciplines have been launched in response to growing public demand.

The newly introduced two-year Associate Degree programmes included: Mass Communication, English, Sociology, Business Administration, Urdu, Gender and Women Studies, Economics, Education, Pakistan Studies, Library and Information Sciences and History.

He added that in addition to these, admissions are also open in PhD, MPhil/MS, BS, Postgraduate Diplomas (PGD), and various certificate courses. The deadline for new admissions is August 18, 2025, while students already enrolled in ongoing programmes can submit their forms until August 25, 2025.

Dr. Sameem noted that AIOU's educational model has proved to be highly effective in making education accessible to the general public. Its features, including low tuition fees, home-based learning, suitability for working professionals and a safe learning environment for women, have made it a source of academic empowerment for millions.

He remarked that AIOU graduates are currently serving in various key sectors, contributing both to national development and improving their personal and professional lives. At the end of the visits, Dr. Basheer Ahmad Sameem responded to faculty members' queries related to admission procedures, academic programmes, and course structures, providing detailed and satisfactory answers. The participants praised the university's educational services and assured their active cooperation in promoting the current admission campaign.

Education key to compete in age of info technology

F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: A grand ceremony was held at Aspire College Kamalia. The chief guest of the ceremony was former MPA Pir Syed Qutub Ali Shah and we are deeply grateful to former MPA Pir Syed Qutub Ali Shah who enhanced the splendor of the ceremony by attending as a special guest. His presence was no less than an honor for us.

The enthusiastic participation of teachers, parents and distinguished guests who love knowledge and art encouraged us. This tribute was not just a ceremony but a humble effort to appreciate the high status of our teachers and their tireless work.

Principal Professor Fizza Khalid said that today the students are in a high position due to the hard work of the teachers because the teacher does not want his students to lag behind in education, so the teacher works tirelessly and provides the light of education to his students. Fizza Khalid said that therefore the teacher is our pride. Because of the teacher, today our students bring glory to our college and the country.

ADC inspects City hospital: Additional Deputy Commissioner General (ADCG) Zeeshan Labbha Masih visited City Hospital Toba Tek Singh to review the provision of public facilities at the district level, on Thursday.

He inspected various wards, laboratories and medicine storage. He met the patients and inquired about the facilities provided. He also reviewed the medicines given to the patients and the stock register records.

ADC directed that the supply of medicines should be ensured in a transparent manner and all records should be updated regularly. He said that under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sandhu, monitoring of hospitals and transparency of medicine are being ensured so that quality medical facilities can be provided to the public.

16 alleged culprits held

F.P. Report

ATTOCK: Police launched a series of successful operations, arresting a total of 16 individuals for violations of Section 144 and drug traffickers.

According to details, Attock Khurd police registered a case against 12 individuals for openly violating Section 144, which prohibits bathing and boating in the River Indus as per the Punjab Government's orders. Despite being warned, the suspects created chaos and chanted slogans at the Attock Khurd point of the river.

UK, Korean & Kazakh varsities coming to Punjab

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz chaired a special high-level meeting on Thursday, where a comprehensive roadmap was unveiled to improve academic standards, promote institutional autonomy, and encourage international collaborations.

During the meeting, the Higher Education Department briefed the chief minister on a wide range of reform proposals, which included the transformation of key public universities, partnerships with foreign institutions, and digital modernization of campuses across the province. The meeting was informed that several prestigious universities from the United Kingdom, South Korea, and Kazakhstan have expressed interest in establishing campuses in Punjab. Notable names include the University of London, University of Brunel, University of Gloucestershire, and University of Leicester. UET, GC University, Women's University to become model institutions CM Nawaz approved the designation of the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Government College University (GC), and

First Lady Aseefa Bhutto visits SICHN Hospitals



F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Honorable First Lady of Pakistan and Member of the National Assembly, Her Excellency Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, accompanied by Madam Azra Fazal Pechuho, Minister for Health and Population Welfare, and Barrister Murtaza Wahab, Mayor of Karachi, paid an official visit today to the Sindh Institute of Child Health and Neonatology's (SICHN) Mother & Childcare Hospital in Azam Basti and the Children Hospital in Korangi 5. At the Azam Basti facility, the delegation was warmly received by Saeed Ghani, President PPP Karachi Division & Provincial Minister of Sindh Local Government.

During the visit, the distinguished guests toured various departments, warmly interacted with on-duty staff and doctors, and met with parents of young patients receiving care. They expressed their appreciation for the tireless efforts of the medical teams and acknowledged the Sindh Government's dedication to improving maternal and child healthcare services in underserved areas of Karachi.

Her Excellency Aseefa Bhutto Zardari particularly lauded the provision of free-of-cost treatment for neonates, infants, and children, along with the specialized healthcare services offered under the growing SICHN network. She directly engaged with families to gather feedback on patient experiences, service quality, and staff behavior.

"The dedication seen here today reflects a promising future for the health of our nation's children and mothers," stated Her Excellency Aseefa Bhutto Zardari.

Their presence serve as a powerful reaffirmation of the government's continued focus on free of cost, equitable, accessible, and high-quality neonatal and pediatric across the province-particularly the most vulnerable, with four centers in Karachi catering to Azam Basti, Korangi, JPMC, and Sobhraj, as well as centres in Sukkur, Nawabshah, and Larkana.

Sindh CM briefed over funding for scheme

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah was briefed over funding for 36-KM long Sindh Coastal Highway scheme on Thursday. Murad Ali chaired a meeting on the schemes of federal PSDP for year 2025-26.

The Sindh Chief Minister was informed that the federal government has released 1000 millions for the coastal highway scheme having estimated cost of 37,718 million. The chief minister was briefed that the federal government intends to approve 16,204.3 million for the project.

"The matter has been discussed with federal government, it will provide total funding of the scheme," chief minister told the session. Murad Ali Shah was also briefed on schemes of Tando Allah Yar to Tando Adam double track road, dualization of Mehran Highway from Nawabshah to Ranipur and renovation of N-V national highway from Sanghar.

GOVERNMENT COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY KOHAT
ADMISSION NOTICE
FOR THE SESSION 2025-2026

Applications are invited for admission to 1st year of the three Years Diploma of associate Engineering (DAE) course in the following Technologies for both Morning & 2nd Shift with criteria as mentioned below.
MINIMUM QUALIFICATION:-
Minimum qualification for admission is (i) Metric 2nd division with science (minimum 40% marks) or (ii) Technical School Certificate (iii) G-2 with Metric in Science in the order given.
NOTE:- Prospectus alongwith admission form can be obtained on payment of Rupees 300/- (non refundable) during working hours from Govt. College of Technology Kohat admission office.

ADMISSION SCHEDULE FOR DAE

MORNING SHIFT		
S.#	Technology	Regions for eligibility
01	Civil	Candidates from District Kohat & Hangu
02	Electrical	Candidates from District Kohat & Hangu
03	Mechanical	Kohat Division

i. Issuance of prospectus

01/08/2025

ii. Last date for submission of application forms

30/08/2025

iii. Test for Hafiz Quran

02/09/2025

iv. Display of Merit list on College notice Board of Morning Shift

03/09/2025

v. Interview and Payment of Admission Fee

08/09/2025

vi. Classes started

15/09/2025

ADMISSION SCHEDULE FOR DAE

EVENING SHIFT		
S.#	Technology	Regions for eligibility
01	Civil	Open Merit Not restriction of Domicile
02	Electrical	
03	Mechanical	

NOTE: Candidate desirous to apply for DAE (Evening Shift) should apply separately.

i. Issuance of prospectus

01/08/2025

ii. Last date for submission of application forms

30/08/2025

iii. Test for Hafiz Quran

02/09/2025

iv. Display of Merit list on College notice Board of Evening Shift

03/09/2025

v. Interview and Payment of Admission Fee

09/09/2025

ADMISSION SCHEDULE FOR SHORT COURSES IN EVENING
Diploma information Technology (One Year Program) are open all the time **No. Restriction on domicile**
IMPORTANT
1. Incomplete applications and those received late will not be entertained.
2. Separate letters for interview will not be issued.
3. Admission will be strictly on the basis of merit and Technology once allotted cannot be changed.
4. detailed information is available in prospectus which must be studied before submission of application.
5. Nomination for reserved seats should be sent through their relevant offices/Quarters before 13-09-2025.
6. Class will commence from 15-09-2025.
7. For more detail visit website www.gctkohat.edu.pk
Admission Officer No: 03469037837

PRINCIPAL
Govt. College of Technology Kohat

INF/KT/13

13th Fund Manager under CPF Scheme

Government signs agreement with Pak-Qatar Takaful

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Under the supervision of Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Finance and Inter-Provincial Coordination Muzzammil Aslam, the Secretary Finance, Amer Sultan Tareen, signed an agreement on behalf of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government with Pak-Qatar Takaful under the Contributory Provident Fund (CPF) scheme.

A simple and dignified ceremony for the signing was held at the Finance Department's conference room, attended by Advisor for Finance Muzzammil Aslam, Secretary Finance Amer Sultan Tareen, Additional Secretary Budget Arshad Ali, Team lead Abdul Qayyum, Deputy Director Pension Cell Naveed Alam, along with the delegation representing Pak-Qatar Takaful.

Speaking on the occasion, Finance Advisor Muzzammil Aslam said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government is expanding the Contributory Provident Fund scheme to further strengthen its pension reform efforts. The CPF, launched in 2022 for provincial civil servants, is a flagship pension initiative, and more than 59,000 government employees have been registered under the scheme so far.

This program is based on a joint contribution model aimed at securing the financial future of government employees — wherein the employee contributes 10% of their basic pay while the government contributes 12% monthly.

It was highlighted at the event that a key feature of the CPF scheme is the outsourcing of its investment component, which operates under the Voluntary Pension System (VPS) model - a structured pension framework regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) since 2005. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government has adopted this model after tailoring it to meet the specific needs of the province.

The Finance Advisor also explained that the CPF scheme engages only those Asset Management Companies (AMCs) that are licensed by the SECP and have a minimum credit rating of AM2 - reflecting high standards of professional fund management. Since the scheme's launch, the government had entered into agreements with 12 such licensed AMCs.

During the ceremony, it was shared that Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Limited recently obtained its VPS license and applied to become a fund manager under the CPF scheme. After a comprehensive evaluation, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government formally signed the agreement with Pak-Qatar on July 23, 2025, through the office of the Secretary Finance.

With this agreement, Pak-Qatar becomes the 13th approved fund manager on the CPF investment panel.

This expansion reflects the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government's commitment to providing diversified, professionally managed, and Shariah-compliant investment options under its pension framework - ensuring transparency, long-term sustainability, and employee confidence.



PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Finance and Inter-Provincial Coordination Muzzammil Aslam discussing the Contributory Fund Scheme with the representatives of Pak-Qatar Takaful.

PHC suspends Secretary Livestock 1st July notification

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has suspended a notification that directed the Project Incharge of Livestock in Khyber District to report back to his parent department prematurely. The court also directed the Secretary Livestock and other relevant authorities to submit their response in the case, on Thursday.

PHC two-member bench comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Fahim Wali heard the case.

The counsel Aminur Rahman Yousafzai advocate argued that the petitioner's posting as Project Incharge in the Integrated Development Package in Khyber District was made in April 2025. However, on July 1, the petitioner's posting was withdrawn, and he was directed to report back to his parent department.

The lawyer argued that the Secretary Livestock issued the order without the recommendations of the committee, which is not in accordance with the law. He further argued that the provincial government had already issued a policy on deputation to projects, which provides for an initial deputation period of three years, extendable by another two years. However, the petitioner was sent back to his parent department after just two months, which is not in accordance with the policy.

After hearing the arguments, the court suspended the July 1 notification issued by the Secretary Livestock and directed the Secretary Livestock and other parties to submit their response in the case.

Lacrosse training Camp concludes in Peshawar



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Under the auspices of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Lacrosse Association, a lacrosse training camp successfully concluded at Qayyum Sports Complex here in Peshawar.

Director General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tashfeen Haider, graced the closing ceremony as chief guest. A large number of players from District Peshawar actively participated in the camp.

During the closing ceremony, the Director General Sports distributed certificates among the participants. He was accompanied by Director Sports Operations Jamshed Baloch, Director Sports Merged Areas Raziullah Betani, Administrator Yousaf Afridi, Secretary Pakistan Lacrosse Federation Engineer Taifoor Zareen and other notable personalities.

Qualified coaches imparted a range of technical skills to the participants during the camp, including playing techniques, passing, shooting, catching and defensive strategies.

Speaking on the occasion, DG Sports Tashfeen Haider emphasized the importance of promoting emerging sports among youth, terming it a need of the hour.

He appreciated the efforts of the President Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Lacrosse Association for promoting lacrosse across all regions of the province through such training initiatives.

He further added that this training camp marks a significant milestone in the promotion of lacrosse in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and reflects the commitment of Pakistan Lacrosse Federation and its provincial units to expanding the reach of the sport across the country.

Shafqat expresses sorrow on demise of Hammad

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR Dr. Shafqat Ayaz, Special Assistant to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Science and Information Technology, has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise of Mian Azhar, the father of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's senior leader Hammad Azhar and one of the country's most respected and veteran politicians.

In his condolence message, Dr. Shafqat Ayaz stated that Mian Azhar was a principled, ideological, and wise statesman who played a significant role in strengthening the country's politics, democracy, and federal structure. His services as the Governor of Punjab and a national political figure will always be remembered with great respect.

Dr. Ayaz added that the passing of Mian Azhar is a national loss. His personality symbolized political wisdom, insight, composure, and a deep love for the country. With his death, the nation has lost a dignified and experienced leader.

He also praised the political services of Mian Azhar's son, Hammad Azhar, stating that even in the most challenging times, Hammad Azhar stood firmly and courageously with the vision of Imran Khan and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, choosing the path of public service. He is carrying forward his father's political legacy with honesty and sincerity.

Dr. Shafqat Ayaz extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and prayed that Almighty Allah grants the late Mian Azhar the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous and bestows patience and strength upon the family to bear this irreparable loss.

KP PA continue to familiarize youth with parliamentary system

PESHAWAR (APP): Under the vision and guidance of the Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Babar Saleem Swati, a successful series of study tours is ongoing at the Assembly to educate youth about the parliamentary system, legislative process, and democratic values.

In recent days, two educational delegations visited the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly.

The first group consisted of youth from Charsadda under the umbrella of the Youth Alliance for Peace and Development, while the second delegation included LBL students visiting with the support of Syed and Syed Law Associates.

On the special instructions of the Speaker, the Assembly Secretariat made comprehensive arrangements for the tours. Special Secretary (Administration), Syed Waqar Shah, delivered a detailed briefing to the students, introducing them to various departments of the Assembly and their roles in the parliamentary process.

Assistant Secretary, Saifullah Khan, also accompanied the Special Secretary and guided the delegations through key areas including the Session Hall, galleries, and members' chambers.

The visit concluded with an interactive Q&A session, where the students asked insightful questions related to national and parliamentary affairs, and Syed Waqar Shah provided detailed responses.

Speaking on this occasion, Speaker Babar Saleem Swati said that it is essential to make parliamentary institutions accessible and understandable for our youth. The KP Assembly is not only a centre of legislation but also a learning platform where young people can understand how democratic functions.

"We want our youth to not only observe but also participate in this process and contribute positively to national development," added the Speaker KP Assembly.

Federal Minister reviews BISP and PBM operations

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Syed Imran Ahmed Shah, visited both the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Zonal Office and the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) Regional Office in Peshawar, as part of his nationwide review of welfare programmes under the Ministry's mandate.

At BISP, the Minister was briefed by DG KP Haider Murtaza on the outreach and impact of various BISP interventions. Highlights included: Over 1.47 million beneficiaries recertified under the dynamic NSER registration process, Addition of 1,736 new beneficiaries and 140 Dynamic Registration Centers operational across KP with 466 staff members from NADRA, NCHD, and ASPCs.

He also reviewed the Benazir Nashonuma Programme, which has supported more than 600,000 women and children through 148 centers since 2020, and assessed the progress of Benazir Kafalat, supporting nearly 2 million beneficiaries in KP-particularly in Malakand and Peshawar Divisions.

As part of his visit to the BISP office, the Minister also planted a sapling under the Benazir Green Pakistan Initiative, symbolizing the government's long-term commitment to environmental sustainability and inclusive development.

At the PBM office, the Minister received a briefing from Director Lal Badshah, who informed him that: 30 vocational training centers across KP are equipping underprivileged women with skills in embroidery, IT, and other trades, Eight PBM-run orphanages are providing shelter, safety, and education to 800 children up to matric level, with CCTV surveillance installed for real-time monitoring, PBM is also offering educational scholarships for child laborers and financial aid for persons with disabilities and widows.

The Minister praised the impactful work of PBM in education, healthcare, and disability inclusion. He emphasized that financial aid must be paired with skill-building and economic empowerment, citing the Hunarmand Pakistan Programme as a key driver of youth resilience and national economic growth.

Highlighting the need for strong institutional coordination between BISP and PBM, he stressed the importance of data-sharing, transparency, and merit-based delivery to eliminate duplication and ensure aid reaches the most deserving.

Addressing staff at both organizations, the Minister reaffirmed: "We are committed to inclusive, non-discriminatory welfare. No Pakistani will be left behind due to poverty, caste, creed, or political affiliation. Every household below the poverty line is our responsibility."

He directed that corruption in welfare funds would not be tolerated, and assured that administrative challenges-such as vacant posts, internet connectivity, and transport shortages-would be resolved on a priority basis.

He also announced that Balochistan would be the next focus in his ongoing national welfare review, with new initiatives planned for housing, livelihood, and technical training.

"Poverty alleviation is not a slogan-it is a national mission. We aim not just for relief, but for resilience," said Minister Syed Imran Ahmed Shah.



PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar Division Riaz Khan Mehsood chairing a meeting regarding preventive measures during Monsoon season.

Air Pollution in Pakistan A worsening health and environmental crisis



Faiza Riasat

AIR pollution in Pakistan has reached crisis levels, posing severe threats to public health, economic productivity,

and environmental sustainability. According to the World Air Quality Report 2024, Pakistan ranks as the third most polluted country in the world, with a national average PM2.5 concentration of 73.7 micrograms per cubic metre (µg/m³), over 14 times higher than the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommended safe level of 5 µg/m³.

This ranking places Pakistan behind only Chad and Bangladesh, with India and the Democratic Republic of Congo completing the top five most polluted nations globally. In 2024, several major Pakistani cities, including Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Lahore, and Peshawar, witnessed rising pollution levels. Twelve cities in the country recorded annual PM2.5 levels more than ten times the WHO guideline.

Various factors are responsible for the worsening air quality in the country. Key contributors include vehicular emissions, industrial activity, brick kilns, biomass and crop residue burning, open waste incineration, construction dust, and widespread deforestation. In Lahore alone, vehicular emissions account for up to 83% of total pollution.

During winter months, the pollution rises to a dangerous level due to agricultural stubble burning and temperature inversions that trap particulate matter close to the ground. During this period, PM2.5 concentrations often exceed 100 µg/m³, more than 20 times the safe threshold, resulting in a thick, hazardous smog enveloping urban centres. Lahore surpassed this benchmark in 2024 for the first time since 2018.

The Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) report by the University of Chicago's Energy Policy Institute estimates that air pollution reduces life expectancy in Pakistan by over four years on average. It identifies particulate pollution as the second-most serious threat to public health, after cardiovascular diseases. The report links rising pollution to increased cases of mental health disorders, including anxiety, seasonal depression, and mood-related illnesses.

The State of Global Air 2024 report further reveals that air pollution was responsible for 256,000 deaths in Pakistan in 2021.

To address the air pollution crisis, the federal and provincial governments have launched various initiatives. However,

experts argue that policy implementation lacks urgency and coordination. Moreover, with climate change intensifying extreme weather events like heatwaves, flash floods, and water scarcity, the nexus between air pollution and environmental degradation is growing clearer.

Smog, a dangerous by-product of urban pollution, has become a recurring nightmare in cities like Lahore. It forms when nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) react with sunlight, creating ground-level ozone and fine particulates. This thick haze severely affects people with respiratory illnesses and poses significant risks to children and the elderly.

To address this most urgent crisis, a coordinated national and regional response is needed. South Asia, with shared geography and air corridors, must cooperate on data sharing, research, and policy alignment. Within Pakistan, addressing air pollution will require localised action to reduce traffic congestion, eliminate open garbage burning, improve industrial emissions controls, and strengthen urban planning.

The private sector must also be engaged.

Businesses can contribute by adopting clean technologies, investing in green infrastructure, and collaborating on emission-reducing innovations.

Financing mechanisms, both domestic and international, are critical to support air quality monitoring systems, emission scrubbers, and clean transport. Tackling Pakistan's air pollution crisis demands a collective and sustained response.

The Author is student of Environmental Engineering, IESE NUST, Islamabad and can be reached at faizari-asat2002@gmail.com



In brief

Solar system inaugurated Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: District Development Advisory Committee Chairman and Member Provincial Assembly, Haji Zar Alam Khan, inaugurated a solar system at the Nowshera District Bar today. The event was attended by members of the bar association, senior lawyers, and political leaders, who warmly welcomed Haji Zar Alam Khan, on Thursday. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Mian Arshad Jan, President of the District Bar, Fawad Abdul Salam, General Secretary, and other notable lawyers, including Wilayat Advocate, Kamil Raza, Shahzad Amin, and Ayub Khan. Haji Zar Alam Khan not only facilitated the installation of the solar system but also announced the provision of two water coolers, a transformer, and a cash grant of Rs. 100,000 for the lawyers' tour under the supervision of ILF. The President of the District Bar and other office bearers expressed their gratitude to the DCD Chairman, describing the initiative as a welcome step for the lawyers' community. They appreciated Haji Zar Alam Khan's efforts to support the lawyers and improve their working conditions. In his address, Haji Zar Alam Khan emphasized the importance of the lawyers' community, describing them as a dignified and enlightened segment of society. He assured the lawyers that resolving their issues would remain a priority for him, and he would continue to provide all possible support. The inauguration ceremony concluded with a prayer, and the solar system was formally inaugurated. The guests were treated with refreshments, and the event was seen as a significant step towards improving the facilities for lawyers at the Nowshera District Bar.

