

Balochistan police attacked
F.P. Report

QUETTA: Two separate hand grenade assaults targeted law enforcement officials in Balochistan province on Tuesday, injuring one officer. In Sibi, unidentified individuals on a motorcycle threw a grenade at police conducting a check near Government Girls College. Assistant Sub Inspector Muhammad Afzal was wounded in the explosion and transported to Teaching Hospital Sibi.



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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif presenting awards for recognition of services in various sectors, of individuals from minority communities at a ceremony on International Youth Day.

Bilawal accuses BLA of siding with India

F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari accused the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and Majeed Brigade of siding with India. He announced plans to push for a United Nations ban on these groups.

Speaking after inaugurating Khan Bahadur Hassan Ali Afandi Park, Bilawal welcomed the U.S. decision to designate both groups as terrorist organizations, calling it a major win for Pakistan's stance.

He alleged the BLA and Majeed Brigade have attacked workers and civilians, and openly supported Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during recent tensions. On water issues, Bilawal criticized India for threats to block the Indus River, stressing that under the Indus Waters Treaty, Pakistan must receive its share. Calling the river a "lifeline" for the

nation, he urged unity across provinces and adoption of modern farming techniques like drip irrigation to conserve water.

He also demanded provinces receive their constitutional share under the National Finance Commission (NFC) award, saying the federal government's tax collection failures should not penalize provinces. Bilawal denied any government consultation with PPP on the proposed 27th constitutional amendment, calling such reports media speculation.

Meanwhile, in a message released by Bilawal House on International Youth Day, Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari today praised Pakistan's young people, calling them the heartbeat of our nation and the torchbearers of our future.

The PPP leader linked the aspirations of Pakistan's youth to the goal of a thriving, secure, and democratic nation. He expressed unwavering confidence in their capacity to steer Pakistan towards a brighter future and encouraged them to uphold principles of democracy, tolerance, and social justice.

Bilawal emphasized the PPP's history of prioritizing youth under the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto, highlighting policies focused on education, employment, and youth involvement in decision-making. He cited Sindh's local government system and programs like the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Youth Development Program as examples of ongoing efforts to empower youth through training and skill development.

The PPP chairman reaffirmed his party's dedication to supporting young people, protecting their rights, and amplifying their voices. He concluded by assuring every young Pakistani that the PPP will consistently champion their cause.

Operation in Bajaur continue

F.P. Report

KHAR: The military operation in Bajaur's Mamund tehsil has entered its second day, with security forces targeting suspected militant hideouts. Gunship helicopters have been deployed to strike militant positions, while a curfew has been imposed in 27 areas of Mamund tehsil until 14 August.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Saad Ullah Jan claimed that over 20,000 families have fled their homes, with many seeking shelter in nearby areas. Some have been accommodated in 85 government and private schools, as well as sports complexes, where relief camps have been set up.

The district administration has made arrangements for the displaced persons, including provision of food, clean water, electricity, and tents. The Bajaur Sports Complex has been converted into a relief camp, with 450 tents set up to accommodate the affected people.

The government has assured that the operation is targeted and aimed at eliminating militant groups. However, locals have expressed concerns about civilian casualties and damage to their homes. A grand jirga has been convened to address the situation, with tribal elders and political leaders participating in the meeting. The situation in Bajaur remains volatile, with tensions running high. The curfew has been imposed to ensure public safety.

Finance Minister meets CJP

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, met with Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi, at the Supreme Court on Tuesday to discuss judicial reforms and tax dispute resolution.

The Chief Justice highlighted the Supreme Court's initiatives to improve access to justice, modernize court procedures, categorize tax cases, and enhance service delivery through technology. Justice Afridi emphasized the need for government backing to ensure the success of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system for resolving tax disputes quickly.

He also informed the Minister about training sessions being conducted for judicial officers and members of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) at the Judicial Academy, with plans to include officials from the Competition Commission of Pakistan soon.

Aurangzeb expressed appreciation for the judiciary's reform program and pledged the government's continued support in providing necessary resources for judicial development initiatives. Both officials stressed the significance of collaboration between the judicial and executive branches to uphold the rule of law and protect citizens' rights.

SC will declare Imran innocent: Aleema Khan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Aleema Khan, the sister of PTI founder Imran Khan, has expressed the hope that judges would show courage and declare the sentences handed down [to her brother] as illegal.

Speaking to the media outside the Supreme Court on Tuesday, she said she moved the Supreme Court regarding the May 9 case involving the PTI founder. Appeals have been scheduled for next week. She said: "We pray that the judges find the courage to ensure justice is served and declare the punishments as unlawful."

PM warns India over water threats

— vows firm response if Indus Treaty violated

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday warned India that any attempt to block Pakistan's water in violation of the Indus Waters Treaty would be met with a decisive response. "You threaten to stop our water. If you attempt such a move, Pakistan will teach you a lesson you will never forget," the prime minister said while addressing an event held here in connection with International Youth Day.

He emphasized that water was a lifeline for Pakistan, and no compromise would be made on the country's rights under international agreements. The prime minister said that a "new Pakistan" had emerged after the armed forces of Pakistan defeated India May 10.

He said India's pride was sunk on May 10 when the Pakistan Air Force downed six Indian fighter jets. He called it a historic moment for Pakistan. PM Shehbaz announced that 100,000 laptops would be distributed interest-free to students purely on merit. "This government believes in transparency and merit, and we will ensure both in the distribution process," he assured.

The prime minister said that the country's future was in the hands of youth, reaffirming his government's commitment to empowering youth through education and technology. During his address, PM Shehbaz also congratulated the nation on Independence Day and praised the role of minorities and all segments of society in the creation and development of Pakistan. Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sardar Muhammad Yousaf said the government was taking effective measures for the protection of minorities. All citizens have equal rights as per the Constitution, he said adding that "To ensure representation, the government has formulated a policy to promote interfaith harmony. Under this policy,

Shehbaz directs completion of 100MW Solar Project in Gilgit-Baltistan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed the completion of the 100-megawatt solar power project in Gilgit-Baltistan within a year, vowing to personally monitor its progress. Chairing a review meeting here following the recent approval of the project by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), the Prime Minister stressed that the initiative will be executed on a priority basis to ensure uninterrupted, low-cost, and environment-friendly electricity supply to the region.

"All infrastructure for the project must be climate-resilient," the Prime Minister instructed, adding that transparency will be ensured at every stage of its construction. He highlighted that the federal government will bear the entire cost of the project, which is expected to significantly reduce the region's prolonged load-shedding of up to 20 hours a day and provide power to remote areas. Under the plan, six solar parks will be set up in Gilgit, eight in Skardu, and six in Diamer. Additionally, 234 buildings in Gilgit, 179 in Skardu, and 68 in Diamer will be equipped with solar installations. The project will also include battery storage for backup supply and a real-time monitoring system, adhering to international standards. The Prime Minister said solarization was the most viable solution to meet Gilgit-Baltistan's energy needs, noting that integrating renewable energy sources into Pakistan's energy mix was essential to mitigate the effects of climate change.

minorities will be granted a 5% quota in jobs". Minister of State for Religious Affairs Khel Das Kohistani said Islam respects all other religions, and Pakistan's Constitution also protects the rights of all people, regardless of their faith. "The Prime Minister is taking the country forward in line with the vision of the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah," he said.

Chairman PM Youth Program Rana Mashhood Khan said Pakistan's first youth policy was introduced in 2011 by the then Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Under this initiative, laptops, soft loans, and scholarships were provided to talented students across the province. The Punjab Educational Endowment Fund (PEEF) was also launched by Shehbaz Sharif, he said adding that today, it had evolved into the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund, which benefits students from all over the country. "Every child in Pakistan can benefit from this

initiative." Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif directed the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to further enhance coordination with provincial governments for the effective relief and rehabilitation of those affected by recent rains and floods.

The prime minister issued these instructions during a meeting with NDMA Chairman Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik, who briefed him on ongoing relief operations and preparedness measures for any potential emergencies, a Prime Minister's Office news release said. Reviewing progress on strengthening early warning mechanisms, the prime minister emphasized that the advanced information system in Gilgit-Baltistan should be made fully operational at the earliest, with close collaboration between NDMA and the Ministry of Climate Change.

50 militants eliminated in operation

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Pakistani security forces have neutralized 50 militants in a four-day operation near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

The operation, a significant counter-terrorism victory, took place in the Sambaza area of Zhob District. From August 7th to 9th, 47 insurgents, designated as khawarij, were killed in fierce clashes. A subsequent sanitization operation on August 10th and 11th resulted in the elimination of three more India-backed militants.

Troops confiscated weapons, ammunition, and explosives during the operation. The ISPR stated these actions aim to secure Pakistan's borders and maintain peace and stability. The ISPR affirmed the military's dedication to eliminating hostile actors and protecting the nation's territorial integrity.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif commended the officers and personnel of the security forces for carrying out another successful operation against Khawarij in the Sambaza area of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

The president and prime minister, in their separately issued statements, appreciated the security forces for killing 50 Indian-sponsored terrorists in the last four days as a testament to their professionalism, bravery, and determination. "The nation stands shoulder to shoulder with its brave armed forces against terrorism. The enemies of Pakistan's peace, stability, and development will never succeed," the president said, reiterating that the war would continue with full force until the complete eradication of terrorism.

PM also praised the professional capabilities of the security forces for killing three more Indian-backed terrorists on Monday night, following a successful operation that neutralized 47 terrorists in the same area a few days ago. "We will continue this war against the scourge of terrorism until it is eradicated from the country. Pakistan armed forces are engaged day and night in the mission to cleanse the homeland of terrorists, and for this, the entire nation, including myself, pays tribute to them," he added.



HYDERABAD: Chairman PPP, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari inaugurating Khan Bahadur Hassan Ali Effendi Park.

7th monsoon spell sparks flood fears

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The seventh spell of monsoon rains began on Tuesday raising concerns about potential flooding due to anticipated water releases from India. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab has issued an alert, warning of flash floods in hill torrents and the risk of urban flooding in cities.

According to the forecast, rains are expected to continue from today, with flooding concerns peaking from tomorrow as India is likely to release water over the next three days. The PDMA spokesperson said that an extraordinary increase in water levels has been recorded in Indian dams, and Bhakra Dam, Pong Dam and Thein Dam have been filled to 61, 76 and 64 percent respectively.

PDMA Punjab, IRSA and the Irrigation Department are monitoring the situation of rivers and dams 24 hours a day.

A PDMA Punjab spokesperson reported that the River Indus is experiencing a low-level flood at Tarbela, Kalabagh, and Chashma barrages, while the River Chenab is facing the same at Marala Barrage. The River Sutlej at Ganda Singh Wala is flowing normally with reduced discharge. The rivers Jhelum, Ravi, and Kabul, along with their tributaries, are maintaining normal flows. However, Nala Dek in Kangra, Narowal, is at a low-level flood, while Nala Bein in Shakargarh, Narowal, is experiencing a medium-level flood.