Head cut body recovered F.P. Report

KARAK: A heartbreaking incident took place on the side of the paved road near the eastern bypass within the limits of the Teri police station, where the headless body of an unknown person was found. According to police sources, the age of the deceased is estimated to be between 49 and 50 years. As soon as the incident was reported, the police reached the spot and started collecting initial evidence by cordoning off the area. The identity of the deceased and the reasons for the murder have not yet been revealed. Police say that an investigation is underway from every aspect of the incident and efforts are being made to reach the real motives and those involved soon.

Monsoon tree plantation drive F.P. Report

D I KHAN: A pre-monsoon tree plantation campaign was formally launched at the district headquarters of Rescue 1122 in Dera Ismail Khan, in collaboration with the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) and the Forest Department. The event was led by District Emergency Officer Engineer Faseeh Ullah, who inaugurated the drive by planting a sapling. NCHD Assistant Director Asma Sadaf and Sub-Divisional Forest Officer (SDFO) Asif Kundi were also present on the occasion. Speaking at the ceremony, Engr. Faseeh Ullah emphasized the importance of trees in combating environmental pollution and ensuring a safe and healthy environment for future generations.

Munda seminary child murder case Prosecution team lauded for securing convictions

Haleem Asad

LOWER DIR: Civil society members and human rights activists in Lower Dir have praised the prosecution team for securing convictions in the rape and murder case of an eight-year-old girl at a religious seminary-cum-orphanage in the Munda area.

The incident, which occurred a year ago, drew widespread condemnation after the girl's mysterious death. Initially, the orphanage administration claimed she had died after a pile of bedding fell on her. However, following intense protests and demands for justice, police launched a formal investigation that cast doubt on the initial version of events.

As public pressure mounted, an FIR was registered and the case was brought to trial in the court of Additional Sessions Judge Ijaz Younas in Samarbagh, which delivered its verdict on Monday.

The prosecution, led by District Public Prosecutor (DPP) Rafiullah, was commended for its rigorous pursuit of justice. The prosecution team presented substantial evidence and arguments that led to the conviction of three individuals on charges of sexual assault and murder. The court sentenced all three to life imprisonment along with heavy fines.

Speaking on the development, civil society and rights groups stressed that there must be zero tolerance for such heinous crimes. They urged investigators and prosecutors to remain steadfast and uncompromising in similar cases to ensure justice is served.

Local residents said the verdict had helped restore public confidence in the justice system and credited the prosecution team for its commitment and professionalism.

Reconciliatin ceremony: A reconciliation ceremony was held at a local hotel in Timergara on Wednesday to reconcile a feud between the families of the Sadat from Shikolai Timergara, Syed Nusrat Ali Shah and Syed Mohsin Ali Shah—and Maulana Gul Jan of Bajaur. The event was attended by political leaders, religious scholars, lawyers, doctors, and representatives of the chemist community.

Speakers, including Malik Bashir Ahmad, Dr. Dawood Jan, former provincial minister Mehmood Zeb Khan, Alam Zeb Advocate, and Mian Sultan Yousaf Bacha, emphasized that reconciliation was a virtuous act that pleased Allah. They stressed the importance of peace, forgiveness, and understanding in building a harmonious society. The event concluded with both parties embracing each other, and participants congratulating the mediators for their successful efforts.

Vehicle refueling with LPG a circus with human lives F.P. Report

MARDAN: The dangerous trend of filling vehicles directly with LPG cylinders is rapidly spreading across the city of Mardan, which is not only a violation of the law but has also become a serious threat to human lives. Vehicles are being filled with LPG cylinders without any safety measures at small workshops and unregistered gas points in various areas.

There is no fire safety arrangement at these places, nor are the staffs trained with any technical skills. Experts say that if LPG is used without specific and approved equipment, it can lead to severe explosions and fires. Several accidents have already occurred across the country, in which precious lives were lost. Citizens have demanded that the relevant authorities take immediate action against this illegal and dangerous practice, close such points and take legal action against those responsible.

It should be remembered that according to OGRA rules, specific safety standards are required for the installation and supply of gas in vehicles, the violation of which is a punishable offense.

CEO WSCCM visits different localities: Chief Executive Officer Water and Sanitation Services Company Mardan (WSCCM) visited various areas of Mardan city during heavy rainfall to inspect ongoing sanitation operations and clearing of storm water drains.

The CEO visited all the hotspots including College Chowk, Police Line Road, Bank Road, Khwaja Ganj Bazaar, Shaheedan Bazaar, Bicket Gunj, and Bari Chum. He appreciated the efforts of the sanitation staff in removing obstructions to ensure free flow of storm water and stated that the company is striving to provide maximum services to citizens with the resources available in routine and special circumstances and weather conditions as well. Shahid Khan ordered the termination of three sanitation workers who were found absent during the night shift.

Manager Municipal Service Muhammad Ishaq, Deputy Manager Ikrumullah and Media & Communication Officer Junaid Yousafzai accompanied him.

The CEO directed all the relevant officials to take concrete measures for maintaining proper flow of storm water at eight designated hotspot areas and across the city. He further announced that all staff leaves had been canceled amid the emergency weather situation and that WSCCM personnel remain on high alert to respond to any eventuality.

Iranian petrol sale multiplied F.P. Report

MARDAN: The illegal sale of Iranian and poor-quality petrol has increased to an alarming level in the city of Mardan, leading to an increase in the number of vehicle engine breakdowns.

According to sources, Iranian petrol is being sold secretly at some petrol pumps and unregistered shops, which is not upto standard and has become a threat to both the pockets and lives of the public. Local residents have complained that the use of this poor quality petrol is not only affecting the performance of motorcycles and cars, but also causing engines, fuel pumps and other parts to deteriorate quickly, increasing repair costs.

Sources say that this petrol is smuggled illegally from Iran and since there is no tax or quality check on it, it is cheap. Some shopkeepers are selling it openly, in the lure of high profits. Meanwhile, the Excise Department, police, and district administration have not taken any effective action against this illegal business so far, over which public circles have expressed concern and demanded immediate action.

KUST hosts seminar on tech-talk



Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: The Institute of Computing, Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST), in collaboration with the Office of Research, Innovation, and Commercialization (ORIC), successfully organized the Tech-Talks & Posters Symposium 2025.

Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Syed Zafar Ilyas graced the event as the chief guest and praised the spirit of research, innovation, and student creativity. The event was attended by Director IOC, Director ORIC, faculty members of the Institute of Computing, Public Relations Officer (PRO), and a large number of students and guests. The main objective of the event was to promote a culture of research, critical thinking, and collaboration within the university.

On the successful execution of the event, the Vice Chancellor appreciated the efforts of the Chief Organizer, Dr. Amjad Mehmood (Chairman, Institute of Computing), Dr. Zeeshan Bangash (Director ORIC), and Dr. Muneer. He also directed the ORIC office to select three to four of the presented projects to be developed as startups, in order to provide students with opportunities to excel in the practical field. During the concluding session, Dr. Amjad Mehmood awarded shields and certificates to the students who

presented the best posters across different batches. From the BSCS Open Batch (2021–2025): Group 1: Ayesha Hidayat and Syeda Hamda Shah presented a poster titled "Grains of Hope".

Group 2: Syed Mufassir Shah, Waseem Dawar, and Owais Ahmad presented "AI-Powered Multi-Cancer Detection and Classification System" and secured first position.

From the BSCS Self-Support Batch (2021–2025): Group 1: Ayesha Khan Afridi presented "AI-Based Language Learning Application".

Group 2: Faisal Minhas, Waqar Ahmad, and Hammad Ahmad presented "EduAI: Next-Gen AI-Powered E-Learning Marketplace", securing the top position in their batch.

From the BSSE Batch (2021–2025):

Ahmad Saeed, Fahad Ahmad, and Syed Muhammad Jawad Hussain presented "An AI-Based Personalized Smart Restaurant Management System" and won first position in their category.

From the BSCS Hangu Campus Batch (2021–2025): Group 1: Aftab Fazal Qayum, Hamda Khalil, and Ahlam Ayaz presented "Resume AI" and secured the first position from the Hangu Campus. The event concluded with high appreciation for the participating groups and discussion on the potential of turning their projects into real-world applications.

Commissioner reviews industrial development

F.P. Report

KOHAT: The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has formed Divisional Task Force at divisional level under the supervision of the respective Commissioners to rapidly develop the industries in the province and protect the industrial land from encroachments. In light of the decision of the provincial government, after formal meeting of the Divisional Task Force, efforts are underway to promote industrial activities in the entire Kohat division as well.

Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah, in this regard, along with the Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Hamid Iqbal and other concerned officials, visited the Kohat Industrial Zone and several other industrial areas on Thursday and reviewed various aspects and measures for industrial development in detail.

Commissioner Kohat on this occasion, said that the provincial government is serious enough about the development of the industrial sector, that is why the Divisional Task Force have been formed for this purpose. He said that the miner-

al resource-based industries of southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially Kohat division, have immense potential for which a plan of action is being formulated in consultation with all the stakeholders.

He added that South Pakhtunkhwa, especially its tribal districts, are still deprived of industrial development, for which concrete steps are needed. Commissioner Kohat said that training of local manpower is also of immense importance for the rapid development of industries, to which special attention will be given.

Meanwhile, Commissioner Kohat Syed Motasim Billah Shah has inspected several major rain waterways along with the Deputy Commissioner and other staff in the tribal district of Orakzai on prior information of a major flood, to ensure the safety of human lives, livestock and other properties in the possible flood situation of the current monsoon season.

On this occasion, the tourists who were enjoying at several places in the middle of the most extremely dangerous waterway, originating from Orakzai district were safely evacuated from

the area in time before the floodwaters reached. The tourists include the large number of children, elderly people and women. Commissioner Kohat also ordered action against the staff on duty for negligence.

All Deputy Commissioners were strictly directed to ensure all possible safety measures and the people were also strongly urged to be extremely careful. It was also instructed to provide safety and possible facilities to the tourists, however, immediate legal action was called for in case of negligence by any department in their safety.

Meanwhile, Commissioner Kohat also inspected the construction work on Kohat-Orakzai Road and issued directions to the authorities concerned and construction company to maintain the quality of work at all costs. He made it clear that no compromise will be made on the quality and completion period of the work.

He also directed all the Deputy Commissioners to ensure continuous monitoring of the construction work in their respective districts so that the work can be completed on time and according to the prescribed standards.

Patients pays price for BoG members infighting at MMC

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Patients and their family members have been suffering owing to infighting and conflicts among members of Board of Governors of the teaching hospital Mardan Medical Complex (MTI), it has been learnt.

Credible sources said that the Board of Governors (BoG) of the major teaching hospital, Mardan Medical Complex (MTI), has been entangled in infighting and conflicts for a long time. The situation has escalated to the point where board members can't even tolerate each other's presence. In such a scenario, expecting them to formulate effective policies for the public's benefit is a futile practice.

This is the first BoG in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province's history with nine members instead of the usual seven. Recently, two members were removed, and the provincial government appointed two new ones.

However, the removed members regained their positions through the courts, sparking a tug-of-war among the BoG. The restoration of two members by court had created many problems for the BoG to hold its routine meetings. However, after long consultations, the BoG chairman and his allies made efforts to gather all nine members, and a meeting was eventually held in early June.

However, minutes of the June-meeting had yet to be released, and another meeting was scheduled in the current month of July. But just before it was to be held, a letter from the Advocate General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa arrived. The letter clearly stated that the board cannot legally conduct any meetings or make decisions with nine members. Any such meetings or decisions would be considered illegal. Following this directive, the scheduled meeting was canceled.

Now the matter of the two board members is back in court, with the next hearing scheduled for late August. This means the BoG is unlikely to hold any meetings for at least the next two months, leaving the MTI effectively in suspension. As a result, many important matters of the hospital are stalled.

It is pertinent to mention here that one or two members belonged to district Mardan while the rest of BoG members were not hailing from Mardan district. How can the residents of Mardan expect effective healthcare policies from such a board?

Currently, work has begun on the Cath Lab as well as the Benazir Bhutto Hospital project has also just started, and projects like the Dental College, Cardiac Center, and Phase III expansion of the hospital all required solid policy direction.

Similarly, the hospital is being run by an interim and acting Medical Director and Hospital Director who lack the authority and competence to make key decisions. However, they continued to enjoy the privileges of their positions without delivering results.

Advisor to Chief Minister on health Mr. Itisham Khan who belonged to district Mardan should make quick intervention in the said matter so as to remove suffering and difficulties of people. Besides, the Health Advisor could also bring several great health projects to his hometown district but their benefits would only reach people when there was a capable team to implement them. He should also focus on providing quality healthcare to the poor if he wants to win the hearts of people.

The scribe tried time and again on phone numbers of both the BoG Chairman and Hospital director of Mardan Medical Complex Hospital to seek their point of view on the above-mentioned patients related issues but they did not bother to pick up the calls to give appropriate reply.

However, PRO of the Mardan Medical Complex Mr. Zia-us-Islam while talking to The Frontier Post said that affairs of the hospital were going on as per the routine and patients along with family members were not facing any problem.

Disables in Bara seek their rights

F.P. Report

BARA: A protest rally of special persons for their rights was held here in front of Bara press club on Thursday. Scores of disabled persons from across the tehsil gathered in front of the press to file their protest in favor of their demands.

Addressing on the occasion chairman special persons tehsil Bara Mr. Saif said that for the last one decade disabled community in Bara was totally ignored and no such incentive had been granted, being enjoyed by special persons of the down towns.

He came hard on the parliamentarians as well as on the administrative officials and said till the day no concrete step had been adopted



to ensure provision of basic rights to the local disabled persons. Abdurrehman, a disabled said that all funds specialized for them had been embezzled.

The provincial government approved funds for the welfare of the special persons but ironically in the last fifteen years a single penny in the form of financial assistance had been extended to them, he

regretted. He maintained that the government increased their quota from two percent to five percent but could not apply it practically.

The protestors marched to Khyber Chawk, Bara Bazaar from the press club where they threatened that if their demands were not met then they would initiate indefinite protest sit-in the Bazaar.

Tribesmen observes strike against insecurity

F.P. Report

WANA: A complete shutdown strike was observed in Wana Bazaar on Thursday as traders and local residents staged a protest rally against growing insecurity and renewed calls for lasting peace in the region. All commercial activity came to a halt as demonstrators marched through the main market, carrying placards bearing slogans demanding an end to bloodshed and the restoration of law and order.

The protest was triggered by a recently reported militant attack on Malik Sardar Ali, a well-known tribal elder. Speakers at the rally condemned the incident in the strongest terms and called on the government to take immediate and concrete steps to ensure his safety and apprehend those responsible.

Addressing the gathering, community leaders and activists criticized what they termed the state's failure to establish its writ in the region. "The state's unwillingness to assert its authority is unacceptable. It must fulfill its constitutional responsibility to protect its citizens," said one speaker.

The protesters voiced frustration over decades of conflict, noting that for over 22 years, the region has been caught in a cycle of violence and neglect. They highlighted the long-standing closure of the Angoor Adda border crossing, which they said has choked the local economy, deepened poverty, and left many struggling for basic survival.

"Our villages have been reduced to ruins. Generations have grown up knowing nothing but war," lamented another protester. "We demand an immediate end to this imposed conflict and urge the state to focus on development and peace."

Participants accused state institutions of failing to stem the rising tide of lawlessness and warned that continued inaction could lead to further alienation and unrest. Some speakers also blamed foreign actors particularly the United States for having sown seeds of distrust between the

tribal population and the state, calling the damage "irreparable."

The protest concluded with a unified demand for the federal government to abandon militarized solutions, address long-standing grievances through dialogue and inclusion, and restore the dignity and security of the people of South Waziristan.

Dabkot dispensary becomes death due negligence: The government dispensary in Dabkot, a village in Tehsil Wana of South Waziristan, has turned into a potential death trap due to years of negligence by the Health Department. Once established to serve the healthcare needs of the region, the dispensary now stands as a crumbling reminder of official apathy.

Just 4 kilometers from the Frontier Corps camp in Wana, the building is in a perilous state — its walls are visibly tilted, the roof threatens to cave in, and the premises lack even basic medical supplies and staff. Local residents describe the facility as a "haunted house" rather than a center of healing.

Dozens of patients reportedly visit the dispensary daily, only to return without treatment. The absence of medicines, trained personnel, and proper maintenance has rendered the facility non-functional, prompting serious concerns among the local population.

The growing frustration has led to public outcry, with residents staging protests and demanding immediate government intervention. Community elders and youth leaders have called upon the Secretary of Health, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, to personally look into the matter and ensure urgent repairs are carried out. They are also urging the authorities to deploy medical staff and restore the supply of essential medicines without delay.

Health experts warn that if the current state of neglect continues, the very structure meant to save lives could soon become the cause of tragedy. The pressing question now is: Will the authorities act before disaster

Kidney screening camp today F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Lucky Cement Limited, in collaboration with Tabba Kidney Institute, will organise a two days Kidney Screening Camp for the local community at the Abdul Razzak Tabba Welfare Dispensary, in the Darra Pezu town of Lakki Marwat district today (Friday).

An official of the company said that the he initiative aimed to promote early detection and awareness of kidney related health issues. He said that a range of diagnostic tests and medical consultations would be offered at the camp.

"Additionally, consultations with senior doctors from Tabba Kidney Institute will be available on-site to provide expert medical guidance", he maintained, adding that this healthcare initiative reflects the company's ongoing commitment to the wellbeing of the communities where it operates. He expressed the company's commitment to continue to support sustainable and impactful health programs across Pakistan.



\$5b deals signed by Saudi Arabia to help rebuild Syria

RIYADH: A Saudi delegation visiting Damascus inked investment and partnership deals valued at \$5 billion to help rebuild war-battered Syria, the Kingdom announced.

The delegation of some 150 investors and representatives of the Saudi public and private sectors, led by Investment Minister Khalid Al-Falih, attended a forum in Damascus.

"The announced investments, valued at SR19 billion (about \$5 billion), span vital and strategic sectors, including real estate, infrastructure, communications and IT, transportation and logistics, industry, tourism, energy, trade" and more, a statement from the Investment Ministry said.

On Tuesday, the ministry had said the Damascus forum aimed to "explore cooperation opportunities and sign agreements that enhance sustainable development and serve the interests of the two brotherly peoples". The Saudi delegation's visit underscores the Kingdom's growing support for Syria's economic recovery and reconstruction efforts.

As part of the visit, Al-Falih and Syrian Economy Minister Mohammed Nidal Al-Shaar inaugurated the Fayhaa White Cement Factory in Adra Industrial City, the first of its kind in Syria. Backed by a \$20 million investment from Saudi Arabia's Northern Region Cement Co., the plant is set to produce high-grade white cement while creating 130 direct jobs and more than 1,000 indirect employment opportunities.

"The launch of this project reflects our commitment to Syria's reconstruction and to opening new avenues for regional investment," said Obaid Al-Sobie, CEO of Northern

Region Cement. The Kingdom will also fund the construction of Al-Jawhara Tower, a 32-storey skyscraper in the center of the Syrian capital, Damascus.

Spanning 25,000 sq. meters with an estimated cost exceeding \$100 million, the project marks one of the most significant Saudi investments in Syria. In April, Saudi Arabia and Qatar announced a joint initiative to settle Syria's \$15 million debt to the World Bank as part of broader efforts to support the financial recovery of the war-torn nation.

Last month, Al-Falih conducted a virtual meeting with Syrian Economy Minister Mohammad Al-Shaar, and discussed opportunities for collaboration in both public and private sectors. The Syrian government this month also amended the country's investment law, in a move that is expected to support more domestic and foreign investment.

During a visit by a Saudi delegation last week, Al-Shaar said that the new law provides an attractive legal environment that promotes the entry of capital, SANA reported. The law will support the investment process and enhance the role of the private sector in reconstruction and economic development, the minister added.

According to official data from Saudi Arabia's General Authority for Statistics, Syria was the Kingdom's 53rd largest export destination in April, with non-oil exports rising by 153.37 percent year on year to reach SR81.97million. These exports are composed primarily of plastics and rubber products, making up 33 percent, 26 percent plant products, and 14 percent prepared foodstuffs, beverages, and

tobacco.

The remaining exports comprise a variety of chemical products, articles made from stone, cement, ceramics, and glass, reflecting the expanding diversity of trade flows. On the import side, Syria ranked 60th among countries supplying goods to Saudi Arabia, with imports totaling SR78.5 million in April, representing a sharp 149.7 percent year-over-year increase.

The bulk of these shipments consists of animal and plant products, edible oils and fats, and processed food and beverages, indicating Syria's agricultural and agri-food sector's growing relevance to the Saudi market. This recent growth in trade volumes follows the rapid evolution of political dynamics between Riyadh and Damascus. In May 2024, the Kingdom formally reopened its embassy in Syria after a 12-year rupture following the outbreak of the Syrian conflict in 2011.