In Lahore, drizzle in the early morning brought relief from humidity as

clouds covered the sky and cool winds blew. The Meteorological Department has predicted further rainfall in the next 24 hours. The minimum temperature is expected to be 29°C, with winds blowing at 11 kilometres per hour and humidity at 80 percent.

In Islamabad, pleasant weather prevailed in the morning as cool winds swept through the city. The Met Office forecasts partly cloudy skies with the possibility of rain in some areas. Karachi also experienced overcast conditions and a pleasant breeze. According to the Meteorological Department, drizzle is likely in the city today. The maximum temperature is expected to range between 31°C and 33°C, with winds from the west blowing at 15 to 20 kilometres per hour and humidity at 70 percent.

Protest-hit UK town bids to empty asylum-seeker hotel

LONDON (AFP): A UK town applied for a High Court injunction on Tuesday to stop asylum seekers being housed in a local hotel, following protests, some of which turned violent. The council in Epping, northeast of London, applied for an interim injunction against the housing of asylum seekers and refugees at the Bell Hotel, citing "the clear risk of further escalating commu-

nity tensions."

"The current situation cannot go on. If the Bell Hotel was a nightclub we could have closed it down long ago," Epping Forest district council leader Chris Whitbread, from the Conservative party, said in a statement. Protests broke out in the town in July after an asylum seeker was charged with sexually assaulting a 14-year-old girl, which he

denies.

Since then hundreds of people have taken part in protests and counter-protests outside the Bell Hotel. Further anti-immigration demonstrations also spread to London and around England. Police said there had been at least six protests in Epping since July 17 and 28 people have been arrested and 16 people charged in connection with disorder.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur offering dua after inaugurating the newly established Provincial Intelligence Fusion and Threat Assessment Centre (PIFTAC). Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah is also present.

Govt determined to ensure uplift of all areas: Chanzeb

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tourism and Culture, Zahid Chanzeb, has said that the provincial government is determined to ensure the development and prosperity of all areas, including Hazara. He said that numerous development projects are underway in Mansehra and across the Hazara Division, and their timely and transparent completion is the government's top priority.

He expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation from his constituency at his office in Peshawar. Zahid Chanzeb said that the people had placed their trust in him by electing him, and he would make every effort to meet their expectations. He made it clear that any negligence in completing the ongoing development projects in Mansehra would not be tolerated.

He urged local leaders and workers to keep a close watch on the progress of these projects and to promptly report any shortcomings or negligence so that such elements could be discouraged. During the meeting, the Advisor for Tourism and Culture also listened to the delegation's issues and issued directives for the immediate resolution of some of them.

Plantation most effective way to combat pollution: Pir Musavir

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Forests, Environment, Wildlife, and Climate Change, Pir Musavir Khan has said that tree plantation is the most effective and sustainable solution to eliminating environmental pollution and fostering a greener environment.

He stated that under the ongoing monsoon plantation campaign in the province, a target of one million saplings has been set, with the drive progressing successfully through active public participation. He expressed these views while addressing a tree plantation event organized by the Malakand Forest Division at Hira School and College, Tehsil Dargai. The event was attended by Deputy Commissioner Malakand Hamid ur Rehman, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner Dargai Shahbaz Khan, Conservator Malakand Abid Mumtaz, officials from the Forest Department and district administration, Levies personnel, school administration, teachers, students, and local residents.

During the event, Special Assistant Pir Musavir Khan and other participants planted trees as part of the monsoon plantation drive. Around 600 fruit-bearing and other types of saplings were planted, while 4000 additional saplings were distributed among students.

Pir Musavir Khan stressed that planting trees is both a national and religious duty. Under the leadership of the Chief Minister and in line with the vision of founding chairman Imran Khan, the campaign to plant one million trees across the province is in full swing.

In Malakand alone, with the active participation of youth, students, and the local community, approximately 83,000 trees have already been planted, surpassing the target.

This initiative, he said, will significantly help reduce pollution and promote a healthier and green environment.

He commended the role of young people, especially students, describing their involvement as the beginning of a green revolution in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He also urged the public to not only plant trees but to ensure their proper care.

The Deputy Commissioner Malakand and the Chairman of Tehsil Dargai also addressed the ceremony.

Governor Kundi stresses unity, tolerance on National Minorities Day

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has said that the true strength of the nation lies in unity, adding that social harmony, tolerance, and mutual respect are the foundations of a strong and peaceful society. He urged all segments of society to work together to eradicate hatred, prejudice, and discrimination.

He expressed these views on Tuesday while addressing a special ceremony at Governor House Peshawar in connection with National Minorities Day, where he was the chief guest. The event was attended by MPA Baba Ji Gorpai Singh, PPP Provincial President Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha, Bishop Humphrey Saffraz Peter, Haroon Sarb Dayal, Yousaf George, and members of the Hindu, Sikh, and Christian communities from across the province.

The ceremony began with the national anthem, followed by speeches from minority leaders highlighting the rights, welfare, and contributions of minorities to Pakistan since its inception.

They lauded President Asif Ali Zardari and the PPP leadership for approving August 11 as National Minorities Day, and also appreciated the Governor for opening the doors of Governor House to the public.

Welcoming the minority communities, Governor Kundi said it was an honor to host National Minorities Day at Governor House for the second consecutive year. He praised the role of minority communities in Pakistan's progress, stability, and cultural diversity, reiterating that the Constitution guarantees equal rights to all citizens regardless of religion, color, or race. He assured that the government would ensure effective implementation of existing laws for the protection of minorities and would take every possible step for their social, economic, and educational uplift.

Media delegation visits Al-Madina Institute of Medical Sciences, lauds medical training standards

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a grand and informative event at the Al-Madina Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS), renowned television and print media representatives, along with marketing officers, were invited for an exclusive visit to the institution. Dr. Habib Ullah, Director of Al-Madina Institute of Medical Sciences Peshawar, warmly welcomed the guests and gave them a detailed tour of the institute's various departments—Dental, Surgical, Laboratory, Health, and Pharmacy Technologies.

During the briefing, Dr. Habib Ullah stated that the Al-Madina Institute is not only providing quality education in the medical field but is also maintaining a high standard of practical training, enabling students to achieve a distinguished position in their professional careers. He emphasized that for admission, a minimum of 50% marks in Matriculation (Science) is mandatory to maintain the institute's academic standards.

Participants were informed that admissions are currently open in various disciplines at the institute, including Paramedical Diploma, a two-year Pharmacy Technician program (Assistant Pharmacist, Category-B), and two-year Nursing programs (LHV, CNA, CMW). Similarly, at the F.Sc level, the institute offers education in Medical, Dental, Physiotherapy, Radiology, Laboratory, Theatre Technician, and other specialized fields.

According to the administration, all programs are conducted under the supervision of qualified faculty, with modern educational technology and well-equipped laboratories, ensuring that students excel in both theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

At the conclusion of the visit, media representatives praised the institute's modern infrastructure, excellent training environment, and academic standards, describing it as a leading center of medical education in Peshawar.



Chief Minister inaugurates newly established PIFTAC

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur on Tuesday visited the provincial Home Department and formally inaugurated the newly established Provincial Intelligence Fusion and Threat Assessment Centre (PIFTAC). Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah and other relevant high ups were also present. Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Mohammad Abid Majeed, on this occasion, briefed the chief minister in detail on the functions and scope of the newly established facility.

The Chief Minister was informed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has become the first province in the country to set up such a centre, which has been completed in just two months at a cost of Rs 210 million. The PIFTAC is linked with the National Intelligence Fusion and Threat Assessment Centre (PIFTAC) at the federal level and serves as a digital, integrated system for countering terrorism and facilitating nationwide intelligence sharing and assessment. The system connects the federal and all provincial governments, enabling a uniform mechanism for intelligence and data sharing on potential threats.

According to the briefing, PIFTAC integrates 14 relevant agencies - including the FIA, NADRA, PTA and intelligence organizations - under a single platform. It is also directly linked with District Coordination Committees across the province. Through this system, real-time intelligence sharing across the country will be possible, ensuring coordinated, timely and effective actions against terrorist activities. Officials said the centre will significantly enhance the operational capacity of intelligence agencies.

Speaking on the occasion, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur said the establishment of PIFTAC at the provincial level marks an important step towards effectively countering terrorism. He stressed that the fight against terrorism is a national agenda that requires the government, the public and all institutions to remain on the same page. The chief minister underscored the need for a comprehensive system to tackle the menace, expressing hope that PIFTAC will play a vital role in providing timely intelligence and facilitating its effective use for neutralizing threats.

PHC seeks response from govt, FIA till 19th Aug

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) heard a petition filed by the daughter of former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Minister Taimur Saleem Jhagra, seeking her removal from the Exit Control List (ECL). The petitioner, a student at the University of California, claimed that her name was included in the ECL without any legal proceedings.

The lawyer, Ali Gohar Durrani, argued that the petitioner name was added to the ECL due to her relation to Taimur Jhagra, without any substantial evidence or justification.

PHC divisional bench comprising of Justice Syed Arshad Ali and Justice Dr. Khurshid Iqbal, expressed concern over the inclusion of the petitioner's name in the ECL without due process, questioning the need for a detailed judgment in such cases.

PHC issued notices to the federal government, FIA, and other respondents, seeking their response by 19th August.



PESHAWAR: Peshawar Press Club (PPC) is beautifully decorated with lights as part of the Independence Day celebrations.

KP youth are our pride and strenght, says Fakhar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: On the occasion of International Youth Day 2025, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Sports & Youth Affairs, Syed Fakhar Jehan, in his special message, said that as the world observes this day under the theme "Youth Action for the SDGs and Beyond," he wishes to tell the youth of the province that they are its pride, strength, and power.

"You are not merely the leaders of tomorrow, you are the true torchbearers of change today," he said.

The Minister stated that, under the vision of a self-reliant youth as envisioned by Patron-in-Chief and Founding Chairman Imran Khan, and in line with the public agenda of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, the provincial government stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the youth at every step of their journey, providing all possible support and facilitation.

He remarked that he has witnessed the courage, creativity, and determination of young people in classrooms, on sports fields and in entrepreneurial ventures.

"Our youth have proven that dreams are not to be postponed, they are to be pursued with passion and purpose. Our mission is to nurture self-reliant youth, individuals who are independent, confident, and empowered," he added.

Highlighting ongoing initiatives, the Minister said that projects such as Jawan Marakiz, Skills & Modern Technology Hubs and the flagship Ehsaas Naujawan Programme worth Rs. 5 billion are equipping young people with the resources and facilities to turn their ideas into reality.

Thousands of youth have already transformed their concepts into successful enterprises, proving that self-reliance is not a dream but a deliberate choice.

Syed Fakhar Jehan underscored that global goals can only materialize when they are implemented locally, and every young person holds the potential to drive change and shape the nation's future through their actions.

Addressing the youth, he urged that "Dream bigger, work harder and move forward with honesty. Do not wait for the future, let us build it together."

Concluding his message, the Minister prayed for the youth's success, saying, "May Allah bless our youth and guide their steps along the righteous path."