Saudi Arabia does not export oil to the country primarily because of the comprehensive sanctions regime imposed on the Syrian government following the outbreak of the civil war in 2011. While Syria once produced and exported substantial quantities of oil, the war and sanctions effectively eliminated its export capacity after late 2011.

Today, production remains constrained, and Syria relies heavily on imports, particularly from Iran, to meet its domestic demand. The trade figures reported by GASTAT, while still modest in comparison to the Kingdom's broader trade profile, are significant in light of where bilateral relations stood just two years ago. — Arab News

2 dead, homes burn in massive Cyprus wildfire

NICOSIA (Reuters): Two people were killed and hundreds evacuated as a massive wildfire tore through southern Cyprus, destroying homes and threatening communities amid an intense heatwave. Firefighters were struggling to contain the blaze after it erupted in mountainous terrain north of the southern city of Limassol midday, driven by strong winds and searing temperatures.

Overnight, two people were found dead in a burned-out vehicle, while authorities continued to struggle to evacuate people trapped in the village of Lofou, about 26 kilometres (16 miles) from Limassol. "The situation is very difficult and the fire front is huge. All forces have been mobilised," Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides told reporters from the scene earlier. Temperatures on the island reached 43 degrees Centigrade (109.4 Fahrenheit), triggering an amber weather alert. Conditions are expected to worsen, with highs forecast to hit 44 degrees - the hottest day of the year so far.

Firefighting aircraft were expected to be redeployed at first light after darkness forced a pause. Homes were burning in the Souni-Zanakia communities, the fire brigade said. Cyprus has requested help through the European Union's civil protection mechanism, with Spain expected to send two aircraft, government spokesperson Konstantinos Letymbiotis said. Jordan has also pledged assistance.

Cyprus has struggled with a protracted drought, pushing scarce water resources to critically low levels. The affected area sits just north of Cyprus's Kouris reservoir, the island's largest. It was at just 15.5% of its capacity.

Women win right to sue Qatar Airways

SYDNEY (Reuters): Five Australian women who say they were pulled from a Qatar Airways flight by armed guards and strip-searched have won the right to sue the airline, after a court overturned an earlier decision to throw out the case.

Women on 10 Qatar Airways flights, including 13 Australians, were subjected to invasive examinations to see if they had recently given birth after a newborn baby was found abandoned at Doha's Hamad Airport in October 2020. The incident made headlines around the world, sparked outrage in Australia and strained diplomatic ties with Qatar.

A group of five women on a Sydney-bound flight launched legal proceedings in 2022 against Qatar Airways, the operator of Doha Airport MATAR, and Qatar's Civil Aviation Authority. They brought claims under the Montreal Convention, which covers airline liability, as well as negligence, assault and false imprisonment. The women sought damages for the impact on their mental health, including depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, stemming from the "unlawful physical contact".

After being escorted off their flight by armed Qatari authorities, some women claimed they were made to take off their underwear and subjected to non-consensual gynaecological inspections by a nurse in ambulances on the tarmac. Federal Court Justice John Halley dismissed the claims against Qatar Airways last year, finding they had no reasonable prospect of success, and that Qatar's Civil Aviation Authority amounted to a foreign state immune from Australian law. The full Federal Court overturned the ruling on Qatar Airways saying the issue was too complex to be dismissed summarily.

"Whether or not the claims come within the scope of (the Montreal Convention) is a matter of some complexity," the summary judgment said. "It is therefore not an issue apt to be decided at the stage of summary dismissal." The judgement allows the women to continue their lawsuit against Qatar Airways and MATAR. Both companies were ordered to pay the costs of the appeal.



GAZA CITY: Palestinian boy Mosab al-Debs, 14, who is malnourished according to medics, lies on a bed at al-Shifa Hospital.

In landmark opinion, UN court says climate change an 'existential threat'

THE HAGUE: The United Nations' highest court has said that countries must meet their climate obligations – and that failing to do so could violate international law, potentially opening the door for affected nations to seek reparations in future legal cases.

In a groundbreaking advisory opinion delivered at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) said states must act urgently to address the "existential threat" of climate change by cooperating to cut emissions, following through on global climate agreements, and protecting vulnerable populations and ecosystems from harm. Reading the opinion, ICJ President Yuji Iwasawa said that greenhouse gas emissions are "unequivocally caused by human activities" and have cross-border effects.

"Failure of a state to take appropriate action to protect the climate system ... may constitute an internationally wrongful act," Iwasawa said. He called the climate crisis "an existen-

tial problem of planetary proportions that imperils all forms of life and the very health of our planet". Notably, the court said a "clean, healthy and sustainable environment" is a human right. That paves the way for other legal actions, including states returning to the ICJ to hold each other to account as well as domestic lawsuits.

While the ICJ's ruling is not binding, it said that countries themselves have an obligation to take binding measures to comply with climate treaties. But crucially, the ICJ said industrialised nations have a legal obligation to take the lead in combating climate change, due to their greater historical responsibility for emissions. The judges also affirmed that countries that signed the 2015 Paris Agreement must ensure their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), their individual national climate plans, are "progressive" and reflect the "highest possible ambition," in line with the treaty's aim to limit global

temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit).

The opinion was immediately welcomed by environmental groups. Oxfam climate change policy lead Nafkote Dabi said: "This ruling elevates national climate commitments everywhere by confirming that countries must reduce emissions enough to protect the universal rights to life, food, health and a clean environment. "All countries, particularly rich ones, now have to cut their emissions faster and phase out fossil fuels. Rich countries have to increase their financing to Global South countries to help them reduce emissions and protect their people from past and future harm. This is not a wish list – it is international law."

Danilo Garrido, legal counsel at Greenpeace International, said the opinion marked the "start of a new era of climate accountability at a global level". "The message of the court is clear: the production, consumption and granting of licences and subsidies for fossil fuels

could be breaches of international law," he said. "Polluters must stop emitting and must pay for the harms they have caused."

After years of lobbying by vulnerable island nations fearing they could be submerged under rising sea waters, the United Nations General Assembly asked the ICJ in 2023 for an advisory opinion, a nonbinding but important basis for international obligations. The landmark opinion of the 15 judges of the ICJ – who all voted unanimously in favour of the opinion – will carry legal and political weight and is likely to determine the course of future climate action across the world, including whether polluters should be made to pay for their actions.

Judges waded through tens of thousands of pages of written submissions and heard two weeks of oral arguments during the ICJ's biggest-ever case, as they sought to pull together different strands of environmental law into a definitive international standard. — Aljazeera

Charges dropped against more than 120 defendants

BOSTON (AP): More than 120 cases, including some for assault on family members and police, were dismissed in Boston, the latest fallout from a months-long dispute over pay that has led public defenders to stop taking new clients.

At a mostly empty courtroom, Boston Municipal Court Chief Justice Tracy-Lee Lyons invoked the Lavallee protocol in dismissing case after case. It requires cases be dropped if a defendant hasn't had an attorney for 45 days and released from custody if they haven't had one for seven days. This was the first time it was invoked to drop cases, while suspects in custody have been released in recent weeks. Most were for minor crimes like shoplifting, drug possession and motor vehicle violations.

But several involved cases of assault on police officers and domestic violence. One suspect allegedly punched his pregnant girlfriend in the stomach and slapped her in the face. Another case involved a woman who was allegedly assaulted by the father of her child, who threatened to kill her and tried to strangle her. A third case involved a suspect who allegedly hit a police officer and threatened to shoot him.

The judge, repeatedly invoking the Lavallee pro-

TOCOL, dismissed almost all of the cases after being convinced public defenders had made a good-faith effort to find the defendants an attorney. No defendants were in court to hear their cases being dismissed. "This case will be dismissed without prejudice," Lyons said repeatedly, noting that all fines and fees would be waived. Prosecutors unsuccessfully objected to the dismissal of many of the cases, especially the most serious being dismissed. "The case dismissals today, with many more expected in coming days and weeks, present a clear and continuing threat to public safety," James Borghesani, a spokesperson for the Suffolk County district attorney's office, said in a statement. They vowed to re-prosecute all the cases.

"Our prosecutors and victim witness advocates are working extremely hard to keep victims and other impacted persons updated on what's happening with their cases," he continued. "These are difficult conversations. We remain hopeful that a structural solution will be found to address the causal issues here and prevent any repeat." Democratic Gov. Maura Healey, speaking to reporters in Fall River, said the situation needed to be resolved. "This is a public

safety issue and also a due process issue as people need representation," she said. "I know the parties are talking. They have got to find a way to work this out. We need lawyers in court ... and certainly they need to be paid fairly."

Public defenders, who argue they are the lowest paid in New England, launched a work stoppage at the end of May in hopes of pressuring the legislature to increase their hourly pay. The state agency representing public defenders had proposed a pay increase from \$65 an hour to \$73 an hour over the next two fiscal years for lawyers in district court, an increase from \$85 an hour to \$105 an hour for lawyers in Superior Court and \$120 an hour to \$150 an hour for lawyers handling murder cases. But the 2026 fiscal year budget of \$60.9 billion signed early this month by Healey didn't include any increase. "The dismissal of cases today under the Lavallee protocols is what needs to be done for those individuals charged with crimes but with no lawyer to vindicate their constitutional rights," said Shira Diner, a lecturer at the Boston University School of Law and the immediate past president of the Massachusetts Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

UK sanctions 25 targets

LONDON: The United Kingdom has sanctioned 25 targets involved in alleged people smuggling, under a new financial sanctions regime targeting those facilitating the travel of refugees and migrants across the English Channel via small boats.

The individuals and entities targeted include a small boat supplier in Asia and gang leaders based in the Balkans and North Africa. "Middlemen" putting cash through the hawala money transfer system in the Middle East, which is used in payments linked to Channel crossings, are also targeted. It is unclear how effective the new sanctions regime will be, since British authorities

can only freeze assets that are in the UK, and most of the smugglers are based elsewhere.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy said that it was a "landmark moment in the government's work to tackle organised immigration crime [and] reduce irregular migration to the UK". "From Europe to Asia, we are taking the fight to the people smugglers who enable irregular migration, targeting them wherever they are in the world and making them pay for their actions," he added.

The move follows legislation being introduced under the Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill to ramp up enforcement powers for police

forces and partners to investigate and prosecute people smugglers. As part of the new sanctions regime, which was introduced two days ago, the government can now freeze assets, impose travel bans and block access to the country's financial system for individuals and entities involved in enabling irregular migration, without relying on criminal or counterterrorism laws.

Albanian Bledar Lala, leader of the Belgian operations of an organised smuggling group, and a company in China that advertised small boats for people smuggling on an online marketplace are among those sanctioned. — Aljazeera

Xi says China, EU must deepen trust but bloc chief urges 'real solutions'

BEIJING (AFP): Chinese President Xi Jinping said China and the EU must deepen trust in a turbulent world but the bloc's chiefs called for "real solutions" to move past an inflection point as they met in Beijing. China's leadership has sought to draw the European Union closer as it positions itself as a more reliable partner than the United States and a bedrock of stability in a troubled world.

But the EU has made clear it will confront deep divisions over trade, fears that cheap, subsidised Chinese goods could overwhelm European markets and Beijing's tacit support for Russia's war against Ukraine. Though nominally intended to celebrate 50 years of diplomatic ties, the long list of grievances set the stage for a contentious summit. Welcoming EU Commission head Ursula von der Leyen and Chinese President Xi and Premier Li Qiang may be tense. "We know that we don't see eye to eye with China on many issues," a senior EU official

told AFP last week. "But we believe that it is essential to have this kind of very direct and open and constructive conversation sitting at the table at the highest level." Top of the agenda for the EU is the yawning trade deficit with China that stood at around \$360 billion last year and which von der Leyen has described as "unsustainable".

Beijing has dismissed those concerns, insisting that Brussels must "rebalance its mentality", not its economic ties with China. Von der Leyen has also said Brussels will demand that China eases market access for European companies and loosens export controls on strategically crucial rare earths. The EU has imposed hefty tariffs on electric vehicles imported from China, arguing that Beijing's industrial subsidies unfairly undercut European competitors.

China has rebuffed that claim and announced what were widely seen as retaliatory probes into imported European pork, brandy and

dairy products. A second key source of friction is Russia's war in Ukraine -- Brussels says China's deepening political and economic relations with Russia since the 2022 invasion represent tacit support for Moscow that have helped its economy weather sweeping Western sanctions. Meeting Xi, Costa urged China to "use its influence" on Russia to help end Moscow's "war of aggression". Last week, the bloc adopted a new package of sanctions on Russia over the war -- including on two Chinese banks, leading Beijing's commerce minister to issue "solemn representations" to his EU counterpart. "This is a core issue for Europe," the senior EU official said. "We know that Chinese companies supply around 80 percent of the dual-use goods to the war," they said, referring to goods with nominally civilian uses but which can also have military applications. "We're not naive. We're not asking China to cut relations, but to step up the customs and financial controls."

Iranian copter confronts US warship approaching territorial waters

Iranian copter confronts US warship approaching territorial waters

TEHRAN: Iran has said it warned a United States Navy destroyer to change course as it approached Iranian territorial waters in the Gulf of Oman, but the US has claimed the confrontation was "professional" and had "no impact" on its naval mission.

Iranian state media published video and images of incident - the first direct encounter reported between Iranian and US forces since the 12-day war between Iran and Israel in June - taken from a helicopter dispatched to confront the USS Fitzgerald guided missile destroyer. "US destroyer 'Fitzgerald' attempted to approach waters under Iran's monitoring, in a provocative move", Iranian state tele-

vision said.

In video footage of the reported encounter, a helicopter is seen flying in close proximity to the warship and an Iranian crew member can be heard issuing what appeared to be a radio warning in English to the warship, ordering it to change course as it was approaching Iran's territorial waters at about 10am local time (06:00 GMT). Iranian state media have described the encounter as a tense exchange. The US destroyer reportedly responded by threatening to target the Iranian aircraft if it did not leave. The vessel eventually departed the area upon continued warnings from the Iranian military.

US Central Command disputed the Iranian

account of tension, calling the incident a "safe and professional interaction". Asked about the encounter, a US defence official, speaking on condition of anonymity with the Reuters news agency, also downplayed its seriousness. "This interaction had no impact to USS Fitzgerald's mission, and any reports claiming otherwise are falsehoods and attempts by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to spread misinformation," the official said. The official, who said the interaction took place entirely in international waters, identified the aircraft as an Iranian SH-3 "Sea King" helicopter.

The US military inserted itself into Israel's war against Iran last month when it bombed Iranian

nuclear sites. US President Donald Trump hailed the strikes as a "spectacular" success that "obliterated" Iran's nuclear programme. But media reports in the US, citing intelligence assessments, suggest the campaign was only partially successful, with just one of the three Iranian nuclear sites - the Fordow facility - reportedly destroyed. In an interview broadcast, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said Tehran was committed to continuing its nuclear programme for peaceful purposes, and that his country is prepared for any future war that Israel might wage against it. He added that he was not optimistic about the ceasefire between the countries. — Aljazeera

The Frontier Post

Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

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

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

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

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

Navigating challenges in Sino-US trade ties

HEAD-OF-STATE diplomacy has provided crucial guidance for the development of Sino-US relations. It was the telephone talks between President Xi Jinping and his US counterpart on June 5 that enabled the two countries to keep their trade relations on the right track through their talks in London along with other efforts.

China has been faithfully implementing its part of the outcomes from the framework reached during the London talks. This has laid a foundation for their talks in Stockholm from Sunday to Wednesday.

Nonetheless, optimism should be tempered. After making initial progress in their negotiations in Geneva and London, the talks in the Swedish capital are likely to address some tough nuts. Not to mention the US has threatened to impose so-called "secondary sanctions" on economies trading with Russia citing the Ukraine crisis. The US also claims to have reached deals with some economies that reportedly contain China-targeted clauses, in an apparent bid to provide itself with more leverages in future trade talks with China.

These issues might not be avoidable in the Stockholm talks, but they must not be impassable barriers if the two sides are to move forward toward the common goal of straightening out their economic and trade relations.

To create the necessary conditions to ensure the forthcoming talks remain solution-oriented, the two negotiating teams should implement the common understanding the two leaders have reached, which is necessary to guarantee their discussions focus on what really matters in their economic and trade relations.

As President Xi pointed out in his talks with US President Donald Trump last month, for the smooth sailing of China-US relations it is particularly important that the two sides steer clear of disturbances and disruptions.

Since the two countries have made some progress in their previous talks, they should continue to make good use of the economic and trade consultation mechanism already in place, and seek win-win results in the spirit of equality and respect for each other's concerns, as agreed by the two leaders.

China has always focused on doing its own things well in its quest for high-quality development, high-standard opening-up and innovation-driven growth.

That also provides new opportunities for foreign companies and investors, including those from the US. A recent report by the US-China Business Council suggests that 82 percent of US companies in China reported making a profit last year, underscoring the common interests and potential for cooperation that exist between the two countries.

That the country's total goods imports and exports in yuan-denominated terms rose to 21.79 trillion yuan (\$3.05 trillion) in the first half of 2025, up 2.9 percent year-on-year despite the overall world trade being lack-luster clearly shows that China is enhancing its capability to resist the headwinds of protectionism and unilateralism.

So in the process of recalibrating bilateral trade relations, the US side should rationally view China's development, and recognize the cooperative nature of bilateral relations. It should meet China halfway in that direction in the negotiations.

To that end, more efforts should be made to guard against the potential disruptions that may pop up from time to time to prevent them from derailing the mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

China is sincere and principled about its cooperation with the US, and it always honors and delivers what has been promised.

For the overall benefit of Sino-US ties, both sides should make good on the agreements reached in Geneva and London, and carry on the practical momentum by enhancing communication in such fields as foreign affairs, economy and trade, and law enforcement to consolidate the consensus, clear up misunderstandings, and strengthen collaboration.

Important Notice

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



Trump's Epstein nightmare worsens amid new revelations and a GOP revolt

Stephen Collinson

THE Jeffrey Epstein morass surrounding President Donald Trump is deepening amid growing defiance by some Republicans and despite the administration's most inflammatory attempt yet at distraction.

New reports Wednesday that Attorney General Pam Bondi told Trump in May that his name appeared in documents related to the case of Epstein, an accused sex trafficker, offered a plausible explanation for the president's growing fury over the drama.

They will fuel accusations of a cover-up since the administration has refused to release the files.

And although there is no evidence that Trump was involved in any wrongdoing or that he knew of Epstein's criminal activities when they ran in the same social circle decades ago, there is bound to be intense speculation about the nature of mentions about the president in the investigative files.

The storm is also intensifying in Congress.

A vote in the House Oversight Committee to subpoena the Department of Justice for files related to Epstein worsened Trump's political headache, since it revealed the appetite for more disclosure among some MAGA Republicans. The GOP-majority committee also voted to subpoena testimony from Epstein's accomplice Ghislaine Maxwell, who is serving a 20-year prison term.

Trump responded to the ballooning crisis with the oldest trick in his political book, pushing a conspiracy theory against Barack Obama — a decade and a half after his false claims about the 44th president's birthplace electrified his coalition and political career. He enlisted the top US intelligence official, Tulsi Gabbard, who misleadingly claimed in a theatrical White House appearance that Obama's handling of Russian election meddling in 2016 amounted to a coup to destroy Trump's first presidency, a day after her boss accused his predecessor of treason.

There is no evidence that Trump did anything wrong or illegal in his interactions with Epstein. But days of stalling by the White House and new disclosures drove speculation to a fever pitch over their relationship in the 1990s and early 2000s, long before the wealthy financier was charged with sex trafficking and abuse and died in prison in 2019.

The frantic confluence of events Wednesday underscored Trump's failed attempts to put a lid on the Epstein drama, the most serious challenge to his authority over the MAGA base in either of his administrations. In fact, the storm is now gathering its own momentum, and it's increasingly hard to see how the president calms it.

The controversy is overshadowing Trump's recent political successes, including trade deals he announced with Japan and the Philippines and recent legal victories enabling a key goal: the gutting of swaths of the federal government. And it's outraging House Speaker Mike Johnson's attempts to contain it. Among developments on Wednesday with the greatest capacity to damage Trump politically were revelations that Bondi warned him in May that his name appeared in documents related to the Epstein case.

The conversation, which also included Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche, was characterized by two White House officials as a "routine briefing" that covered the scope of the Justice Department's findings. Trump's name appearing in the files, they said,

was not the sole focus of the discussions. Bondi also told Trump that several other high-profile figures were mentioned. She also briefed that investigators did not find evidence of an Epstein client list or that suicide was not his cause of death — two key elements of a MAGA conspiracy.

Simply being mentioned along with hundreds of others in documents does not imply wrongdoing by the president. And White House communications director Steven Cheung said in a statement to CNN that Trump had kicked Epstein out of his Mar-a-Lago club because he regarded Epstein as a "creep."

Still, details of Bondi's briefing, first reported by the Wall Street Journal, offered new context about the political controversy that erupted over the Epstein files, since it took place three months after Bondi raised huge expectations for disclosure by telling Fox in February that she had Epstein's client list sitting on her desk.

It's hardly a surprise that Trump was mentioned in the Epstein files, since his former friendship with the disgraced financier was well known. The men were pictured together on multiple occasions. And Trump's name was included in flight logs of Epstein's plane that were among documents released by Bondi earlier this year in a political stunt meant to reward conservative bloggers.

But Wednesday's revelations are politically difficult for Trump since they will renew speculation that the administration's refusal to release Epstein documents, as his top aides promised on the campaign trail, is motivated by an attempt at a cover-up.

Now that it is established that Trump's name is in the documents, speculation will go into overdrive on the nature of the mentions and whether they add to the public knowledge of Trump's ties to Epstein and whether he knew anything about the offenses with which the financier was later charged. Again, this does not imply Trump himself did something wrong. But since he's the sitting president, the focus on him and his handling of the Epstein matter in government will be intense.

This is especially the case since Bondi and Kash Patel, who now heads the FBI, had vehemently demanded the release of Epstein documents before finding themselves on the other side of the conspiracy theory they had puffed up when they took top jobs. Their agencies issued a joint statement earlier this month saying that there was no evidence of a client list or to support the conspiracy theory that Epstein was murdered.

But the pattern of inconsistencies and denials that typically fuel Washington's scandal machine are piling up. Trump, for instance, appeared to deny this month that Bondi had told him his name was in the Epstein files, which he then claimed were made up by Obama and fired former FBI Director James Comey.

Ironically, the growing clamor is a test case of why grand jury material and other documents are typically sealed. That's partly out of a need to protect the reputations of people — including witnesses, victims and blameless third parties — who are identified during an investigation but are not charged with any offenses.

But the MAGA movement is obsessed with conspiracy theories and has a bedrock belief that Washington is run by a cabal of "deep state" elites who suppress the truth. This tempted Trump, Bondi and other officials to tap into the

political well and to promise the release of previously sealed information on famous cases also including the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

When the administration then refused to make public all the evidence about Epstein, top officials looked like they'd become avatars of the deep state they once decried.

As anger built in the MAGA base, the Justice Department launched an effort to get court permission to unseal grand jury testimony in the case. But a federal judge in Florida on Wednesday ruled against the release of material that represents only a small portion of the thousands of documents in the Epstein case file. The DOJ move is a legal long shot, but it may still serve the purpose of building political cover for the administration as supporters demand more transparency.

Trump's growing nightmare was exacerbated in a rare show of defiance by Republicans in Congress on Wednesday.

A subcommittee of the House Oversight Committee voted 8-2 to subpoena the Department of Justice to release files related to Epstein. Republican Reps. Nancy Mace, Scott Perry and Brian Jack joined with Democrats in a revolt against Johnson's leadership.

House Oversight Committee Chair James Comer, meanwhile, subpoenaed Maxwell, a day after Blanche, Trump's former personal lawyer, announced that he'd meet with her to see if she has more information on Epstein's offenses. Blanche's move raised alarms because Trump, with his pardon power, could commute her sentence or pardon her, suggesting an incentive for Maxwell to offer testimony that might help him. CNN's Kaitlan Collins, citing a people familiar with the plan, reported that the meeting is expected to take place on Thursday at the US attorney's office in Tallahassee.

The actions of the Oversight Committee suggested there is genuine desire for more accountability among some Republicans despite the possibility that it could inflict political damage on the president. This suggests that any hopes harbored by Trump and Johnson that the furor might abate over the summer recess will prove to be ill-founded.

Johnson has accused Democrats of playing political games over Epstein, since the documents they now want released were not made public during the Biden administration. And he denied that his attempt to shut down House votes on the matter before September meant he was losing control of his conference.

"No one in Congress is blocking Epstein documents. No one in Congress is doing that," the speaker said Wednesday. "What we're doing here, Republicans are preventing Democrats from making a mockery of the Rules Committee process because we refuse to engage in their political charade."

But Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer taunted Johnson, accusing him of "skedaddling out of town early." The New York Democrat added, "If the speaker thinks he can make the Epstein escapade disappear by sending folks home early, he's got another thing coming."

The looming political question is whether fury over the Epstein saga among prominent MAGA media figures and influencers is mirrored more broadly in Trump's base. Summer recess town halls involving GOP members

could begin to answer that question. A Quinnipiac poll released on July 16 showed splits on the issue. While 40% of Republicans backed how Trump was handling the issue, 36% disapproved. But a CBS/YouGov poll Sunday showed that only 11% of Republicans said Epstein-related issues matter a lot to how they evaluate Trump's presidency.

Trump has responded to the building Epstein scandal with increasingly heated attempts to distract attention and to provide alternative programing for the conservative media universe.

Gabbard's appearance in the White House briefing room on Wednesday represented the most striking effort yet to weaponize elements of the federal government to advance Trump's personal political aims.

The director of national intelligence declassified a highly sensitive congressional report written by Republicans in the first Trump presidency to bolster her claim that the Obama team plotted to ruin her boss's first administration with its investigations and public statements on Russian election meddling.

"The evidence that we have found and that we have released directly point to President Obama leading the manufacturing of this intelligence assessment," Gabbard said. She focused in particular on the report's conclusion that an intelligence community finding that Russian President Vladimir Putin developed a preference for Trump in 2016 and wanted to help him win was based on poor sourcing.

"They knew it would promote this contrived narrative that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to help President Trump win, selling it to the American people as though it were true," Gabbard said.

While there was a debate among intelligence analysts about Putin's intent, Gabbard's presentation represented an attempt to cherry-pick evidence that is not reflected in other congressional and government assessments of Russian election meddling.

The overwhelming consensus in Washington, including from a report released in 2020 by the Senate Intelligence Committee on which Secretary of State Marco Rubio served, is that Russian interfered in the 2016 election to help Trump win and to hurt Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton.

The documentation that Gabbard produced did not back up Trump's absurd claims of treason by Obama or her own assertion that there was an orchestrated plot to discredit Trump. Democrats accused her of jeopardizing the safety of US intelligence sources and offering valuable information to the Russians while sending a message to assets that it was not safe to report politically sensitive information.

Even if Obama did something wrong, Trump's argument that he should be in prison would be undercut, ironically, by one of his own famous legal victories. Last year, the Supreme Court ruled in a case related to Trump's indictment on charges of election interference related to the 2020 election that ex-presidents enjoy substantial immunity from prosecution.

The choreographed outrage in the White House briefing room, meanwhile, showed that the Russian election-meddling controversy — one of Trump's greatest obsessions — is back and is sowing yet more division and mistrust among voters. Gabbard's decision to revive it was a reminder that Putin's scheme was one of the highest-yielding, lowest-cost intelligence operations in history.

COP30 must make good on past climate pledges

Jacinda Ardern, Carlos Lopes, and Laurence Tubiana

IN 2015, the landmark Paris climate agreement set the ambitious but necessary goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and ensuring that the increase stays "well below" 2 C. With the average global surface temperature having already reached 1.1 C above the 20th-century baseline, time is running out to reach this goal. Yet governments so far have failed to agree on a strategy for doing so.

At the 62nd session of the UN Climate Change Subsidiary Bodies (SB62) in Bonn last month — the negotiations intended to lay the groundwork for November's UN Climate Change Conference in Brazil — countries got so hung up on the details of the agenda that little progress was made. Such delays have long characterized the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, but they are at odds with scientific reality, which demands rapid and unified action.

Building consensus is, thus, a key challenge facing Brazil's COP30 presidency. The task ahead is formidable not only because of the challenges inherent in the UNFCCC process, but also because four interconnected global developments are undermining trust and impeding multilateral cooperation.

First, the global-governance architecture, with the UN at its core, is showing signs of disarray.

Institutions that were designed to nurture and facilitate cooperation are increasingly hamstrung by bureaucratic inertia and outdated organizational structures. With reform efforts grid-

locked, the UN system risks losing its relevance, and multilateralism its credibility. Second, the rise of transactional diplomacy has meant countries prioritize their own short-term interests over collective long-term needs. This approach, based on a narrow conception of national interest, effectively precludes broad-based cooperation, as it erodes the norms that have traditionally underpinned international engagement. Third, compromise is increasingly being rejected in favor of "realism," leading to extreme polarization and entrenched negotiating positions. Multilateral negotiations frequently come down to the wire, and the results are often disappointing, further encouraging transactional engagement at the expense of cooperation and compromise. Finally, climate change is increasingly taking a back seat to other challenges, with armed conflicts, a global trade slowdown, intensifying growth headwinds, and record debt levels

consuming countries' political attention, diplomatic space, and financial resources.

Brazil clearly has its work cut out. Above all, it must resist the tendency for COP presidencies to emphasize fresh agreements and ambitious commitments — the kind that grab headlines and make the negotiations look like a smashing success, but often fall short when the hard work of implementation begins. Brazil's COP30 presidency must eschew flashy results in favor of pragmatic pathways to deliver on past commitments.

Fortunately, Brazil recognizes this. Its fourth letter to the international community outlines an action agenda aimed at making progress on what the world has "already collectively agreed" during previous COPs and in the Paris climate agreement. Specifically, the agenda seeks to leverage existing initiatives to complete the implementation of the first "global stocktake" under the Paris agreement, which was concluded at COP28.

This focus on previously agreed outcomes is well-suited to the current geopolitical context, in which any agreement can be difficult to reach. Representatives at the SB62 in Bonn did not achieve a consensus, and last month's G7 summit failed to deliver a joint communique. Rather than perpetuating stalemates, the action agenda invites stakeholders to make progress where agreement already exists.

The agenda also charts the way forward. It is organized into six thematic "axes," including stewarding forests, oceans, and biodiversity; transforming agriculture and food systems; and building resilience for cities, infrastructure, and water. "Unleashing enablers and accelerators" in finance, technology, and capacity-building — the final, cross-cutting axis — will accelerate implementation at scale.

Brazil clearly has its work cut out. Above all, it must resist the tendency for COP presidencies to emphasize fresh agreements and ambitious commitments — the kind that grab headlines and make the negotiations look like a smashing success, but often fall short when the hard work of implementation begins. Brazil's COP30 presidency must eschew flashy results in favor of pragmatic pathways to deliver on past commitments. Fortunately, Brazil recognizes this. Its fourth letter to the international community outlines an action agenda aimed at making progress on what the world has "already collectively agreed" during previous COPs and in the Paris climate agreement. Specifically, the agenda seeks to leverage existing initiatives to complete the implementation of the first "global stocktake" under the Paris agreement, which was concluded at COP28. This focus on previously agreed outcomes is well-suited to the current geopolitical context, in which any agreement can be difficult to reach. Representatives at the SB62 in Bonn did not achieve a consensus, and last month's G7 summit failed to deliver a joint communique. Rather than perpetuating stalemates, the action agenda invites stakeholders to make progress where agreement already exists. The agenda also charts the way forward. It is organized into six thematic "axes," including stewarding forests, oceans, and biodiversity; transforming agriculture and food systems; and building resilience for cities, infrastructure, and water. "Unleashing enablers and accelerators" in finance, technology, and capacity-building — the final, cross-cutting axis — will accelerate implementation at scale.

Unleashing enablers and accelerators" in finance, technology, and capacity-building — the final, cross-cutting axis — will accelerate implementation at scale.

Since responsibility for the implementation and governance of climate policy is distributed among many actors — which must have some level of trust that others are doing their part — the agenda also establishes "transparency, monitoring, and accountability" as top priorities. To this end, Brazil's COP30 presidency should seek to deliver a set of shared principles and supportive mechanisms.

As COP30 special envoys, we extend our full support to the action agenda. By emphasizing consolidation, rather than spectacle, Brazil is setting the stage for a highly productive COP30 — one focused on bridging divides, building trust, and delivering genuine progress. The task ahead is daunting, but the chance to rebuild momentum is real.

Protecting Sudan’s children from war and starvation

IN the midst of Sudan’s relentless civil war, children have increasingly become the primary victims of a brutal and indiscriminate violence that shows no sign of abating. In a single weekend of attacks this month, at least 24 boys and 11 girls were reportedly killed in communities around the city of Bara — a tragic toll that drew urgent condemnation from UNICEF and reignited global concern over the war’s deepening atrocities.

These children were not caught in the cross-fire by accident — they were targeted in areas of dense civilian population, further proving that the violence has abandoned all pretense of protecting the innocent. This devastating incident stands as a grim symbol of the horrors that have engulfed millions of children across the nation. From killings to starvation, from rape to disease, Sudan’s children are enduring one of the most heartbreaking humanitarian catastrophes of the modern era. The world cannot look away.

The war in Sudan, which erupted in April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, has spiraled into one of the world’s most catastrophic and underreported crises. What began as a power struggle between two rival military factions has degenerated into a total collapse of law, order and human dignity. Now in its third year, the conflict has displaced millions, decimated infrastructure and created a humanitarian vacuum that is being filled with starvation, disease and death.

Nowhere is this more tragically evident than in the suffering of Sudan’s children. According to UNICEF, the number of children in need of humanitarian assistance has doubled since the war began — from 7.8 million to an estimated 15 million. These are not just numbers. They represent children who have been torn from their homes, orphaned by shelling, starved by blockades, denied medicine and robbed of education. These are lives suspended in trauma, childhoods stolen in real time, futures endangered before they ever had a chance to begin.

The violence against children is not limited to bullets and bombs. It is structural, systemic and widespread. Malnutrition rates among children have soared, with thousands already perishing from hunger and disease due to the inability of aid agencies to reach them. International relief workers warn that, without immediate humanitarian access, tens of thousands more children in these

The war in Sudan, which erupted in April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, has spiraled into one of the world’s most catastrophic and underreported crises. What began as a power struggle between two rival military factions has degenerated into a total collapse of law, order and human dignity. Now in its third year, the conflict has displaced millions, decimated infrastructure and created a humanitarian vacuum that is being filled with starvation, disease and death. Nowhere is this more tragically evident than in the suffering of Sudan’s children. According to UNICEF, the number of children in need of humanitarian assistance has doubled since the war began — from 7.8 million to an estimated 15 million. These are not just numbers. They represent children who have been torn from their homes, orphaned by shelling, starved by blockades, denied medicine and robbed of education. These are lives suspended in trauma, childhoods stolen in real time, futures endangered before they ever had a chance to begin. The violence against children is not limited to bullets and bombs. It is structural, systemic and widespread. Malnutrition rates among children have soared, with thousands already perishing from hunger and disease due to the inability of aid agencies to reach them. International relief workers warn that, without immediate humanitarian access, tens of thousands more children in these regions are at imminent risk of dying preventable deaths.

regions are at imminent risk of dying preventable deaths.

Compounding the horror is a health crisis spiraling out of control. Disease outbreaks have flourished in the absence of functioning clinics and vaccination programs. Only 48 percent of Sudanese children now receive basic immunizations — down from over 90 percent before the war. Diseases like measles, cholera, malaria and dengue are spreading rapidly, particularly in makeshift camps and besieged cities where clean water and medicine are nonexistent.

The healthcare system, already fragile before the conflict, has collapsed under the weight of violence, looting and blockades. UNICEF warns that 770,000 children will suffer from severe acute malnutrition this year alone, with more than a million more teetering on the edge. In some areas, the malnutrition levels have reached levels consistent with famine. Children are not simply dying from bullets — they are dying silently from hunger, from diarrhea, from infections that a \$2 vaccine could have prevented.

And while their bodies wither, so do their minds and spirits. The psychological impact of this war on children is immeasurable. Many have wit-

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

nessed their parents killed, their homes burned, their villages razed. Rape and sexual violence are used as weapons of war, with horrifying reports emerging of babies and toddlers being assaulted. These crimes are committed with impunity, often in front of families, often in communities too broken or terrified to

respond. The psychological trauma of such experiences will not end with the war — it will ripple into the next generation, planting seeds of pain, rage and loss that may take decades to heal. There is also an educational catastrophe unfolding in parallel. More than 17 million children in Sudan are now out of school. That means an entire generation — already traumatized by war, hunger and displacement — is also being denied the single most powerful tool for recovery: education. Countless schools have been destroyed, looted or repurposed as shelters and military bases. Teachers have fled. Textbooks are gone. In many conflict zones, attending class is no longer possible — or safe. What does the future look like for a nation in which millions of children are growing up illiterate, uneducated and deeply scarred by war? It looks like perpetual conflict. It looks like generational poverty. It looks like the complete unraveling of a nation’s social fabric.

No child should ever be subjected to such horrors. No child should have to grow up surrounded by corpses, starvation, gunfire and fear. Childhood is supposed to be a time of play, learning, curiosity and growth

— not of trauma, terror and survival. The longer this crisis continues, the more children will be permanently damaged — physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. And the more likely it becomes that these children, once grown, will either replicate the violence they have seen or be unable to rebuild what was lost. The cost of inaction is not just moral. It is generational.

It is global. The violence against children must end now. The international community must mobilize with urgency and resolve. First, pressure must be brought to bear on the warring parties to end their hostilities, particularly in civilian-populated zones. Targeted sanctions, diplomatic isolation and coordinated international pressure must be used to demand ceasefires — especially in areas where children are most at risk. All sides must be held accountable for violations of international law, particularly crimes committed against children. There can be no lasting peace without justice. There can be no stability if perpetrators are allowed to act with impunity.

Simultaneously, humanitarian access must be secured without delay. Aid organizations must be allowed to reach besieged areas, deliver food, administer vaccinations and establish emergency health and nutrition centers. Governments, international donors and philanthropists must step up. UNICEF estimates that it needs more than \$1 billion to meet the humanitarian needs of Sudanese children in 2025 alone. That figure is likely to rise. The global response has thus far been grossly underfunded and logistically

cally strangled. This must change. A coordinated international effort must be launched to fund, staff and protect humanitarian missions in Sudan — starting now.

We must also act to evacuate the most vulnerable children from active war zones. Safe corridors must be negotiated to extract children trapped in cities like Al-Fashir, Nyala and Khartoum. Displaced children must be resettled in secure environments with access to clean water, shelter, healthcare and education. Psychological counseling must be provided to help these children process their trauma.

Remote learning programs and temporary schools should be rapidly expanded. Teachers must be trained, supplied and paid. Local nongovernmental organizations and civil society groups should be empowered with funding and logistical support to reach communities the UN cannot. This must be a full-spectrum response — one that addresses immediate survival needs and long-term recovery.

Finally, the world must not turn its back on Sudan’s children. It is easy to become numb to statistics. It is easy to be distracted by other crises. But we must resist the temptation to forget. The suffering of children in Sudan is a moral stain on our generation. If we claim to stand for human rights, we must act like it. If we value peace, we must work for it. If we believe in a future for all people, we must protect those who will inherit it. The children of Sudan are not just victims — they are the future of a nation that, if given a chance, could still rise from the ashes of war.

In conclusion, the children of Sudan are enduring unspeakable horrors. They are being killed, starved, raped, traumatized and forgotten. This must not be allowed to continue. The war must end. The aid must flow. The world must act. Sudan’s children must be protected — not tomorrow, not in a diplomatic meeting in a year’s time, but now. Before another child dies. Before another girl is raped. Before another future is erased. The world must remember Sudan’s children — and fight for them as if they were our own. Because in truth, they are.

Lost cause? Let the people of Lebanon have their say

THERE is a strange situation in Lebanon. For decades, politicians and their staff have been permanently present on the media scene — commenting, contesting, making their clan’s voice heard, and, in short, occupying space. This was true whether in opposition or government. Today, there is a period of quasi-silence. This silence indicates a loss of direction and an inability to read what is coming next regionally.

There is another serious and pressing element that is changing the equation: the erosion of security and the impact of the difficult situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. While the new leadership in Syria faces a lot of challenges and risks, the one that presents the biggest danger for Lebanon is not the military clashes between communities, but the lack of order and security, a threat that can easily spread. Syria’s security forces are unprepared to fight crime due to corruption, fragmented control, and, as stated, much bigger issues than public safety. This situation creates great instability for Lebanon, as organized crime does not stay within borders.

As the new president, Joseph Aoun, came to power, most Lebanese — some politicians included — hoped he would deliver on his promises to restore sovereignty to the country. Many imagined that a negotiated outcome with Hezbollah was possible and that soon Lebanon would be back to its short-lived “Switzerland of the Middle East” model. Close to seven months later, the optimists — not to call them naive — agree with the cynics of the first hour that this is just quixotic.

There was never going to be, and never will be, a negotiated outcome with Hezbollah. We nevertheless need to put things back into perspective. Aoun came to power after Israel defeated Hezbollah using strikes that brought the Iranian proxy to a level of vulnerability never witnessed before. This extreme weakness, and the shell-shocked status of Hezbollah with the change of regime in Syria, made people believe that this was the perfect time.

It is a lost opportunity, just like what happened in the 2000s, not taking the bold step needed and losing the window to make a real change? No one knows. Perhaps, despite

Khaled About Zahr

years of US support and financing, the Lebanese armed forces still do not represent the stick that can challenge Hezbollah. Or perhaps the answer is simply closer than people think. There is no doubt that even if negotiated, projecting strength would be a necessity. This does not exist today.

There is also within Lebanon an echo of what we see in Western capitals. We cannot ignore the protest posters in New York showing an image of Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei with a slogan telling people to be on the right side of history. Yet, there are, even in Lebanon, people who are puzzled about what comes next. This is why it is time to leave the decision to the people in Lebanon.

There was never going to be, and never will be, a negotiated outcome with Hezbollah. We nevertheless need to put things back into perspective. Aoun came to power after Israel defeated Hezbollah using strikes that brought the Iranian proxy to a level of vulnerability never witnessed before. This extreme weakness, and the shell-shocked status of Hezbollah with the change of regime in Syria, made people believe that this was the perfect time. It is a lost opportunity, just like what happened in the 2000s, not taking the bold step needed and losing the window to make a real change? No one knows.

Perhaps, despite years of US support and financing, the Lebanese armed forces still do not represent the stick that can challenge Hezbollah. Or perhaps the answer is simply closer than people think. There is no doubt that even if negotiated, projecting strength would be a necessity. This does not exist today. There is also within Lebanon an echo of what we see in Western capitals. We cannot ignore the protest posters in New York showing an image of Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei with a slogan telling people to be on the right side of history.