Family of deceased school teacher demands action against lady doctor

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The family of Najma Parveen, a 33-year-old school teacher who died due to alleged medical negligence, is demanding action against the doctor responsible. Najma's husband, Shams Rehman, claims that Dr. Samdana Wahab performed an operation on his wife without proper consent or signature, failed to clean the operation site, and didn't provide adequate care, leading to complications that ultimately resulted in her death.

The husband said that Dr. Samdana Wahab allegedly operated on Najma Parveen without obtaining proper consent or signature. The doctor failed to clean the operation site, leading to urinary complications and kidney damage. Najma Parveen's condition worsened due to alleged negligence, and she underwent dialysis for two years before passing away.

The family demands that a case be registered against the doctor for alleged negligence. The family also demanded Dr. Samdana Wahab's medical license canceled to prevent further alleged negligence. He also demanded that Dr. Wahab's clinic be sealed to stop any further alleged malpractice.

The family has approached the courts, and the court has directed the police to conduct a thorough investigation. However, Shams Rehman alleges that Dr. Samdana Wahab is using her influence to harass him through cybercrime cases and allegations of links to banned organizations.

The family requested Prime Minister, Governor, Chief Minister, and Health Department to direct legal proceedings against Dr. Samdana Wahab for negligence. They demand that Dr. Samdana Wahab be held accountable for her alleged negligence and that action be taken to prevent similar incidents in the future.





In brief

Two traffic police suspended F.P. Report

MARDAN: District Police Officer (DPO) Zahoor Babar Afridi has suspended two traffic police personnel after a video was shared on social media. The action was taken in response to violations of police discipline and the department's social media policy. According to the police, maintaining discipline within the force and ensuring strict adherence to institutional rules and regulations is a top priority. A departmental inquiry into the incident is currently underway and further legal and administrative measures will be taken based on the findings of the report. Meanwhile, a man was killed by unknown gunmen in Mardan district on Tuesday, police said. In the Katlang tehsil of Mardan district, a firing incident resulted in the death of one person. The incident occurred in the Mayar area under the jurisdiction of Katlang police station. According to the police, 45-year-old Niaz Ali Shah, a resident of Babuzo, was killed in the firing. The Rescue 1122 medical team immediately reached the scene and transferred the deceased's body to tehsil hospital at Katlang. The Katlang police have registered a case and begun an investigation.

Train kills two persons in Taxila F.P. Report

TAXILA: A horrific incident in Taxila where train struck three children, killing two and injuring one other. As per details, the incident occurred in Rawalpindi's Taxila, two of the children, identified as four-year-old Lubaba and four-year-old Rehan, lost their lives while playing near the railway track. Initially, all three children were critically injured and rushed to the hospital. However, one of the injured children later succumbed to his injuries, raising the death toll to two. The third child remains under treatment at a local hospital. Authorities report that the children were playing dangerously close to the railway line when the incident occurred.

Bugti welcomes US decision F.P. Report

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti welcomed the United States' decision to designate the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and its sub-group, the Majeed Brigade, as terrorist organisations, calling it a commendable and timely step. In a message on social media platform X, the Chief Minister said that the federal government and Field Marshal Asim Munir had presented Pakistan's stance before the US administration in a highly effective and well-reasoned manner, which led to this important decision. He stated that the BLA and Majeed Brigade had long been shedding the blood of innocent civilians under the false guise of ethnic and linguistic rights, and their hands were stained with the blood of countless innocents. He stressed that terrorism can never be justified under any circumstances, and no cause can legitimise the killing of innocent civilians. The Chief Minister urged the international community to unite and adopt a joint strategy to eradicate the scourge of terrorism so that the world can be freed from this dangerous menace. Mir Sarfaraz Bugti expressed hope that this decision would help promote peace and stability in Pakistan and further strengthen the ongoing fight against terrorism.



LARKANA: Commuters passing through nearby an open sewerage manhole which may cause any accident specially in night time, showing negligence of authorities concerned.

Govt commits to enhance higher education: Aftab

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST) hosted Provincial Law Minister Aftab Alam Advocate, who was accompanied by MPA Daud Afridi and Chairman of Tehsil Gumbat, Sajid Iqbal, for a meeting with Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Syed Zafar Ilyas, on Tuesday.

The meeting featured in-depth discussions on the university's academic and research advancements, the provision of quality facilities for students, and ongoing initiatives to promote higher education.

Provincial Law Minister Aftab Alam Advocate stated that the students of the region can have access to quality and



further enhancing the standard of higher education and providing young people with modern opportunities for learning and research, utilizing all available resources.

MPA Daud Afridi and Chairman Tehsil Gumbat Sajid Iqbal also expressed their commitment that public representatives will extend all possible cooperation for the development of the university so that the students of the region can have access to quality and

modern education within their own area.

Welcoming the Minister for Law and his delegation, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zafar Ilyas said that KUST is playing a significant role not only at the regional level but also at the national level in academic and research advancement and that in the future, the faculty, students and administration will continue to work with full dedication and commitment for further improvement.

Youth killed, two injured in Larkana F.P. Report

LARKANA: A fight broke out in the Khaskheli community over a trivial matter in Dokri city of Larkana district, while one person was killed and two others were injured due to sticks and shovels.

According to the details, two groups of Khaskheli community clashed over a trivial matter in a farm colony near Dokri yesterday, as a result Javed Ali Khaskheli was killed due to sticks and shovels, while Abdul Samad and Majid Khaskheli were seriously injured and shifted to the hospital for treatment. On receiving information, police reached the spot, ascertained the details, took the body to Dokri hospital, conducted a post-mortem and handed it over to the heirs.

The affected party of the Khaskheli community kept the body in front of the police station Dokri and staged a protest. On this occasion, the heirs of the murdered Javed Ali Khaskheli, they said that the oppressors have unjustly killed our youth, they have asked the DIG.