The electoral system for years has been carved out by politicians to accommodate their deals. They have been, in a sense, accomplices of Hezbollah. It is time to ask the people what they want. It is time to put forward two questions to the people of Lebanon. The first is: Do you back the sovereignty of the country? And the second question: Do you prefer a centralized political system or a federation?

There also should be a two-level count — one for the entire nation and one for each community. It is now important to see what each community needs and wants for the future. There is no doubt that, for example, today the Sunni community — to which I belong — expects the change of regime in Syria from a pro-Iran to a Sunni one that is representative of the majority of the Syrian population to work to their advantage in the long term. In my opinion, Lebanon’s specificity will clash with the uniformity of the Syrian model. This

was true yesterday and will still be true tomorrow.

Yet, it is this entrenched thinking that needs to be destroyed. This historical clan setup has partially been responsible for the ills of the country.

Whether Hezbollah or the groups before it, it is the same cycle. I would like to see this setup and political system obliterated. I believe that federalism will bring stability to Lebanon. Yet, perhaps I am a tiny minority within the country or my community. This is why reverting to the people is important.

It is also important to have a view of what each community needs and wants. This should be stated by the people and not the clan leaders who have perpetuated the cycles generation after

generation. If we believe in the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon, we cannot be influenced by how the geopolitical shifts affect our community in the balance of power. It is contradictory. We need a system that gives each citizen within each community the capacity to lead a stable life.

What would be the outcome of such referendums? How to manage fragmented results where a community or a group of communities vote differently? What happens if people vote against the state? Does this mean that all communities can arm themselves again? What if they vote for sovereignty — who will execute the will of the people? There are many unanswered questions. Yet the main objective should be to initiate a dialogue, or perhaps accept that, for now, Lebanon is still a lost cause. Either way, the people will know. And those who wish to be Don Quixote can still carry on.

I was training to heal eyes in Gaza. Then everything went dark

Lina Ghassan Abu Zayed

BEFORE this catastrophe began, I was living the happiest days of my life, surrounded by the warmth of my family, the affection of my friends, and dreams that felt within reach. I spent most of 2023 preparing for my graduation and getting ready to move from lecture halls to practical training fields, rotating between the laboratories of the Islamic University in Gaza and the eye hospitals spread across the Gaza Strip.

On the evening of October 6, I was organizing my books, tools and white coat, getting ready for a long training day at Al-Nasr Eye Hospital in Gaza. My feelings were a mix of excitement and nervousness, but I had no idea that night would mark the end of my peaceful life.

At 6am the next morning, October 7, it wasn’t the sound of my alarm that woke me, but the sound of rockets. I opened my eyes, wondering, “Is this a dream or a nightmare?” But the truth was impossible to deny. A war had begun, turning our once-bright lives into a never-ending nightmare.

On October 8, I received the devastating news that my university had been destroyed — its laboratories, its class-

rooms and every place where I had learned how to help patients. Even the graduation hall, where I had pictured myself celebrating at the end of the year, had turned to rubble. I felt a sharp pain in my chest, as if a part of my soul had collapsed. Everything fell apart so suddenly. Overnight, all that I had dreamed of was reduced to ashes.

On December 27, 2023, the bombing in our neighbourhood intensified, and we were forced to leave our home and flee to the so-called humanitarian zones in Rafah. There, we took shelter in one of the hundreds of tents that had become the only refuge for survivors.

There was one thing I still held on to: my knowledge and modest experience in the field of eye care. I began to notice children and women suffering from persistent eye infections, caused by inhaling smoke and dust and constant exposure to dirt. Even I developed an infection in my own eyes. I looked at them, then at myself, and I knew I couldn’t just stand by and watch. I wanted to be a reason someone healed, a reason the light returned to their eyes.

In December 2024, I volunteered at Al-Razi Health Center, working

in the eye clinic under the supervision of a remarkably compassionate doctor. At first, I was afraid and hesitant. The war had taken a toll on my memory and shaken my confidence. But the

A four-year-old girl lost her vision completely due to severe corneal burns caused by an explosion near her home. She screamed in pain. She was far too young to endure such suffering. Despite the lack of resources, she underwent surgery to remove her damaged eye and replace it with an artificial one. A man in his late 30s was struck by shrapnel in the face and suffered skull fractures. He had a torn upper eyelid and a deep corneal injury. He needed delicate surgery, but it was postponed multiple times because it required repeated general anaesthesia, which was impossible under the current conditions. A young woman in her 20s had taken a direct hit that caused an orbital fracture and muscle tears around the eye, leading to hypotropia and facial asymmetry. She broke down emotionally at every visit. As a young woman like her, I felt her wound as if it were my own. There was also an elderly man suffering from eye cancer. The disease was eating away at his eye, and there was a strong possibility it would spread to the other eye. But we couldn’t help him. Resources were unavailable, and he couldn’t travel for treatment due to the closure of the borders. At every visit, I did my best to lift his spirits, hoping that maybe, just maybe, I could ease his pain, even if only a little. Most children were suffering from chronic conjunctivitis and the appearance of chalazion (fatty cysts on the eyelid), due to dust, touching their eyes with their hands, and a lack of hygiene in the camps. The elderly, most of whom suffered from cataracts, a condition that leads to gradual loss of vision, needed lens removal surgery and intraocular lens implantation, but all such operations were postponed due to the disruption of communication with northern Gaza, the only place in the Strip where the necessary equipment was available.

doctor told me words I will never forget: “You are hardworking. You’ll remember everything. And you will become a tool for healing others.”

Patients started arriving from everywhere: north, central and southern Gaza. The clinic wasn’t equipped for such numbers, but we did everything we could. I witnessed cases I had never seen before:

A four-year-old girl lost her vision complete-

ly due to severe corneal burns caused by an explosion near her home. She screamed in pain. She was far too young to endure such suffering.

ly due to severe corneal burns caused by an explosion near her home. She screamed in pain. She was far too young to endure such suffering.

A young woman in her 20s had taken a direct hit that caused an orbital fracture and muscle tears around the eye, leading to hypotropia and facial asymmetry. She broke down emotionally at every visit. As a young woman like her, I felt her wound as if it were my own. There was also an elderly man suffering from eye cancer. The disease was eating away at his eye, and there was a strong possibility it would spread to the other eye. But we couldn’t help him. Resources were unavailable, and he couldn’t travel for treatment due to the closure of the borders. At every visit, I did my best to lift his spirits, hoping that maybe, just maybe, I could ease his pain, even if only a little. Most children were suffering from chronic conjunctivitis and the appearance of chalazion (fatty cysts on the eyelid), due to dust, touching their eyes with their hands, and a lack of hygiene in the camps. The elderly, most of whom suffered from cataracts, a condition that leads to gradual loss of vision, needed lens removal surgery and intraocular lens implantation, but all such operations were postponed due to the disruption of communication with northern Gaza, the only place in the Strip where the necessary equipment was available.

Despite the lack of resources, she underwent surgery to remove her damaged eye and replace it with an artificial one. A man in his late 30s was struck by shrapnel in the face and suffered skull fractures. He had a torn upper eyelid and a deep corneal injury. He needed delicate surgery, but it was postponed multiple times because it required repeated general anaesthesia, which was impossible under the cur-

rent conditions.

A young woman in her 20s had taken a direct hit that caused an orbital fracture and muscle tears around the eye, leading

to hypotropia and facial asymmetry. She broke down emotionally at every visit. As a young woman like her, I felt her wound as if it were my own. There was also an elderly man suffering from eye cancer. The disease was eating away at his eye, and there was a strong possibility it would spread to the other eye. But we couldn’t help him. Resources were

unavailable, and he couldn’t travel for treatment due to the closure of the borders. At every visit, I did my best to lift his spirits, hoping that maybe, just maybe, I could ease his pain, even

if only a little. Most children were suffering from chronic conjunctivitis and the appearance of chalazion (fatty cysts on the eyelid), due to dust, touching their eyes with their hands, and a lack of hygiene in the camps. The elderly, most of whom suffered from cataracts, a condition that leads to gradual loss of vision, needed lens removal surgery and intraocular lens implantation, but all such operations were postponed due to the disruption of communication with northern Gaza, the only place in the Strip where the necessary equipment was available.

During those months, the operating rooms turned into real teaching labs for me after the occupation destroyed the university’s lab. I accompanied the doctor to every surgery, performing them by the light of hope and the sounds of bombing. One time, a rocket hit a house next to the centre while we were inside the operating room. Despite the panic, we held ourselves together. We didn’t break down. Instead, we completed the operation successfully.

In the few moments of spare time, there wasn’t only room to talk about medicine. We spoke about the pain, about our lost homes, about our missing relatives, about postponed dreams. The war spoke from every corner of the clinic.

We faced severe difficulties due to the shortage of medicines. We had to prescribe alternatives whose side effects we didn’t fully know, but what else could we do? There was no other choice. The crossings were closed, and the medicines were unavailable.

One day, during a surgery, I felt dizzy and had severe chest pain. I couldn’t bear it, and fainted from extreme exhaustion, malnutrition and psychological pressure. I was just a person trying to hold on. But I didn’t give up. I returned the same day to continue my work at the clinic.

In January 2025, with the announcement of a temporary ceasefire, the university resumed sessions at the European Hospital. I went only four times. The road was long, and the place was desolate, filled with the remnants of war. Just one kilometre (two-thirds of a mile) from the clinic’s window, tanks were stationed. I wondered: Should I flee or stay? The ceasefire was no guarantee. Indeed, days didn’t pass before the war returned and the sessions were cancelled, after the occupation took control of the area.

We returned to square one.

I am still here, moving between health centres, healing, listening and trying to bring light back into people’s lives, literally. My purpose is not forgotten. My spirit is not broken. I was made to help. And I will continue, even through smoke and rubble, with steady hands and an unshakable heart, until the light returns for all of us.



PSX continues with bearish trend, loses 561 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark KSE-100 turned continued with bearish trend on Thursday, losing 561.69 points, a negative change of 0.40 per cent, closing at 138,692.67 points against 139,254.36 points last trading day.

A total of 648,800,865 shares were traded during the day as compared to 656,642,916 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 28,117 billion against Rs 32,096 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 484 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 182 of them recorded gains and 273 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 29 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Bank of Punjab with 113,028,558 shares at Rs 13.55 per

share. Media Times Limited with 37,109,870 shares at Rs3.42 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 28,180,735 shares at Rs 1.52 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 3,055.49 per share price, closing at Rs 33,610.43, whereas the runner-up was PIA Holding Company LimitedB with Rs 2,872.42 rise in its per share price to Rs 33,577.59.

SS Oil Mills Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs101.72 per share closing at Rs 953.00 followed by Blessed Textile Limited with Rs30.28 decline in its share price to close at Rs314.72.

Rupee gains 54 paisa against US Dollar

The Rupee on Thursday appreciated by 54 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 284.21 against the previous day's closing

Rs 284.75.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 286.50 and Rs 287.55, respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 06 paisa to close at Rs334.34 against the last day's closing of Rs 334.40, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.94, whereas a decline of Rs 0.25 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 385.45 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 385.70.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 14 paisa to close at Rs 77.38 and Rs 75.76, respectively.

Gold prices dip by Rs5,900 at Rs359,000

The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs.5,900 and was traded at Rs.359,000 on Thursday as against its sale at Rs. 364,900 the previous day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs.5,058 to Rs.307,784 from Rs. 312,842 whereas that of 10 grams of 22 karat gold went down by Rs.4,637 to Rs.282,145 from Rs. 286,782.

However, the rates of per tola and ten gram silver decreased by Rs24 and Rs.20 to Rs.4,057 and Rs.3,478 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$61 to \$3,363 from \$3,424, whereas that of silver decreased by \$0.26 to \$39.08 from \$39.34, the Association reported.



ISLAMABAD: President FPCCI & ECO-CCI Atif Ikram Sheikh presenting a shield to Federal Minister for Investment Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh during Interactive Session on "Economic Integration between Pakistan-ASEAN Regions" at FPCCI Capital House office.

Air Arabia Abu Dhabi takes off to Sialkot F.P. Report

ABU DHABI, UAE: Air Arabia Abu Dhabi, the capital's first low-cost carrier, commenced its service to Sialkot in Pakistan directly from Zayed International Airport. Operating with a frequency of three non-stop flights per week, the new route further strengthens the airline's growing network in Pakistan, complementing existing services to Multan and Faisalabad.

Adel Al Ali, Air Arabia Group Chief Executive Officer, said: "The launch of direct flights to Sialkot underscores our continued commitment to expanding Air Arabia Abu Dhabi's network through strategic connections from the UAE capital. This new route enhances our presence in Pakistan and offers customers greater convenience, reliable connectivity, and exceptional value."

Customers can now book their flights between Abu Dhabi and Sialkot by visiting Air Arabia's website, calling the contact center, or through preferred travel agencies.

Air Arabia Abu Dhabi operates a modern fleet of 12 Airbus A320 aircraft, recognized globally as the world's best-selling single-aisle aircraft. Designed to deliver a comfortable and value-driven experience, each aircraft is equipped with SkyTime, Air Arabia's complimentary in-flight streaming service, and SkyCafe, which offers a wide selection of snacks and meals at affordable prices. Passengers can also enjoy the benefits of Air Rewards, the airline's generous loyalty program that allows members to earn, transfer, and redeem points with ease.

Tesla reports 16% profit drop to \$1.2b

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): Tesla reported another drop in quarterly profits Wednesday on lower auto sales amid intensifying electric vehicle competition and lingering backlash over CEO Elon Musk's involvement in US politics.

Tesla reported second-quarter profits of \$1.2 billion, down 16 percent from the year-ago level. The company in a press release emphasized ongoing efforts to lead in artificial intelligence and robotics.

Revenues fell 12 percent to \$22.5 billion.

Lower profits had been expected after Tesla earlier this month disclosed a decline in auto deliveries. Results were also impacted by a fall in average vehicle selling prices and higher operating expenses driven by AI and other research and development projects.

Tesla did not offer an outlook on full-year vehicle production, citing shifting global trade and fiscal policies.

"While we are making prudent investments that will set up both our vehicle and energy businesses for growth, the actual results will depend on a variety of factors, including the broader macroeconomic environment, the rate of acceleration of our autonomous efforts and production ramp at our factories," Tesla said.

'Sugar profiteers' days numbered as noose tightens around mafia'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Thursday said the government would ensure a smooth supply chain of sugar across the country, showing no leniency towards those involved in black marketing and profiteering of the commodity.

"Sugar profiteers will be dealt with an iron hand and brought to justice by taking stern action and ensuring exemplary punishments through the due course of law," he said while speaking to APP.

The minister said necessary directives had already been issued to all provincial chief secretaries and deputy commissioners to ensure the availability of sugar at

controlled prices.

Under the guidelines, he said, district administrations were required to enforce the ex-mill rate of sugar at Rs161 per kilogram and the retail rate at Rs173 per kilogram.

Tanveer assured that a sufficient supply of sugar was being maintained, adding that no leniency would be shown to those exploiting the poor for profit, regardless of political affiliation. He warned that anyone acting against the public interest would face consequences in accordance with the law.

The minister vowed that the government would protect the rights of the public at all costs and would not allow any mafia to operate or cause financial harm to

any segment of society through hoarding and profiteering.

He lamented that hoarding and profiteering had become a major challenge in society but expressed confidence in the current leadership, describing it as capable of addressing all such challenges.

Tanveer said all available resources and expertise were being utilized to place the national economy on a sustainable growth trajectory.

He said the day was not far when Pakistan would emerge as one of the fastest-developing economies in the world, as all necessary measures were being taken to achieve the set goals of national progress and prosperity.

PAJCCI hails PTA signing by Pakistan-Afghanistan — calls for FTA agreement to boost trade

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI) has welcomed signing of Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between Pakistan and Afghanistan aimed at increasing bilateral trade through reduction in tariffs on different items.

"PTA signing is a very welcoming development in regard with enhancing trade between the two brotherly neighbouring countries, but for increasing commerce and trade at regional level, both the countries should have to take a further step of signing Free Trade Agreement (FTA)," observed Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, Senior Vice President PAJCCI.

In a press statement issued here on Thursday, Zia Sarhadi who is also Executive Member Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) said agreements for enhancing bilateral and region trade is the need of the hour for overcoming economic crisis faced by the country.

It merits a mention here that Pakistan and Afghanistan on Wednesday have signed the much-awaited Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA).

According to this agreement, Pakistan will reduce tariffs on four items including grapes, pomegranates, apples, and tomatoes.

While Afghanistan will reduce tariffs on four items including mangoes, oranges, bananas, and potatoes. Previously, the tariffs on these items were over 60%, but will now be reduced to 27%.

US, China and UK top 3 destinations of Pakistani exports

ISLAMABAD (APP): The United States (US) remained the top export destination of Pakistani products during the fiscal year 2024-25, followed by China and the United Kingdom (UK).

Total exports to the US during July-June 2024-25 were recorded at US \$6028.193 million against the exports of US \$5444.197 million during July-June 2023-24, showing an increase of 10.72 percent, according to SBP.

This was followed by China, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth US \$2476.790 million against the exports of US \$2709.901 million last year, showing a decrease of 8.60 percent. UK was the third top export destination, where Pakistan exported products worth US \$2160.262 million during the year under review against exports of US \$2015.120 million, SBP data revealed.

Among other countries, Pakistani exports to UAE stood at US \$2121.961 million against US \$2082.009 million last year while the exports to Germany were recorded at US \$1987.554 million against US

\$1515.555 million last year, data said. During July-June 2024-25, the exports to Holland were recorded at \$1492.284 million against \$1385.348 million whereas the exports to Italy stood at \$1132.231 million against \$1122.001 million. Pakistan's exports to Spain were recorded at \$1482.822 million against the exports of US \$1449.857 million while the exports to Afghanistan were recorded at \$773.892 million against \$558.032 million last year. The exports to Bangladesh stood at US \$787.348 million against US \$661.192 million.

Similarly, the exports to France during the year under review were recorded at US \$563.763 million against US \$508.690 million while the exports to Belgium stood at US \$543.426 million against US \$556.950 million.

Pakistan's exports to Saudi Arabia were recorded at US \$704.317 million compared to US \$710.293 million last year whereas the exports to Türkiye stood at US \$264.742 million against US \$336.878 million.

This one-year agreement will come into effect on August 1, 2025. It can be extended in the future and additional items may also be included.

SVP PAJCCI expressed the hope that PTA signing will increase import and export in both the countries, benefiting thousands of people on both sides of the border.

He appreciated the decision and said such prudent approach should help in overcoming economic problems being faced by people in both the countries.

Zia Sarhadi expressed the hope that both Pakistan and Afghanistan will soon agree on signing of FTA for tapping the trade potential between the two countries and for boosting of trade at regional level.

Nestlé reports revenue of Rs.101.3b

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Nestlé Pakistan reported revenue of PKR 101.3 billion for the first half of 2025, reflecting a decline of 5.9% compared to the same period last year.

This decline was primarily driven by continued pressure on demand following the introduction of sales tax on the majority of the company's portfolio under the Finance Act 2024-25. Despite the drop in revenue, a favorable product mix, along with energy cost optimization and operational efficiencies contributed to improved gross profit and operating profit margins. Additionally, optimization in finance costs, supported a 3.5% increase in absolute net profit.

Lost MA Urdu Degree

I have lost my MA Urdu degree, Roll No. 27785, Session 2022. If anyone finds, please return it.

Ghazala Ishtiaq Daughter of Ishtiaq Ahmad Mohalla Yousafabad, post office Umarzai District and Tehsil Charsadda Charsadda NIC# 17101-1967446-6

OICCI Security Survey 2025 highlights notable progress

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) has released the results of its Annual Security Survey 2025, reflecting feedback from leading foreign investors operating across Pakistan. Covering the period from June 2024 to May 2025, the survey reveals a measurable improvement in the overall security environment, particularly in key business hubs of Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad.

According to the survey, over 70 percent of respondents reported a notable decline in serious crimes in Karachi, Lahore, and across Punjab, with street crimes also reducing significantly in Karachi, Lahore, and

Islamabad. Additionally, employee perceptions of personal safety during daily commutes improved for two-thirds of the respondents, especially in the aforementioned cities.

However, the findings also highlight that security challenges persist in certain sensitive regions. While street crimes moderately declined in Quetta and Peshawar, these cities continue to be perceived as the least secure for personal safety. Most notably, Balochistan witnessed a deterioration in serious crimes compared to the previous year, impacting the positive trend seen in other provinces. This divergence reinforces concerns that while perception has improved in major cities, the fragile security situation

in regions like Balochistan continues to impact Pakistan's global image and undermines long-term investor confidence.

Importantly, despite visible progress in key urban centers, security remains one of the top three concerns for Chief Executives, signaling that continued and inclusive improvement is essential for sustaining business confidence.

Commenting on the findings, Secretary General OICCI M Abdul Aleem stated: "The OICCI Security Survey 2025 reflects a cautiously optimistic outlook, with clear gains in major cities like Karachi and Lahore, a positive signal for investor confidence. However, sustaining and expanding these improvements across all regions is

essential to maintain momentum and reassure both local and foreign stakeholders about Pakistan's overall security trajectory."

While the number of overseas business visits to Pakistan remained similar to 2024, the decline in meetings held abroad indicates growing confidence in Pakistan's internal security environment. The few instances of postponed travel were primarily due to geopolitical tensions, particularly India-Pakistan escalations, rather than domestic security concerns.

OICCI reiterates its commitment to partnering with government and law enforcement institutions to promote a more secure and enabling business climate throughout Pakistan.