SMBBMU organizes "Maurka Haq" events: Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Medical University (SMBBMU) organized the fourth free medical camp in Jacobabad in connection with the Independence and "Maurka Haq" events.

According to the details, after the Sindh government announced to celebrate "Murka Haq" and Jashn-e-Azadi for two weeks from August 1 to August 14 with full national enthusiasm, free medical camps are being organized in backward and remote areas on the special instructions of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Medical University (SMBBMU) Larkana Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nusrat Shah.

The fourth free medical camp in this series was organized in Jacobabad today, in which about 1700 patients were provided free medical treatment facilities. Clinics for gynecology, dermatology, medicine, hepatology, urology specialists were set up in the camp, while ultrasound and X-ray facilities were also provided, while various events are also ongoing in institutions affiliated to the university along with medical facilities.

Jirga aims to address Swat's growing problems



Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: A new jirga, Babuzai Qami Taroon, has been announced to tackle the rising issues in Swat's Tehsil Babuzai. The jirga's advisory committee members, including Wajid Ali Khan, Muhammad Amin, Irfan Chatten, Ishaq Zahid and others addressed a press conference at the Swat Press Club, emphasizing the need for collective action to address social crimes, drug trafficking, and immoral activities plaguing the region.

Babuzai Qami Taroon

aims to work alongside the Swat National Jirga, business community, and other organizations to maintain peace and security in the region. Wajid Ali Khan said that The jirga seeks to address public problems and find solutions to the challenges faced by the local community.

The jirga is open to members from all parties, organizations, and influential individuals in civil society, with no political ambitions. Muhammad Amin cited that we have formed a 12-member committee has been formed to oversee the

operations. Additional members will be included through mutual consultation to ensure broader representation.

The jirga's formation comes amid growing concerns about the region's stability, with the Swat Qaumi Jirga having previously raised alarms about the presence of armed groups and the need for collective action to maintain peace. The Babuzai Qami Taroon jirga's efforts are expected to contribute to the ongoing initiatives aimed at promoting peace and stability in Swat. Irfan Chatten vowed.

KP CM approves WSS Kumongar: Minister

F.P. Report

KARAK: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister on Agriculture Major Sajjad Barakwal has disclosed that under the vision of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan, the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, has approved the grand Kumongar Water Supply Scheme worth Rs.1 Billion for the people of Takraon.

This he disclosed while talking to the locals in his constituency in Karak on Tuesday. The Minister said

that the project will ensure the provision of clean, safe and fresh drinking water to all the villages and households in Takraon, significantly improving the quality of life for the local population. Upon completion, the project will eliminate drinking water shortages and provide better access to quality health facilities for the community, he added.

Agriculture Minister remarked that this success is a result of the public trust and the tireless efforts of the leadership. He declared that PTI government will leave no stone unturned in

fulfilling its promises of public service and development.

Barakwal described the approval of this scheme as an important step towards regional progress and prosperity, affirming that the provincial government is taking robust measures to provide basic facilities to the public. Instructions have been issued to the relevant departments to expedite work on the Kumongar Water Supply Scheme as timely and quality completion of the project is the top priority of the government, he concluded.

Six booked for violence on domestic worker

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Police have registered a murder case against six individuals, including influential local figure Syed Najam-ul-Hassan Shirazi, over allegations of brutally assaulting a domestic worker with sticks and rods before poisoning him to death. The other accused have been named as Abdul Razzaq Chadhar, Zain Ali, Ghulam Abbas Chadhar, Ghafoor Ahmed, and others.

The victim, Waseem Riaz, a resident of Rahgo Syedan, was employed at Shirazi's residence in Akhtar Town. Two days ago, his body was brought to the DHQ Hospital, where his family staged a strong protest against the refusal to conduct a postmortem examination. Despite their demonstrations and loud objections, the autopsy was not performed, and the body was buried at night in

Rahgo Syedan.

The case gained wider attention when local media aired reports of the alleged torture. Following this coverage, the Inspector General of Police took notice, and District Police Officer Atif Nazir formed an inquiry committee headed by DSP Rana Jameel Qaiser. Subsequently, the Regional Police Officer Gujranwala and the SSP of the CCD Gujranwala visited Hafizabad to conduct a detailed investigation. After the inquiry, FIR was lodged at City Police Station, formally charging Shirazi and the other accused with murder. To date, however, the victim's autopsy has not been conducted.

Minority day observed: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Punjab and Member of the National Assembly, Hafiza Saira Afzal Tarar, has said that while August 11 is officially observed as Minority Day

every year, the contributions and rights of minorities must be recognized every day of the year.

"I believe such days are important, but their significance is not limited to a single day, all 365 days belong to them," she said. "Minorities are patriotic Pakistanis, and history shows that in every great struggle, Pakistanis, regardless of religion, ethnicity, race, or tribe, have stood united against the enemy. This unity has always ensured the enemy's defeat."

She emphasized that the government stands committed to protecting minority rights, supporting their development, and resolving their issues. She added that minorities have been given representation at the provincial and divisional levels, and efforts will be made to secure their seats in the provincial assembly as well.

DPO hold meeting with tribesmen

F.P. Report

WANA: District Police Officer (DPO) Lower Waziristan on Tuesday convened a series of meetings at his office with tribal elders and prominent figures from the Spin area. The discussions primarily focused on the incident that took place in Spin a day earlier, with participants reviewing the circumstances and exploring possible measures to prevent such occurrences in the future.