UBL expands strategic partnership with Teradata

F.P. Report

KARACHI: United Bank Limited (UBL), one of Pakistan's leading financial institutions, has announced the expansion of its strategic partnership with Teradata. The collaboration includes an upgrade of UBL's data environment, leveraging Teradata's enterprise analytics and data platform for Trusted AI at scale, with the flexibility to deploy cloud infrastructure where applicable. This collaboration marks a pivotal step in UBL's digital transformation journey, as the bank transitions to a cutting-edge, open, and connected Data Lakehouse platform.

The partnership will enable UBL to scale its data infrastructure into a high-performing, intelligent, single source of truth-capable of supporting real-time insights, smarter decision-making, and enhanced customer experiences. This initiative is a key component



of UBL's broader data and AI roadmap, designed to create greater operational agility and long-term service excellence.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, UBL's Chief Information Officer, Mr. Sohail Aziz, emphasized that this partnership is a major milestone in the bank's digital evolution, unlocking powerful analytics and AI capabilities to

drive innovation and enhance customer experiences. He highlighted that the upgraded platform will enable faster, data-driven decision-making and more personalized banking services. Teradata's Area Vice President for Pakistan, Mr. Waqas Hashmi, reinforced the long-standing collaboration, stating that Teradata's AI-powered data platform will allow UBL to

harness the full potential of its data, accelerate strategic initiatives, and strengthen its leadership in Pakistan's competitive banking sector.

With this strategic step, UBL remains at the forefront of building a modern AI ecosystem-where data is not just stored, but actively leveraged to enable smarter services, actionable insights, responsive operations, and future-ready capabilities.

Germans reluctant to open wallets despite easing inflation

BERLIN (AFP/APP): The cost-of-living crisis may be easing in Germany but that has not sparked a shopping frenzy just yet in a country where, as a recent survey suggests, people fear inflation more than war.

Inflation in Europe's biggest economy has fluctuated between 1.6 and 2.6 percent over the past year, far below the 70-year high reached in 2022 after Russia's full-scale invasion

of Ukraine triggered an energy crisis.

The European Central Bank looks set to hold interest rates steady Thursday for the first time in almost a year after a lengthy easing cycle, with officials increasingly confident that prices have stabilised.

But with the domestic economy still stuck in the doldrums and the threat of US tariffs looming, Germans are hesitant to

start spending again. Here are some questions and answers on the topic.

While inflation rates have been steadily easing for months, prices remain around 20 percent over 2020 levels, and consumers complain about elevated costs of everything from electricity to groceries and leisure activities.

Chemistry student Tim Scheider has had to forgo attending his favourite music festival outside Berlin after the price of a three-day pass increased to 220 euros (\$260), more than double the cost in 2019. "It has become incredibly expensive over the last two or three years... It's madness," the 27-year-old told AFP.

"Life has become a bit more difficult with the rising prices," said Alkim, a Turkish aeronautics student in the western city of Osnabrueck, who has had to cut back on his diving hobby and only buys the cheapest pasta.

Persistent inflation has also fuelled calls for some unusual measures.

During a heatwave earlier this month, Greens party MPs in Berlin urged an "ice cream price cap" limiting the cost of a scoop to 50 cents so children from poorer families could still enjoy the treat.

According to a regular survey published by pollsters GfK and Nuremberg Institute for Market Decisions (NIM) in May, saving rates are on the increase.

Consumer sentiment "remains extremely low," according to the survey, blaming US President Donald Trump's unpredictable trade policy and worries about the weak domestic economy, which has been in recession for the past two years.

There is also little sign of shoppers starting to hit the streets in greater numbers -- German retail sales fell in May, April and March, according to official statistics.



Duckett, Crawley turn up the heat on India after Stokes five-for

L O N D O N (ESPNcricinfo): England backed up their captain Ben Stokes taking a five-for with an unbroken opening partnership of 77. Those runs came at over five an over, taking a big bite out of India's 358 all out on the second day in Manchester.

It was a disappointing bowling performance from the visitors, particularly in helpful conditions and to follow a display of great bravery from Rishabh Pant who came out to bat on a fractured foot and scored a half-century.

England weren't particularly keen to score so quickly. Zak Crawley needed 13 balls to get off the mark and those runs came

with a reminder of the danger the pitch still posed as a Jasprit Bumrah delivery rose up sharply to rap him on the bottom hand. Crawley displayed excellent judgment outside his off stump and ironically only started to look vulnerable once he had runs against his name, the confidence of seeing off the new ball coaxing him to play away from his body and could have been bowled off the inside edge.

Ben Duckett didn't need to be so careful, at any point in his innings. India fed him on his pads and he tucked in with glee. All his seven boundaries came on the leg side and he stands on the cusp of completing a

half-century at almost a run a ball. Duckett welcomed Anshul Kamboj with three fours in his first over of Test cricket, the debutant chosen to open the bowling ahead of Mohammed Siraj.

India must pick themselves back up again because they showed great heart in getting to an above-par total.

Pant put his body on the line - literally because Stokes targeted that broken front foot of his - and had enough in him to hit a 90th six in Test cricket, putting him level with Virender Sehwag for the national record. He also went past Alec Stewart for most runs by a wicketkeeper in a Test series in England. The mere

fact that he was able to walk - let alone bat - moved the fans at Old Trafford who gave him a rousing ovation.

Stokes found similar approval from the crowd when his tireless and relentless display was rewarded with a first five-for in eight years. He was a threat when he bowled full because he was getting both ways movement - Shardul Thakur found that out when he was caught at gully for 41 - and he was a threat when he went short - which did Washington Sundar in. Stokes has 16 wickets in the series now, a career-best for him going past the 15 he took in the 2013-14 Ashes when he made his debut.



SPA, BELGIUM: Gabriele Mini of Italy and PREMA Racing (10) takes part in pit stop practice during previews ahead of Round 9 Spa-Francorchamps of the Formula 2 Championship at Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps on Thursday in Spa, Belgium.

Naqvi vows to make ACC potent regional cricketing body

LAHORE (APP): President Asian Cricket Council (ACC) Mohsin Naqvi has expressed the resolve to utilise all-out resources to turn Asian Cricket Council (ACC) into the most potent cricket body with the cooperation of the member nations.

Underlining his plans for the expansion of the sport at a reception given to the members on the occasion of Annual General Meeting of the ACC in Dhaka, he said there was need to intro-

duce the beautiful game of cricket in the countries of the region where it was not played.

He also expressed his resolve to strengthen associate member teams through enhanced support. "I am fully confident that together, we can achieve this. We must strengthen one another," the ACC president added.

The ACC president urged the member nations to put aside political differences and work for the welfare of cricket, adding that all member nations must

work as team for the collective good of cricket in the region as well as the globe. "As President ACC, I assure you that we will do whatever is necessary to make the ACC the most powerful regional cricketing body," adding that the goal cannot be achieved alone.

Congratulating Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on the first-ever ACC General Meeting in Bangladesh, he thanked BCB Chairman Aminul Islam for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality. He also felici-

tated BCB Chairman on Bangladesh Men's T20I series-win against Pakistan.

On the occasion, President ACC Naqvi also expressed his deep sorrow and condolences over the tragic air crash in Bangladesh that claimed 31 lives. "Our heartfelt sympathies go out to the families of the victims as well as to the government and people of Bangladesh. Our thoughts and prayers are with the affected families," Mohsin Naqvi added.

England have created their own luck at Euro 2025, says Walsh

ZURICH (Reuters): England midfielder Keira Walsh disagrees with fan chatter that her team have been lucky at the European championships, arguing that the reigning champions have created their own fortune, largely through sheer stubborn belief.

Late goals by 19-year-old Michelle Agyemang saved England at the brink in both their quarter-final against Sweden and semi against Italy to set up Sunday's Euro 2025 decider against world champions Spain.

"Maybe it looks like chaos but for us it doesn't feel like that," Walsh said at England's training base on Thursday.

"I've heard that people have been saying that it was luck. But you create those moments yourself, through belief, determina-

tion, confidence.

"I think it's not by luck that Michelle's in the box and scoring. It is not luck that people are putting crosses into the box. It's thought out, it's purposeful.

"And I think it's the absolute belief that no matter what minute of the game it is, we're going to win or we're going to get a result that we need to take us to extra time. I think that's kind of the resilience of this team as well."

The referee was starting to glance at her watch when Agyemang struck in the 96th minute against Italy on Tuesday to send the game to extra time where Chloe Kelly smashed home the rebound of her own penalty shot.

"Maybe the way we've done it is a little bit more stressful for everyone,"

Walsh said from England's training base on Thursday. "But that's kind of the beauty of this team, that we are relentless, and we've got belief in ourselves, that even in the 90th minute we can get a goal and we can win."

Sunday marks England's third consecutive major tournament final and a chance for revenge against the team that beat them in the 2023 World Cup final.

That will not be a focus when they take the pitch in Basel though, Walsh said.

"Obviously that was a massive disappointment, but I think as a football player you can be too emotional," said the Chelsea midfielder. "Just focus on the positives and not draw on that too much. You think about it a little bit but put it to the side and focus on Sunday."

The team watched Spain's 1-0 win over Germany in extra time together in their hotel players' lounge on Wednesday night, and like anyone who saw the game marvelled at twice-reigning Ballon d'Or winner Aitana Bonmati's brilliant goal from a tight angle.

"(It was) Bonmati magic," Walsh said. "Most players in that position wouldn't even think about shooting, they would automatically cross, it was a fantastic goal."

The team have received pleading messages not to let Sunday's final go to extra time, while midfielder Georgia Stanway's dad has said his nerves are shot.

Walsh laughed and said never mind the families. "Sitting there for us is equally not nice."

Pakistan downs Belgium in U19 Volleyball World C'ship

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan team has written a golden chapter in the nation's sports history by securing a commanding 3-0 victory against Belgium in their opening match at the FIVB Boys' U19 Volleyball World Championship 2025, at Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

This is the first time in history that Pakistan is competing in the U19 World Championship, and their spectacular performance in the debut match has already made headlines across the international volleyball community.

Pakistan defeated Belgium by 3-0 (25-19, 25-17, 25-22). From the start, Pakistan displayed excel-

lent coordination, tactical awareness, and composure under pressure. Each set saw solid blocking, sharp serving, and confident attacking from the young Pakistani squad.

Top performers from Pakistan team included Muhammad Saud (13 Points), Top Scorer of the Match; Muhammad Yahya (11 Points) and Jabran (8 Points).

The team's exceptional execution of the game plan, especially in converting defensive blocks into counter-attacks, made the difference against a technically sound European side like Belgium. Pakistan will now face Uzbekistan on

Friday.

In a statement issued here Chairman Pakistan Volleyball Federation (PVF) Ch. Muhammad Yaqoob said, "This is a moment of immense pride for Pakistan. Our U19 team has proven that they belong among the best in the world by beating Belgium in straight sets at the biggest stage. This win is historic not just because it's our first appearance at the U19 World Championship, but because of the maturity and brilliance shown by our players. Coming off the U16 team's gold medal victory and qualification for the U17 World

Championship, this result shows that Pakistan Volleyball is moving in the right direction. I congratulate the team, coaching staff, the entire federation, and the nation on this remarkable achievement."

The event features 24 top volleyball nations from around the world, including powerhouse like Brazil, Italy, Japan, Iran, USA, France, and Poland. Pakistan has been placed in Pool A alongside Belgium, Uzbekistan, Turkey, and Puerto Rico.

The U19 Championship is considered a major steppingstone for identifying and developing future global stars of the game.

WBO order Usyk to face mandatory challenger Parker



LONDON (BBC): Undisputed heavyweight champion Oleksandr Usyk has been ordered by the WBO to begin negotiations with mandatory challenger Joseph Parker.

The Ukrainian, 38, unified the division for a second time on 19 July with a fifth-round stoppage of

Daniel Dubois at Wembley Stadium.

New Zealand's Parker beat Zhilei Zhang to win the WBO interim belt in March 2024.

Both parties have 30 days to find an agreement or the WBO will order purse bid proceedings.

Parker held the WBO

title between 2016 and 2018, beating Andy Ruiz Jr to claim the vacant belt, but lost it to Anthony Joshua after two defences.

Following defeat by Briton Joe Joyce in 2022, the 33-year-old has won six fights in a row to re-emerge among the title contenders.

Parker was set to face Dubois for the IBF strap in February, but the Briton withdrew on two days' notice due to illness. The New Zealander remained on the card in Riyadh and defended his interim title status with a stoppage victory against Martin Bakole instead.

Parker was an ever-present and vocal figure during the build-up to Usyk's latest success and he watched from ringside as the two-weight undisputed champion put on another masterclass in London.

Usyk said he wanted to rest for "two or three months" after earning his second win against Dubois, but named Parker, Tyson Fury, Anthony Joshua and Derek Chisora as potential opponents.

He has yet to lose in 24 contests as a professional, with 15 victories by knockout.

‘Crunch time’ as Hamilton plots Ferrari title bid

LONDON (BBC): Lewis Hamilton says he is "challenging every area" of Ferrari as he seeks to help turn the team into champions again.

The 40-year-old Briton has had a difficult start to his debut year with Ferrari, with no podium finishes other than a sprint-race win in China at the second race of the season.

Hamilton, whose teammate Charles Leclerc has scored four podium finishes, said: "It is a huge organisation with a lot of moving parts and not all of them are firing on all cylinders they need to be."

"I feel like it's my job to challenge every area. To challenge everyone in the team, particularly those at

the top."

Ferrari have not won a title of any kind since a constructors' championship in 2008, while their last drivers' title was with Kimi Raikkonen in 2007.

Hamilton pointed out the iconic Italian team could not blame the quality of drivers for their lack of success. At various times since 2008, Ferrari have had Fernando Alonso, Sebastian Vettel and Raikkonen in their ranks.

"The team have had amazing drivers - Kimi, Fernando, Sebastian - and yet they didn't win a title with Ferrari," said seven-time world champion Hamilton.

"I refuse for that to be the case with me, that's why I am going the extra mile. If you

take the same path, you get the same results."

Hamilton said he had written a series of documents for Ferrari's leadership this year outlining areas for improvement.

He has met with chairman John Elkann, chief executive officer Benedetto Vigna and team principal Frederic Vasseur since the British Grand Prix to go over both his issues with this year's car and thoughts about future development.

"There have been great responses," he added. "There are lots of improvements that need to be made, but [they're] very responsive and I'm trying to create allies within the organisation."

"I'm here to win. It's

crunch time for me and I truly believe in the potential of this team, I believe they can win multiple championships moving forward. That's my sole goal."

Ferrari are introducing a new rear suspension for this weekend's Belgian Grand Prix, with the hope it will improve performance by allowing them to run the car lower without hitting the track too much.

"We'll get to test the suspension tomorrow and I am sure there will be learning from it," said Hamilton.

"We will figure out how to extract performance from it. On the simulator there was no difference, but I am sure there will be differences across different circuits."





In brief

ANF seizes 92 kg drugs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to recover over 92 kgs drugs worth more than Rs 18.5 million and arrested seven drug traffickers including two females. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesperson, in an operation near a university on Jhang Road, Faisalabad, 8.8 kgs ice drug was recovered from the possession of an accused. The arrested accused confessed selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. In second operation at a courier office in Karachi, 17.750 kgs ice soaked in carpet was recovered from a parcel sent from Quetta destined for Australia. From a courier office on Peshawar Ring Road, 7.2 kgs hashish was seized from a parcel destined for Lahore. In 4th operation near GT Road, Attock, 2.4 kgs hashish was confiscated from the possession of two women. In an operation in the Bonistan area of Panjgur, 36 kgs hashish hidden for smuggling was recovered. Near Colonel Sher Khan Toll Plaza, Peshawar, 16.8 kgs hashish was recovered from a vehicle and two suspects were sent behind the bars. In 7th operation near Iqbal Shaheed Toll Plaza, GT Road, Attock, 5.5 kgs hashish was recovered from a rickshaw and two drug traffickers were apprehended. Cases have been registered under the CNS Act against the arrested accused, informed the spokesperson.

Anti-dengue spray conducted

ISLAMABAD (APP): In their effort to combat the spread of dengue in the federal capital, the Directorate of Health Services Capital Development Authority (CDA) conducted an anti-dengue spray at National Press Club (NPC) on Thursday. In a statement issued here, Director General (DG) of Health Services CDA, Dr. Irshad Ali Jokhio, highlighted their commitment to protect the residents of the federal capital from dengue by conducting anti-mosquito spray. "Protecting the public from dengue is our top priority; in this regard, vigorous steps are underway to eliminate dengue from the federal capital," DG said, adding, "swift actions are being taken wherever complaints are reported." He further said that upon receiving the complaint from NPC, a rapid response team has been dispatched to carry out spraying at its premises, ensuring the safety of journalists, staff and visitors.

513,000 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (APP): IRSA on Thursday released 513,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 557,300 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1530.00 feet which was 128.00 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 351,800 cusecs and 351,400 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1194.90 feet, which was 144.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 51,300 cusecs and 7,400 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 404,800, 353,600, 316,800 and 203,100 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 46,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 84,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

UNODC, NACTA, and HRDN to promote peace

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to promote peace and tolerance among Pakistan's youth, the European Union, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) and Human Resource Development Network (HRDN) have joined forces to launch the Youth Engagement and Resilience Initiative (YERI).

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi attended the event as the chief guest. He highlighted the crucial role of youth in shaping Pakistan's future, said a press release here on Thursday.

The Governor stressed that instead of polarizing young people, it's essential to harmonize them to support each other, fostering a

culture of peace, tolerance, and unity.

"By doing so, the youth can become a powerful force for positive change, working together to build a brighter future for the country," he added.

He said, "Cultural exchange and youth determination to promote peace is critical for increasing tolerance in society and Pakistan's future is in the hands of these young people."

Robeela Bangash, CEO of HRDN said "YERI represents a long-term investment in peace building through inclusion, empowerment, and innovation-led by the youth, for the youth."

The event showcased the project's achievements, success stories, and transformative impact on young

communities in vulnerable regions, featuring a Sufi dance performance, live testimonies from trained youth leaders, and a presentation by the YERI Project Manager.

By empowering young people and providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge, YERI is helping to build a more resilient and peaceful society.

It is worth mentioning that YERI has empowered over 130 Youth Champions across four high-priority districts - Swat, Bahawalpur, Mirpur Khas, and Turbat.

The project focuses on building youth-led resilience through inclusive, sustained engagement, and has reignited dialogue, trust, and resilience within communities.

Around 120,913 foreign jobs available with BEOE

ISLAMABAD (APP): So far, around 120,913 foreign jobs were available out of 264,497 (143,584 consumed) with the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BEOE), an attached department of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOP&HRD).

An official source told APP, around 336,999 Pakistanis proceeded abroad for employment during the last six months this year, from January 1 to June 30, as per data of concerned departments.

The number of foreign job seekers are also increasing day by day due to the productive policies of the country as new ways of jobs opening for skilled and unskilled Pakistani workers.

He said that since the inception of the Bureau in the year 1971, more than 10 million emigrants have been provided overseas employment, duly registered with the Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment.

To a question, he said that during the year 2015,

the highest number of Pakistanis(946,571) proceeded abroad for the purpose of employment.

Overseas employment is thus serving as the mainstay for the national economy, by providing much-needed financial outlay for debt servicing, import bills, alleviation of poverty, development projects and economic activities.

Bureau, being a regulatory body, controls, regulates, facilitates and monitors the emigration process followed by the Overseas Employment Promoters (OEPs), in the private sector, besides 'direct employment', the mode adopted by the individuals, to seek foreign employment either through their own efforts or relatives and friends living abroad.

The foremost task of Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment encompass collection, compilation and tabulation of emigration data of all those Pakistanis who proceed abroad for employment purposes.

In fact, the Bureau has been engaged in maintaining a comprehensive statis-

tical record of all the migrant workers since 1971, which provides basis for planning and policy formulation by the Economic Division and other interested government departments.

He said that the main function of this body was to control and regulate emigration under the Emigration Ordinance, 1979 and promote Emigration of Pakistani Citizens.

It was the function of the bureau to look after the interest and welfare of the emigrants and advise the Federal Government on emigration policies and procedures. Monitoring and supervision of Overseas Employment Promoters through 7 Protectorates of Emigrants Offices, Processing of Overseas Employment Promoters (OEP) Licences Pre-departure briefing to Emigrants.

Mandatory Insurance coverage for Pakistani workers abroad and Memorandum of Understanding with Foreign Countries for Export of Manpower and Management of State Life Emigrants Insurance Fund (SLEIF).

Next monsoon spell to start July 28: Met Office

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Deputy Director of the Meteorological Department Anjum Nazir Zaigham, Thursday, anticipated the present spell to persist through the 25th, with a fresh wave of monsoon rains arriving on July 28 expected to influence upper regions of the country, where the public has been urged to stay vigilant and prepared.

In an exclusive conversation with a local news channel, the Deputy Director explained that this development could lead to heavy rainfall and potential flooding in upper regions, urging residents to remain cautious.

Deputy Director said the upcoming monsoon spell is likely to bring heavy rainfall to a wide range of areas, including Kasur, Sialkot, Narowal, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Attock and extending from central Punjab to Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir.

According to him, Karachi and several areas across Sindh will see light showers and overcast conditions, with temperatures expected to remain between 30 and 35 degrees Celsius.

He said that the meteorological department had already issued timely advisories regarding recent weather patterns, their potential impacts, and the risk of flooding in vulnerable areas.

The Met Office had alerted all relevant departments in advance, enabling them to take precautionary measures and respond effectively to any emergency situations arising from the current monsoon activity.

He added that in light of the upcoming monsoon spell expected to begin on July 28, fresh warnings have once again been issued to all concerned departments.

Authorities have been directed to remain on high

alert, particularly in areas prone to urban and flash flooding, to ensure public safety and minimize damage, he said.

Citizens have also been advised to stay updated through official channels and follow safety guidelines during the expected spell, he added.

When asked, he confirmed that the monsoon season is expected to continue through September as per usual, with humidity levels remaining elevated in August.

To another question, he advised that precautions and flood alerts should remain in place throughout the monsoon season to ensure the safety of residents in vulnerable areas.

Authorities and citizens alike are urged to stay vigilant, monitor weather updates regularly, and take necessary measures to minimize the risk of flooding and related hazards during this period.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division Aurangzeb Khan Khichi presenting a shield to Indonesian Minister Counselor Rahmat Hindiarta.

Gillani pledges support for merged districts' uplift

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani reassured a large tribal delegation that the Senate will champion the rights of the formerly Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), now merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and prioritize addressing their needs. The 90-member Jirga, led by KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, met with Gilani at Parliament House to discuss ongoing issues including unequal resource allocation, delayed development initiatives, and limited access to employment and education.

Gilani vowed that the sacrifices of the people from the erstwhile FATA would be recognized through continuous progress, job creation, improved healthcare and education, and lasting peace. He commended Governor Kundi for advocating for the tribal population and promised to raise the matter in the Senate to develop a national strategy for the region's economic, political, and administrative integration.

The Chairman Senate recalled Pakistan's history of humanitarian aid, referencing the nation's support for Afghan refugees and the efficient resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) during his time as Prime Minister. He also highlighted the connection between poverty, illiteracy, and insecurity, emphasizing the importance of justice and economic advancement for peace. He urged for efficient utilization of the merged districts' natural resources and called on provinces to fulfill their developmental responsibilities.

Governor Kundi reiterated the demand for the merged districts' 3% constitutional share from the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, expressing concern over unmet financial commitments and lack of transparency. He explained that despite the merger increasing KP's size and population, poverty has worsened due to insufficient funding.

Tribal elders expressed anxieties about unkept NFC pledges, unresolved issues of IDPs, and the lack of public input in the merger process. They called for reinstating the traditional Jirga system and expressed confidence in Gilani's leadership. Gilani concluded by affirming the Senate's commitment to protecting the rights of the merged districts and advocating for their complete integration into the national mainstream.

PBM, OPF set a pathway for strategic collaboration in social protection field

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a landmark move to advance social equity and humanitarian outreach, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) and the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to jointly launch initiatives targeting the country's economically vulnerable and underserved communities.

In a glorious ceremony, Managing Director PBM Senator Capt. Shaheen Khalid Butt and Managing Director OPF Muhammad Afzaal Bhatti validated the MoU with their signatures. The ceremony was held here at PBM's Head Office, attended by Director General PBM Prof. Dr. Zeeshan Danish, Member OPF Muhammad Kamran Khan and other key representatives from both organizations. The agreement outlines a shared vision to implement sustainable projects focused on health-care, education, food secu-

urity, and livelihood development for the underprivileged.

Speaking at the occasion, Managing Director PBM Senator Capt. Shaheen Khalid Butt, while expressing his long-standing relationship with OPF, stated that "This partnership marks a new chapter in our ongoing mission to bring hope and tangible support to those who need it most. Together, we will create a more inclusive and compassionate society." Capt. Shaheen also reaffirmed his commitment to implement the vision of the federal government for mitigating the sufferings of poor populace in the country.

On the occasion, Managing Director OPF, Afzaal Bhatti remarked that by combining our resources, networks, and passion for service, we are confident this collaboration will make a meaningful impact in the lives of many beneficiaries of PBM.

Terming it a memorable agreement, he anticipated the accelerated efforts by the concerned officials of both organizations making it fruitful for the needy persons. Managing Director OPF also explained his passion for taking every possible step for the welfare of the Pakistani People, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The MoU is designed to promote the collaborative efforts of both organizations on identifying vulnerable communities, mobilizing resources, and implementing grassroots programs. The initiative emphasizes transparency, accountability, and long-term impact. It also aims to enable PBM beneficiaries, especially orphans, child laborers and other vulnerable groups to access quality education in OPF Schools as well as support in e-learning, capacity building and research.

Excise deptt cracks down:

158 vehicles fines over Rs9.5 million: Director

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Excise and Taxation Department of Islamabad has stepped up its drive against tinted windows, unauthorized number plates, and unregistered vehicles, aiming to enforce road safety and vehicle compliance across the Federal Capital.

Talking to APP, Director Excise, Bilal Azam said that as many as five checkpoints were set up across Islamabad where teams conducted inspections throughout the day.

He said that the operations were carried out in key areas including Zero Point, Faizabad, F-7, F-6, and G-14. A total of 158 vehicles were fined for violations. These included the

use of tinted windows and non-standard number plates.

Bilal Azam said heavy fines were imposed, and Rs 904,000 was collected in token tax recovery during the operations.

Vehicles with decorative or colored glass and fancy plates had their registrations suspended on the spot.

These registrations will only be restored once the vehicle owners remove the tinted windows or unauthorized plates and pay the applicable fines.

He warned that the vehicles found using colored glass or plates that do not comply with the prescribed format of the Excise Department will not be

allowed to operate on the roads until they meet all legal requirements.

Bilal Azam, Director Excise Islamabad, appealed to residents of the capital to deposit their token taxes on time and remove any non-compliant number plates.

He urged citizens to use only department-approved number plates to avoid penalties and legal action.

The director also stated that the enforcement operation is being carried out on a daily basis and will continue without interruption.

The ongoing drive reflects the department's efforts to ensure that all vehicles in Islamabad meet legal standards for registration, identification, and roadworthiness.

NDMA saves 1,777 lives in flood rescue operations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) carried out 148 rescue operations across flood-prone regions from June 26 to July 24, 2025, successfully saving at least 1,777 lives nationwide, according to official data.

According to official figures, 1,543 stranded individuals were rescued in 128

operations conducted across flood-hit areas of Punjab.

Meanwhile, 10 rescue missions were conducted across KP, leading to the safe evacuation of 116 individuals. In Sindh, three rescue operations led to the safe evacuation of 53 individuals trapped in floodwaters.

Similarly, two missions were carried out in

Balochistan, where five lives were saved.

Gilgit-Baltistan saw 01 relief and rescue operation, resulting in the rescue of 25 persons from hazardous conditions.

Four targeted rescue operations in Islamabad Capital Territory led to the safe evacuation of 35 individuals, saving lives during high-risk missions.

FIA launches major reforms, sets up command room

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a series of bold institutional reforms, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has taken significant steps to enhance operational efficiency, improve public service delivery, and intensify its crackdown on human trafficking networks. The agency, under the leadership of Director General Rafat Mukhtar Raja, has not only initiated a complete organizational restructuring but also unveiled a modern Command & Control Room within its Anti-Corruption Wing — a landmark move aimed at strengthening real-time coordination and response

mechanisms.

The newly established Command & Control Room is designed to handle all calls and public complaints directly, allowing the agency to respond promptly and effectively to reports of crimes and irregularities. Officials confirmed that FIA's helpline 1991 has now been officially integrated with the system, enabling a centralized and immediate response framework.

"The primary goal of these reforms is to offer citizens fast, transparent, and accountable services," an FIA spokesperson said. "The Command & Control Room will significantly

enhance the agency's performance and coordination capabilities."

As part of its intensified campaign against human trafficking, FIA's Anti-Human Trafficking Circle in Taftan executed a major operation this week, resulting in the arrest of 33 foreign nationals attempting to cross the border illegally. According to officials, all detained individuals are Bangladeshi citizens who entered Pakistan on visit visas during June and July.

The suspects were apprehended near the Mashkhal border in Chagai district, a known hotspot for illegal crossings. The

operation was conducted in collaboration with the Frontier Corps (FC), underscoring the importance of inter-agency cooperation in curbing transnational crimes.

FIA officials stated that when the detainees were asked to present legal travel documentation, they failed to produce satisfactory responses. Initial investigations suggest that the group was part of a coordinated effort to illegally migrate out of Pakistan. All suspects are currently in custody, and formal investigations have been launched.

In a parallel development, the Special Judge

Central Gujranwala delivered a significant verdict in a high-profile human trafficking case. The accused, Muhammad Kashif, was sentenced to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 1.4 million.

The court awarded 10 years of imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 400,000 under the Immigration Ordinance, and an additional 10 years and Rs. 1 million fine under the Smuggling of Migrants Act. The convicted individual had reportedly taken Rs. 4 million from a citizen in exchange for illegally facilitating his travel to Spain. Tragically,

the victim remains missing to date.

FIA's Assistant Director Legal Asifahan Akram Kang represented the prosecution, while the investigation was led by Sub-Inspector Shiraz Ahmed. "This verdict sends a strong message to traffickers and reflects FIA's unwavering commitment to eradicating human smuggling," the spokesperson said.

The FIA reiterated its zero-tolerance policy toward human trafficking, smuggling, and related transnational crimes. Agency officials emphasized that the recent reforms — including the

establishment of the Command & Control Room, improved coordination channels, and enhanced legal action — are designed to modernize the institution and ensure swift justice.

The reforms come at a time when Pakistan is under increasing international pressure to combat human trafficking and improve border control mechanisms. Analysts believe that such institutional measures could also aid in restoring public confidence in law enforcement agencies and improve Pakistan's standing in global anti-trafficking rankings.

1 killed, 5 hurt in accident
KHOST CITY (Pajhwok): One individual has been killed and five others injured as a result of traffic accident in Khost, an official said on Thursday. Police spokesman Tahir Ahrar told Pajhwok Afghan News the accident took place after a car veered off the road and overturned in Nadir Shah Kot district of Khost-Gardez highway on Wednesday. He said one individual lost his live and five others wounded the injured evacuated to hospital for treatment.

688 more Afghans freed
KABUL (Pajhwok): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation said 688 more Afghan refugees have returned to their homeland after being released from prisons in Pakistan. These individuals returned to the country, the ministry announced in a brief post on its X handle on Thursday. Citing Spin Boldak-based officials in Kandahar, the ministry wrote the returnees spent one to seven days in jails and had been arrested in various parts of Pakistan.

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

‘WB not interested in unfinished projects’

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MoRRD) says hundreds of development projects have been implemented across various provinces during the past one year.

Speaking during an ongoing series of briefings on the annual achievements of government institutions on Thursday, ministry officials stated that despite repeated requests, the World Bank showed no interest in completing its unfinished projects in Afghanistan.

Mullah Mohammad Yunus Akhund, Acting Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, told reporters at the Government Media and Information Center that they had held four meetings with World Bank representatives to discuss the incomplete projects and the unpaid salaries of former project employees.

He noted that two of the meetings were held in person and two virtually. During these meetings, they informed the World Bank that thousands of its projects remain unfinished across Afghanistan.

According to Akhund, World Bank representatives made it clear they were not interested in completing these projects and said the

Islamic Emirate should use its own budget to finish them.

He added: “They [the World Bank] clearly told me regarding the employees who worked with them before the takeover, and the projects for which we are financially liable—whether it’s 10,000 or 20,000—we will pay their dues and salaries. Our representative is currently in talks with the Ministry of Finance to develop a payment mechanism. However, for the unfinished projects, we are not willing to proceed. If the Islamic Emirate wants to complete them using its own budget, they may do so; otherwise, we are not prepared to continue those projects.”

He further said: “Many years have passed since these projects began. If we are to complete them now, we would need to start from scratch.”

In addition, ministry officials reported that hundreds of projects were implemented over the past year, with several others currently underway.

Maulvi Mirza Mohammad Shakeeb, Chief of Staff of the Ministry, said that more than 842 clean drinking water supply projects were completed last year, and 559 more are currently being implemented.

He also stated that 737 irrigation projects—including the construction of canals, cleaning of underground water channels

(kariz), building of retaining walls, and check dams—are in progress.

Shakeeb highlighted that the first phase of the major Wakhan Corridor project, which includes the rehabilitation of 49 kilometers of road, has been completed. Only a few associated buildings are still under construction and are expected to be finished soon.

He added that the second phase of the Wakhan Corridor project is advancing rapidly.

According to Shakeeb, thousands of Afghan citizens have been provided with employment opportunities during the implementation of these projects.

5 new health centers inaugurated

LOGAR (BNA): Afghanistan’s Minister of Public Health, Mawlawi Noor Jalal Jalali, along with an accompanying delegation, visited Logar province and officially inaugurated five new healthcare centers, built at a cost of \$500,000.

At the inauguration ceremony, Minister Jalali expressed satisfaction over the completion of these facilities

and stated that the new centers would provide essential maternal and child healthcare services to residents of remote areas in the province.

Logar Governor Mawlawi Mohammad Anwar Dinparwar hailed the development as a major achievement for local healthcare and called for the implementation of similar infrastructure projects in the region.

Logar’s Director of Public Health, Hafiz Saeedurrahman Qadri, said the centers were constructed with financial support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in Pul-e-Alam (the provincial capital) and the districts of Charkh, Kharwar, Baraki Barak, and Khoshi.

He added that these health centers are expected

to provide maternal and child health services to around 15,000 families.

UNFPA Afghanistan’s country representative, Koua Ban Tanhassandy, emphasized the organization’s continued commitment to supporting healthcare services in partnership with the Islamic Emirate, especially in underserved and remote communities.

Minister visits returnee camp

HERAT (BNA): Mullah Abdul Latif Mansoor, Minister of Water and Energy of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, visited a returnee settlement in the Islam Qala border area of Herat province, where Afghan nationals returning from Iran are temporarily housed.

According to a statement issued by the Ministry, Minister Mansoor welcomed the returnees and affirmed that the Islamic system is now firmly in place in the country. He stressed that officials of the Islamic Emirate are working tirelessly to create employment opportunities so that Afghans will no longer need to seek work abroad.

During the visit, the minister also met with

members of the committee established to address issues faced by returnees.

He stated that the concerns of Afghans arriving from Iran would be shared with

relevant central authorities in Kabul for appropriate action.

Climate change, drought: Serious threat to agri sector, raising farmers’ concerns

KABUL (Pajhwok): Acute drought in parts of Afghanistan has psychologically impacted farmers who face serious economic hardships; with some even forced to leave their areas. They are urging the government and the international community for help.

Experts say the government and the international community must provide necessary assistance to affected farmers, distribute drought-resistant crop seeds, and lift sanctions on Afghanistan so that the Afghan government can access financial resources to address the crisis.

The government has also called for assistance in this regard. The head of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Afghanistan considers both short-term and long-term support for affected farmers as essential, saying that the organization is currently focused on providing short-term aid.

Climate change, its impact on Afghanistan

The global climate is changing rapidly, leading to droughts in some regions and severe storms, heavy rainfall, and flooding in others.

Afghanistan, despite contributing only about 0.19% of global greenhouse gas emissions, ranks

fourth among countries most affected by climate change, according to reports.

This situation has severely impacted the country’s agricultural sector, which remains the primary source of livelihood for nearly 80% of Afghans.

Irregular rainfall and floods caused by climate change have also led to crop failures and reduced yields.

Severe drought, farmers’ concerns

Sakhidat, a resident of Kasi village in Firozkoh, the capital of Ghor province, told Pajhwok Afghan News that while he managed to gain some harvest last year, this year, due to drought, he couldn’t even break-even.

He said, “This year I cultivated 490 kilograms of wheat, but not even seven grains have sprouted. I cultivated 210 kilograms of barley, but they didn’t sprout either. I also planted potatoes, but the drought burned them in the ground — only weeds remain.”

Due to these problems, he is experiencing mental stress, saying: “I’m constantly thinking and worrying about what to do and how to provide for my children... I’m overwhelmed with concern. I rely on God first and the government

second for support.”

He called on the government to provide drought-resistant crop seeds to farmers and, if agricultural assistance is not possible, the government should help them find alternative livelihoods.

Sher Mohammad, a resident of Garmisir district in Helmand, said this year he harvested very less that he couldn’t even cover his costs.

“In the past, I used to cultivate up to 10 acres of land, but now I’ve lost hope because the crops no longer yield. We don’t have the infrastructure to store rainwater,” he said.

In Helmand, people mainly grow cotton, wheat, watermelon, beans, and potatoes and have various fruit orchards.

Sher Mohammad added: “Now there are districts and areas in Helmand where people don’t cultivate anything because there’s no water. The more they dig wells, the lower the water drops.”

He said: “The decrease in crop yield has deeply affected us. Life has become very hard. We can’t use our land. We’re confused how to get food. Many people are distressed. We’re looking for other work. This has caused psychological issues for us.

We’re on medication and are now forced to leave our land and find new jobs.”

Abdul Hai, a resident of Delji area in Musa Qala district of Helmand, has been displaced to Lashkargah city for more than two years due to drought.

He said about his displacement: “Since arriving here, I haven’t enjoyed a single day like I did back home. We had four acres of land there. Everything depends on water. Now water levels have dropped to 150 meters, and some people can’t even access drinking water.”

He added: “I was the first to suffer psychological issues. The mental stress comes from not being able to support one’s family. Here in Lashkargah, there comes days when I can’t even earn five afghanis.”

Rohul Amin, a resident of the 26th canal area of Shinwari district in Nangarhar, also complained about drought in his area, saying he can’t even recover the cost of farming.

“Yields have dropped by 40%, and expenses have increased. After covering the costs, we’re left with nothing. Drought has seriously hurt us. Climate change is deeply worrying us,” he said.

According to him, agriculture is their only source

Ghor records above 300 measles cases in 3 months

FEROZKOH (Pajhwok): Health officials in western Ghor say more than 300 children were infected with measles during the first three months of this solar year and two of them died from the disease.

Mohammad Nasir Parsa, chief physician at Ghor Provincial Hospital, spoke about the rise in measles cases in the province, saying: “In the first three months of this year, around 318 children were admitted to our hospital, and unfortunately, two of them died. During the same period last year, 218 measles cases had been recorded in our hospital, but we had no fatalities.”

According to him, throughout last year, 770 positive measles cases were registered at the hospital, with four children losing their lives.

He also stated that their medical teams worked around the clock to care for all patients, especially children infected with measles.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Musa Ulfat, a pediatric intensive care doctor at the provincial hospital, said that measles was a highly contagious and dangerous disease that could spread to healthy children.

He further explained: “If measles is not treated on time, it can cause serious damage to the lungs and brain, lead to malnutrition, and even result in death. Therefore, families should make every effort to take their children to health centers on time.”

On the other hand, Maulvi Abdul Wahid Hamas, the director of public health in Ghor, told Pajhwok: “Based on the data we have received, most of the measles outbreak occurred in ‘white zones,’ but timely action was taken. Our teams were dispatched to the affected areas, vaccines were delivered, and control measures were implemented. As you know, no measles vaccination campaign had been conducted over the past two to three years.”

He added: “God willing, in the near future you will see a measles vaccination campaign conducted across all of Ghor, and there is no need for concern.”

According to him, the most effective way to prevent measles is through timely and regular vaccination of children. He recommended that if early symptoms such as fever, coughing, and skin rashes are observed, families should immediately take their children to health centers to prevent the disease from progressing and causing serious complications.

Parents of children infected with measles expressed satisfaction with healthcare services provided at Ghor Provincial Hospital.

Uzbekistan to strengthening ties with Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLOnews): The spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan stated that the country places particular importance on expanding comprehensive relations with Afghanistan based on principles of good-neighborliness and mutual benefit.

In a statement posted on his X account, Akhror Burkhanov wrote that Uzbekistan actively supports the deepening of economic, political, and humanitarian cooperation with Afghanistan.

He added that in 2024, trade volume between Kabul and Tashkent exceeded one billion dollars. According to Burkhanov, Uzbekistan has supplied essential resources such as electricity

to Afghanistan and signed investment and trade agreements worth \$2.5 billion between the two countries.

The Foreign Ministry spokesperson also noted that major initiatives such as the Trans-Afghan railway demonstrate Uzbekistan’s commitment to transforming Afghanistan into a regional trade and transit hub and to enhancing connectivity between Central and South Asia.

He further stated that diplomatically, Tashkent engages constructively with the authorities of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and supports inclusive governance and Afghanistan’s integration into international frameworks.

The statement also emphasized that Uzbekistan remains committed to promoting peace, stability, and prosperity in Afghanistan and continues to play a significant role in regional security and development.

Since the rise of the Islamic Emirate in the 1990s, relations between Uzbekistan and the Islamic Emirate have gone through various phases. Like other countries around the world, Afghanistan-Uzbekistan relations have also been influenced by political developments, experiencing both positive and negative phases over time. Currently, Kabul and Tashkent enjoy stronger economic relations than ever before, alongside their political ties.

Aid package rolled out for returnees from Iran

HERAT (BNA): Officials from the High Commission for Refugee Affairs say that around 2 billion Afghans have been distributed and spent in the past month to address the situation of refugees in the country.

Mawlawi Ahmadullah Wasiq, a member of the High Commission for Refugees, said in a press conference at the Islam Qala border that 2,000 Afghans are distributed daily to each individual from refugee families, totaling up to 30 million Afghans per day allocated to this group.

He added that, in addition to this, all services for refugees, including food, transportation, healthcare, and registration, are provided free of charge, and this process is ongoing.

Wasiq also stated that the Islamic Emirate is distributing aid directly, but he called on charitable organizations, businessmen, and philanthropists to cooperate in rebuilding homes for the refugees.

Meanwhile, officials at the Islam Qala border commission said that nearly one million refugees have entered the country through this border so far, and the return of refugees from Iran continues.

UN driver arrested after fatal accident in Ghor province

FEROZKOH (Pajhwok): A driver of a UN vehicle has been arrested over a traffic accident that resulted in the death of two children in western Ghor province, an official said on Thursday, but the UN mission in Afghanistan has not yet commented in this regard.