During the meeting, DPO Tahir Shah reaffirmed the police commitment to upholding and respecting the centuries-old tribal customs and traditions of the region. He emphasized that the

participants reviewing the circumstances and exploring possible measures to prevent such occurrences in the future.

During the meeting, DPO Tahir Shah reaffirmed the police commitment to upholding and respecting the centuries-old tribal customs and traditions of the region. He emphasized that the

police will make every possible effort to address the area's challenges and disputes through close coordination and consultation with tribal elders. Highlighting the role of community cooperation in ensuring peace, the DPO noted that effective crime control is only possible with the trust and active support of local residents.

Fizza Hussain

FINANCIAL and budgetary irregularities in the education sector, along with inadequate tax revenue allocation, continue to severely hinder educational development in Pakistan. Despite commitments to universal education, Pakistan's education spending remains one of the lowest in South Asia. This chronic underinvestment by the state along with mismanagement of funds, negatively affects school infrastructure, teacher quality, and access to education, particularly for marginalized communities.

The Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) stands out as a department demonstrating that, with capable leadership, institutional integrity, and focused direction, meaningful reform is achievable. This analysis highlights how such goals are being pursued through the FTO's intensified oversight of tax compliance, particularly within Pakistan's education sector. Special attention has been given to irregulari-

ties among private and unrecognized educational institutions, many of which collect substantial funds from the public while evading tax obligations.

Although teachers are legally protected under the Protection of Employees Ordinance, 1969, as well as various provincial statutes, their remuneration remains modest, typically ranging between USD 170 and USD 200 per month, depending on whether they serve in private or public institutions. Studies suggest that higher salaries can improve the quality of teaching, though the relationship is not always predictable.

Recently, The Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) has directed the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to ensure that payments to government school teachers for supervisory duties, invigilation, and paper marking are taxed under Section 149 (salary), not Section 153(1)(b) (services rendered) of the

Income Tax Ordinance, 2001. According to the FTO, these duties are part of teachers' regular assignments, performed with their employer's approval, and therefore fall under the salary category. The current practice of applying Section 153(1)(b) constitutes maladministration under the FTO Ordinance, 2000. FBR has been instructed to coordinate with the Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education (BISE) Gujranwala to correct the withholding regime and apply Section 149 for such payments. The FTO emphasized that these duties are integral to the education system and are carried out during duty hours under fixed, non-negotiable rates set by the Boards of Governors. Many teachers, especially those with lower salaries, fall below the tax threshold but are still subject to excessive deductions.

Acting on a reference forwarded by President Dr. Arif Alvi, the FTO, has ordered an

investigation into the tax affairs of educational institutions not recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC). The reference was initiated under Section 31 of the Federal Tax Ombudsman Ordinance, 2000, alleging administrative negligence and tax evasion by institutions operating under the guise of education without proper legal status.

While upholding FTO's decision, the president observed that the withholding

tax to be deducted at the rate of 20 percent from the salary of the hired lecturers on semester to semester basis was unlawful. He directed the FBR to prevent excessive tax deductions from lecturers at Post Graduate College for Women, Bannu, Government Degree College Kaki, and similar institutions. He rejected FBR's thirty identical representations and withheld the FTO's decision. Chief Commissioner RTO Peshawar was instructed to prioritize and process the cases under relevant laws to relieve the complainants of the ongoing hardship. Additionally, FBR must issue clarifications to all withholding agents to prevent such deductions and report compliance within 30 days.

The Ad-hoc lecturers who were provisionally hired for semester to semester basis by the Governmental Educational moved the complaint under sec-

tion 10 of the FTO ordinance 2000. They were paid Rs. 36,000 and Income Tax at the rate of 20% was deducted from their monthly salary despite their salaries were not liable to be taxed. As per the findings established by the FTO in the income tax ordinance was that Legal provisions governing "Salary Taxation" i.e. Section 12 and 149 of Income Tax Ordinance, 2001 neither obligate any valid contract of employment, nor place any other condition for a case to be treated as a salaried case except for the basic parameter of employment which is employer employee equation based on "Master-Servant Relationship". Whether Regular, Ad-hoc, Temporary, Hired, Daily Wages, all are the different shades & forms of employment and law doesn't create any distinction among all the above forms. And as law does not allow any exception for hired lecturer's salary to be excluded from the ambit of salary taxation.

The writer is law Student at Bahria University.

Tax justice in education



CLAIRTON: Firefighters spraying water on the site of an explosion at US Steel's Clairton Coke Works plant in Pennsylvania.

Child dies in Italy as European heatwave sets records

ROME (AFP): A young boy died of heatstroke in Italy while wildfires threatened a UNESCO site in Spain and French cities saw record temperatures, as a heatwave baked Europe. Many towns and cities in France, Italy and the Balkans were put on red alert due to the heat. Wildfires fanned by strong winds forced the evacuations of thousands of people throughout the continent and threatened popular tourist sites in Turkey and Spain.

The four-year-old Romanian boy who died in Italy succumbed days after being found unconscious in his family's car on the island of Sardinia. The news came as Italy's health ministry issued a red alert warning for seven major cities, including Bologna and Florence.

Some 11 Italian cities are on red alert for Tuesday, and 16 cities. Red alerts were also announced in southern France and on the Adriatic and Ionian coasts in the Balkans. "The heatwave currently affecting France, Spain, and the Balkan countries is not surprising. It is driven by a persistent heat dome over Europe," Akshay Deoras, a research scientist at the meteorology department in Britain's University of Reading, told AFP.