In a statement, Information and Culture Director Maulvi Abdul Hai

Za’em said the accident took place in Poshta Gaw Morak area near Ferozkoh city on the Kabul-Ghor route on Monday.

“A United Nations (UN) vehicle driven by a UN security force soldier stationed in Bamyán province collided with two children, killing both of them,” he added.

According to him, the victims were two sisters named Masouda, 8, and Setayesh, 4, residents of the Posht Gaw Morak area.

Za’em explained the driver has been arrested and an investigation has been launched into how the incident occurred.

However, the UN or its representation in Afghanistan has not yet responded to this incident.

“Currently, FAO is focusing on short-term support to help mitigate the impacts of sudden climate shocks — like droughts and floods — and to empower farmers so they are not weakened in the future and can better withstand climate threats,” he said.

He added that countries can fight climate change by implementing effective national strategies and policies.

Global support key to combat the effects of climate change

Maulvi Ghulam Mohammad Kazim Shahamat, spokesman for the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock, said drought posed a serious threat to Afghanistan’s farmers and herders, many of whom have been affected.

He said, without providing further details, that the ministry has implemented some projects in coordination with international partners to mitigate the effects of drought. These include building check-dams, distributing aid, providing food for people and animals, and distributing drought-resistant seeds.

He added that the ministry was still working to implement similar projects but emphasized the need for international assistance to fight the effects of climate change.

stan cannot tackle this issue alone and needs international assistance.

Sulaimankhel called for lifting sanctions on Afghanistan so the government can access funding and implement projects.

FAO: Our focus is no short-term aid to farmers

Richard Trenchard, head of the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Afghanistan, in an exclusive interview told Pajhwok that the agency has always responded to climate-related disasters with emergency assistance.

“When people and farming systems are affected by floods, droughts, or other climate events, we try to help them — especially in keeping their livestock alive and healthy. If crops are destroyed, we provide them with quality, improved seeds to restart farming,” he said.

Without providing specifics, he said FAO has built water check-dams in some areas, worked to combat locust infestations, and is currently engaged in various projects to assist those affected by climate change, including distributing seeds, animal feed, vaccines, and more.

He stressed the need for both short- and long-term support for farmers affected by climate change.

He added that Afghani-

and international community for help.

“Farmers need psychological support as well”

Dr. Wahdat Alokozai, Head of Curative Medicine at the Ministry of Public Health, told Pajhwok that farmers are more vulnerable than others to the negative effects of climate change.

He said drought causes economic problems for farmers, which lead to anxiety, mental health issues, and eventually physical illnesses.

Dr. Wahdat urged the government to provide mental health and psychosocial support to affected farmers and, if agricultural work is no longer feasible, help them find alternative jobs to improve their livelihood.

“Farmers should be given drought-resistant seeds”

Climate change expert Sayed Mohammad Sulaimankhel said the government and aid agencies must help farmers cultivate crops that require less water.

He emphasized that the Ministry of Agriculture and relevant institutions must raise awareness about drought-resistant farming and provide such seeds to farmers.

He added that Afghani-

Imran orders PTI to shun all rifts

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Incarcerated PTI founder and ex-prime minister Imran Khan has decried the lack of any “meaningful momentum” for the party’s planned August 5 protest and ordered its members to immediately shun all their differences. In a post Thursday on his X account — which is not operated by Imran himself — a message said to be sent on his behalf stated: “Let me make this absolutely clear: every member of the party must immediately set aside all internal differences and focus solely on the movement planned for August 5th. I do not see any meaningful momentum building behind this initiative at present. I am waging a battle against a 78-year-old system, and my greatest success is that despite unprecedented oppression, the public stands firmly with me.”

The message said the people had expressed their trust in the PTI by voting for it in the general elections, even in the absence of an electoral symbol. “After such a clear mandate, it is the moral and political responsibility of every party member to

become the voice of the people. It will be nothing short of disgraceful and condemnable if PTI leaders waste time on internal conflicts at this critical juncture.

“Anyone found engaging in factionalism within the party will be expelled. I am fighting for the future of our generations and every sacrifice I make is for that cause. To create rifts within the party at this time would be a direct betrayal of my mission and vision,” the message warned. Lashing out at the government, the message said it had “crippled the judiciary” through the 26th Constitutional Amendment. “The way biased judges are now delivering blatantly unjust verdicts under these courts is visible to the entire nation. We must launch a robust campaign to liberate the judiciary, for no nation can survive, let alone progress, without judicial independence.”

The message claimed “inhuman conditions” were being imposed upon Imran’s spouse and former first lady Bushra Bibi while the PTI founder’s conditions were themselves not good. “I am enduring the harshest

prison term in the country’s history solely for the supremacy of the Constitution and in service of my nation. The level of oppression and authoritarianism is such that even the water I have for ablution is filthy and contaminated with dirt, unfit for any human being.”

Meanwhile, Imran’s sons continued their engagements in the United States, where they currently are before visiting Pakistan for their father. They met Republican Congressman Joe Wilson of South Carolina who had introduced a bipartisan bill in the US House of Representatives in March, calling for sanctions on Pakistani state functionaries over alleged human rights violations, including the “persecution” of their father.

They also met US Congressman Brad Sherman. “I am concerned to hear that Khan remains isolated from his family, friends, attorneys and doctors. His sons also shared that his physical health may be deteriorating. The people of Pakistan deserve to have their leaders be treated fairly under the law,” he said in a post on X about the meeting.

PHC dismisses PML-N leader’s plea

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The two-member bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Fahim Wali, has dismissed a contempt of court petition filed by Syed Haider Shah Bacha, a provincial leader of Pakistan Muslim League (N), against his arrest, on Thursday.

During the hearing, Justice Ijaz Anwar observed that if the court summons the police in every case, it would hinder their ability to function. The police admitted that they had arrested the petitioner but claimed that they did not receive a court order to refrain from doing so. The court noted that if the police had received instructions from their superiors to arrest the petitioner, it would have been a different matter.

The counsel informed the court that the petitioner was arrested under three MPOs for protesting against electricity load-shedding and was sent to Dera Ismail Khan jail. Despite the court granting protective bail and directing the police not to arrest the petitioner, the police still arrested him and sent him to jail, which constitutes contempt of court.

The police submitted that there were 18 FIRs registered against the petitioner. Justice Ijaz Anwar observed that the FIRs reflect the petitioner’s conduct. The court noted that if the police had received instructions from their superiors to arrest the petitioner, it would have been a serious matter.

After hearing the arguments, the PHC dismissed the contempt of court petition. Justice Fahim Wali observed that the police had now stated that they did not receive instructions to arrest the petitioner and had released him after receiving the court’s order.

Kohistan scam: Court adjourns hearing

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar Accountability Court has adjourned the hearing on interim bail applications filed by eight accused persons in the Kohistan financial scandal. The court adjourned the hearing due to the absence of the accused’s lawyers, on Thursday.

The accused persons include Raziullah, Musharaf Shah, Abdul Basit, Gul Rehman, Shafiq Ali, Mahboob, Alamzeb, and Yahya. They include government employees, bank officials, and contractors. The accused are alleged to have embezzled billions of rupees from the government treasury.

The Kohistan scandal has caused a loss of Rs. 40 billion to the government treasury. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) is investigating the mega scandal, which involves the withdrawal of funds from the government treasury for development projects that do not exist. So far, NAB has taken nine accused into custody and issued call-up notices to several others. Accountability Court Judge Hamid Mughal conducted the hearing on the bail applications. During the hearing, the court was informed that the accused’s lawyers had requested an adjournment, which was granted by the court. The court will now hear the bail applications on a later date.

Retired official’s body recovered

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The body of a retired government official, who was swept away by floodwaters along with his daughter in a private housing society earlier this week, was recovered from the Soan River on Thursday, while the search for his missing daughter is still going on.

A police spokesperson told media that the incident occurred on Tuesday during heavy monsoon rain when the father and daughter were driving through a waterlogged street. Their vehicle stalled near a stormwater drain and was carried away by the powerful current.

He said that rescue teams comprising police, Rescue 1122 personnel, and divers launched an immediate search operation. Parts of the vehicle, including its bumper and side mirror, were found downstream, which helped rescue workers identify the likely area of submersion.

Political parties unite for rule of law, fair elections

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Tehreek Tahafuz Ayeen-e-Pakistan (TTAP) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) launched a joint political initiative on Thursday, aiming to reinstate constitutional governance, guarantee impartial elections, and safeguard citizens’ rights. At a press conference in Islamabad, TTAP leader Mehmood Khan Achakzai, accompanied by other senior figures, described the partnership as a crucial national endeavor to uphold democracy and the constitution. Achakzai stated that opposition groups are converging towards a wider alliance, emphasizing their commitment to constitutional adherence.

He revealed plans for an All Parties Conference (APC) on July 31 and August 1, urging all political factions to address the nation’s worsening political and constitutional predicament. Achakzai cautioned that failure to tackle these issues could lead to further instability. He voiced concern over the alleged denial of justice to the party with the largest public mandate, criticizing the reported restrictions on PTI founder Imran Khan, including alleged denial of family visits. He stressed that while not opposed to any military official, everyone must operate within constitutional limits.

PTI Secretary General Salman



Akram Raja declared the initiative a national endeavor for all Pakistanis, highlighting the involvement of various political parties in safeguarding fundamental rights. Raja proclaimed a nationwide demonstration on August 5 to underscore their commitment to justice, democracy, and constitutional supremacy.

He condemned the alleged mockery of the nation and stated that PTI, despite being the largest political entity, faces persecution, with leaders receiving lengthy prison terms based

on affiliation. Raja also denounced the purported suppression of free speech and movement, alleging that PTI’s founder has been unjustly imprisoned for two years without a fair trial. He demanded a fair trial for Khan and all political detainees, asserting it as a fundamental constitutional right. This new political campaign is poised to significantly influence the country’s political landscape, particularly with the opposition’s growing unity before anticipated elections.

Sentencing PTI leaders won’t stop movement, it’ll strengthen it: Saif

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, has strongly condemned the recent convictions of PTI leaders, stating that these sentences are part of a well-orchestrated political scheme aimed at weakening the movement for the release of Imran Khan.

He said the timing of these false convictions just before the launch of the movement for Imran Khan’s release clearly indicates a desperate attempt by the illegitimate government to suppress the PTI leadership and its supporters. “The sentencing of our leaders in fabricated cases reveals the fear and panic within the fake regime regarding the growing momentum of the movement for Imran Khan’s freedom,” said Dr. Saif. “These actions will not succeed in intimidating our leadership or silencing our party,” Barrister Saif further condemned the unjust 10-year prison sentence handed to Dr. Yasmin Rashid, a senior PTI leader battling cancer, describing it as an example of the cruelty and inhumanity of the current regime. Despite the convictions, he praised the unwavering courage of Dr. Rashid and other party leaders. “Their resilience in the face of injustice is truly commendable,” he added.

Dr. Saif affirmed that preparations for the nationwide campaign for Imran Khan’s release are in full swing, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the leadership of Ali Amin Khan Gandapur. Worker conventions and corner meetings are

being held across the province, many of which are transforming into massive public gatherings, highlighting the enthusiasm of both PTI workers and the general public. These gatherings are a clear sign of public support and the unstoppable spirit of our workers,” he added. He concluded by stating that the entire province is mobilized and the people are actively participating in preparations for the movement. PTI leaders and workers are ready to make any sacrifice for the release of their leader, Imran Khan.

Meanwhile, a high-level twelve-member delegation from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, led by Barrister Dr. Saif, advisor to the Chief Minister on Information and Public Relations, has arrived in Urumqi, the capital of the Xinjiang. The visit, arranged at the invitation of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is part of a Religious Diplomacy Program aimed at strengthening bilateral diplomatic, religious, cultural, and economic relations between the two countries.

The delegation received a warm welcome from representatives of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs upon arrival at Urumqi Airport. During their visit, the delegation toured the historic Shanzhe Grand Mosque and the Grand Bazaar, where they were introduced to the rich Islamic heritage, culture, and traditions of Xinjiang.

The delegation also visited the Museum on Countering Extremism and Terrorism, where they were briefed on the Chinese government’s efforts in combating terrorism, promoting social stability, and fostering

economic growth. Barrister Dr. Saif commended these initiatives and described Xinjiang’s development and peace as a model of regional harmony.

Another key highlight of the visit was a tour of a high-tech agricultural facility, where the delegation was briefed on modern techniques in plantation, irrigation, and the use of artificial intelligence to enhance crop productivity. Speaking on the occasion Barrister Dr Saif said that China’s rapid progress in agriculture, technology, and smart innovation offers valuable lessons for Pakistan. Our cooperation with China is paving the way for economic stability and development in the region.

The delegation also held meetings with members of the local Muslim community in Urumqi, discussing mutual understanding, religious harmony, and interfaith dialogue. The delegation includes prominent religious, scholarly, and political figures from Pakistan.

Barrister Dr. Saif termed the visit as a new dimension in Pakistan-China relations, stating that such interactions open up new avenues for trust, harmony, and learning at religious, cultural, and economic levels. He emphasized that the friendship between Pakistan and China has stood the test of time. From CPEC to cooperation in education, industry, agriculture, and security, both nations have demonstrated unwavering support for each other. Visits like this, he added, play a crucial role in further deepening and strengthening this strategic partnership.

Court rejects request to record KP CM’s statement

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The lower court of Islamabad on Thursday turned down a request to let the Advocate General record a statement on behalf of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister (CM) Ali Amin Gandapur in a case related to alleged liquor and illegal weapons recovery.

The court upheld the arrest warrants and directed Gandapur to record his statement in person or via video link at the next hearing. Judicial Magistrate Mubashir Hassan Chishti rejected the plea submitted by the Advocate General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to record the statement under Section 342 on behalf of CM Ali Amin Gandapur, who is an accused in an ongoing case involving the

alleged recovery of liquor and illegal arms.

During Thursday’s hearing, Gandapur’s lawyer, Raja Zahoorul Hassan Advocate, informed the court that the Advocate General of KP would represent the chief minister in court. The judge initially paused the hearing to allow both representatives to appear. When the proceedings resumed, KP Advocate General Shah Faisal and Raja Zahoorul Hassan appeared before the court and filed an application seeking Gandapur’s exemption from appearance. The Advocate General explained that a grand jirga was being held in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with tribal elders from across the country attending, and requested the court to delay the case hearing

until September.

Judge Chishti, while turning down the request, said that the detailed order would clarify the court’s position. The court then adjourned the hearing and maintained the previously issued arrest warrants for Gandapur. The court also rejected the Advocate General’s request to record Gandapur’s statement under Section 342 of the Criminal Procedure Code on his behalf. Instead, the court directed Gandapur to either appear in person or record his statement via video link in the next hearing. The court warned that failure to submit the statement could result in the forfeiture of the defendant’s right to present their version of events. The hearing was adjourned until July 29.

Senate passes resolution against killing of couple in Balochistan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Thursday unanimously passed a strong resolution condemning the public and illegal execution of a couple in broad daylight in Balochistan, allegedly on the orders of a so-called jirga in the name of “honour.”

The resolution, moved by Senator Sherry Rehman on her own behalf and on behalf of Senators Mohammad Abdul Qadir, Jan Muhammad, Mohsin Aziz, Haji Hidayatullah Khan, Kamil Ali Agha, Raja Nasir Abbas, Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan, Irfan-ul-Haque Siddiqui, Qaratulain Marri, and Syed Faisal Ali Subzwari, was adopted by the House during its sitting on July 24.

The resolution condemned the heinous and premeditated act as an abhorrent crime and a gross violation of human rights, the Constitution, and the laws of Pakistan. It declared that such barbaric killings must not be justified under cultural or tribal practices and emphasized that the concept of “honour” cannot override constitutional protections. It highlighted that despite existing legal safeguards, the implementation

on the ground remains weak, leading to subversion of justice, particularly in cases targeting women.

The House resolved that such so-called honour killings constitute murder and must be prosecuted under the relevant laws without compromise. It called upon the government to ensure immediate and transparent investigation into the recent killings and bring all those involved—including those who convened or sanctioned any jirga—to justice without delay.

The resolution also urged law enforcement agencies to treat such incidents strictly under the Pakistan Penal Code and called on the Ministry of Law and Justice and Ministry of Human Rights to review enforcement gaps in existing laws. Furthermore, it stressed the need to train prosecutors and investigators to handle gender-based and honour-related crimes as serious offenses and urged both federal and provincial governments to launch awareness campaigns rejecting honour-based violence and reaffirming the primacy of constitutional law. The Senate reaffirmed its commitment to upholding the rights,

safety, and dignity of all citizens, especially women, as guaranteed by the Constitution of Pakistan, according to the resolution passed by the House.

Meanwhile, Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani administered the oath to eight newly elected members of the Upper House and obtained their signatures, marking their formal induction into the Senate. Those who took oath included former federal minister Noor-ul-Haq Qadri, former senator Faisal Javed Khan, BISP chairperson and PPP senator Rubina Khalid and Senator Talha Mehmood.

Other senators included Niaz Ahmed, Dilawar Khan, Atta-ul-Haq and former deputy chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi. The oath-taking ceremony was held in the Senate Hall of Parliament House, followed by the signing of the roll register by the members. Chairman Senate welcomed the newly sworn-in members, expressing confidence that their contributions would bolster parliamentary proceedings and enrich legislative discourse. After the formalities, the senators exchanged pleasantries with the chairman.

Explosion in Syria kills 6, injures dozens

DAMASCUS (AP): At least six people were killed and dozens injured in an explosion in northern Syria’s Idlib province, officials said Thursday. There was no official statement on the cause of the blast.

The Syrian Civil Defense, also known as the White Helmets, reported that at least six people were killed in the blast, which took place in the town of Maarat Misrin north of the city of Idlib on Thursday. “This is the death toll only of those recovered by Syrian Civil Defense teams, who continue to search for those trapped under the rubble,” the White Helmets said in a statement.

Syrian Minister of Emergency and Disaster Management Raed Al-Saleh in a post on social media platform X that teams were transporting the wounded and dead despite “continued recurring explosions in the area, which are hampering response efforts.” The state-run news agency, SANA, reported four people killed and 116 injured, citing health officials, without giving further details.

48 people die in passenger plane crash in Russia

MOSCOW (AP): Forty-eight people have died in a plane crash in Russia’s Far East, the head of the country’s Amur region said in a statement Thursday.

The An-24 passenger plane disappeared from radar as it travelled from the city of Blagoveshchensk on the Russian-Chinese border to the town of Tynda. Rescuers later found the aircraft’s burning wreckage amid dense forests on a hillside south of its planned destination.

Regional Gov. Vasily Orlov said that all passengers and crew on board the aircraft were killed in the crash. He also announced three days of mourning. A passenger plane carrying 49 people, including 5 children, crashed in Russia’s Far Eastern Amur region Thursday, local emergency services said. Russian news agencies said that an initial aerial inspection suggested there were no survivors.

Russia’s Emergency Situations Ministry said that they had found the burning fuselage of the Soviet-designed twin turbo

prop plane on a hillside south of its planned destination in the town of Tynda, more than 7,000 kilometers (4,350 miles) east of Moscow. Images of the reported crash site circulated by Russian state media show debris scattered among dense forest, surrounded by plumes of smoke.

In a video message posted Thursday evening local time, Amur regional Gov. Vasily Orlov said that rescuers had still been unable to reach the remote location where the plane crashed. Russia’s Interfax news agency said there were adverse weather conditions at the time of the crash, citing unnamed sources in the emergency services. Several Russian news outlets also reported that the aircraft was almost 50 years old, citing data taken from the plane’s tail number.

The transport prosecutor’s office in the Far East reported that the site of the crash was 15 kilometers (9 miles) south of Tynda. The office said in an online statement that the plane attempted a second

approach while trying to land when contact with it was lost.

Forty-three passengers, including five children, as well as six crew members were on board the An-24 passenger plane as it traveled from the city of Blagoveshchensk on the Russian-Chinese border to the town of Tynda, Orlov said. The plane had initially departed from Khabarovsk before making its way to Blagoveshchensk on the Russian-Chinese border and onwards to Tynda. Russia’s Emergency Situations Ministry reported that 48 people were on board the flight, which was operated by Siberia-based Angara Airlines. The reason for the discrepancy was not immediately clear.

The authorities have launched a probe on the charge of flight safety violations that resulted in multiple deaths, a standard procedure in aviation accidents. Aviation incidents have been frequent in Russia, especially in recent years as international sanctions have squeezed the country’s aviation sector.

Woman’s mother remanded after ‘honour killing’ confession

F.P. Report

QUETTA: A court in Quetta has remanded a woman to the Serious Crime Investigation Wing for two days in connection with the double murder case in Sanjidi involving her daughter, Bano Bibi. The anti-terrorism court (ATC) ordered the remand after Gul Jan was presented before it by investigating officials, who had requested custody for further probe.

According to the investigation officer, Javed Buzdar, Gul Jan was arrested a day earlier after a video surfaced on social media in which she repeatedly confessed to the killing of her daughter. In the video, Gul Jan is seen holding the Holy Quran and admitting to killing Bano Bibi in the name of honour, citing Baloch tribal customs. She further claimed that no unlawful action was taken by her tribe’s elders, stating they had no role in the decision.

The murder, which took place around six weeks ago, involved Bano Bibi and a man named Ehsanullah, both of whom were shot dead in the Degari area near Quetta in what police described as an honour-related incident. Authorities confirmed that two other suspects, Sardar Sherbaz and Bashir Ahmed, are already in custody under a 10-day remand with the Serious Crime Investigation Wing.