"Heatwaves don't roar like storms - they creep in quietly, but can be just as deadly." A blaze, which broke out, damaged a UNESCO World Heritage-listed Roman-era mining site at Les Medulas in northwestern Spain -- famed for its striking red landscape -- and prompted hundreds of residents to evacuate. High temperatures and winds of up to 40 kilometres per hour (25 mph) created "many difficulties" for firefighters

struggling to contain the wildfire, said Juan Carlos Suarez-Quinones, the Castile and Leon regional environment minister. "We will not allow people to return until safety in their communities is absolutely guaranteed," he told reporters, estimating that about 700 people had been displaced. Spain has been in the grip of a heatwave for the past week, with temperatures nearing 40C in many areas and fuelling wildfires.

In the southern tourist town of Tarifa, more than 2,000 people were evacuated, some from hotels and beaches, after a fire that had been subdued flared up again, with more than 100 firefighters battling the flames. In neighbouring Portugal, firefighters were battling three large wildfires in the centre and north of the country, while Morocco is sending two aircraft to help fight the fires after two Portuguese planes broke down. In Italy, around 190 firefighters and the army were tackling a wildfire on Mount Vesuvius that caused the closure of the national park to tourists.

People were evacuated from dozens of homes in the Balkans as firefighters battled blazes in Albania, Montenegro and Croatia, where red alerts were announced. In Albania, hundreds of firefighters and soldiers had subdued most of the nearly 40 fires that flared up in the last 24 hours, according to the defence ministry, but more than a dozen were still active. Since the start of July, nearly 34,000 hectares (84,000 acres) have been scorched nationwide, according to the European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS). Police

allege that many of the blazes were deliberately lit, with more than 20 people arrested in recent weeks.

Just outside the capital of neighbouring Montenegro, where temperatures soared to 40C, fire crews managed to save dozens of homes when a blaze broke out in inaccessible terrain. In Croatia, around 150 firefighters also spent the night defending homes from a blaze near the port city of Split. In the northwestern Turkish province of Canakkale, more than 2,000 people were evacuated and 77 people received hospital treatment for smoke inhalation after several fires broke out around the tourist village of Guzelyali, authorities said. Several homes and cars caught ablaze, according to images shown on Turkish media, while more than 760 firefighters, 10 aeroplanes, nine helicopters and more than 200 vehicles were deployed to battle the flames. Turkey had just experienced its hottest July since records began 55 years ago. Temperature records were broken in at least four weather stations in southern France, as the government called for vigilance.

The southwestern city of Bordeaux hit a record 41.6C while all-time records were also broken at meteorological stations in Bergerac, Cognac and Saint Giron, according to the national weather service, Meteo France. The heatwave, the country's second this summer, began and was forecast to last possibly until August 19 or 20. At least 12 French departments were placed on red alert, the country's highest heat warning, with four more expected on Tuesday.

No bread, no fuel, no dollars: How Bolivia went from boom to bust

LA PAZ (AFP): A bread roll has become a symbol of a severe economic crisis in Bolivia that looks set to decide the outcome of the most significant elections in nearly two decades. The marraqueta, which is subsidized by the state, is the baguette of Bolivia. But even the humble "battle bread," as it is nicknamed, is hard to come by these days in La Paz as the government runs out of the dollars it needs to import essentials such as fuel and wheat.

Ligia Maldonado, 70, tried over a dozen street stalls for what she calls the "bread of the poor" but went home empty-handed. "This government offers no hope," she said disconsolately. Bolivians go the polls in the first round of presidential and parliamentary elections which could see a country that steadfastly voted left for a generation swing to the right. Opinion polls show voters poised to punish the ruling MAS party, which has been in power for 19 years, for socialist policies that, like in Venezuela, lifted millions out of poverty in the 2000s but are now blamed

for leading the country to ruin. Carlos Tavera, a 70-year-old socialist activist, says the best-placed opposition candidate would get his vote, even if it meant backing a right-wing candidate. "Anyone else would be better than this," he said. As in parts of Venezuela, life for many in Bolivia has become a daily slog to find affordable subsidized goods. The lines at gas stations in La Paz at times extend for nearly up to a kilometer (0.6 miles). "This morning I came at 6:00 am, and at 11:00 am. I'm just getting in to fill up," Manuel Osinaga, a taxi driver, told AFP at a gas station in La Paz. Wheat, used to make flour for bread, is also becoming scarce, as is cooking oil and rice and medication. Wilson Paz, a 39-year-old self-employed man, said he was forced to buy expensive unsubsidized bread to feed his family of seven.

"We can't wait for these elections to arrive in order to change this (economic) model, which has impoverished us so much," he added, without revealing how he would vote. In the

heyday of former leftist president Evo Morales, in the 2010s, things were very different. Bolivia, which has Latin America's second-biggest natural gas deposits, was being talked up as one of the region's hottest economies, powered by a commodities boom. But years of falling gas output, caused by underinvestment in energy exploration, have caused the country to go from boom to bust. Gas exports only brought in \$1.6 billion last year, down from a peak of \$6.1 billion in 2013. The dollar has doubled in value against the local boliviano in less than a year, which is in turn fuelling annual inflation of 24.8 percent, the highest level since at least 2008. The shortages of basics have sent Bolivians repeatedly into the streets over the past year, in protest over outgoing President Luis Arce's handling of the crisis. Napoleon Pacheco, an economics professor at the state-run Universidad Mayor de San Andres, said the economic meltdown had erased gains in living standards made under MAS. "The little that had

been gained in previous years has been lost because the economy has contracted," he told AFP.

The official poverty rate is listed at 36-37 percent, but if rising inflation were accounted for, 44 percent of Bolivians would be considered poor, according to the Jubileo Foundation, a Bolivian think-tank. The government has sought to stabilize the economy by printing money -- a policy that the two election frontrunners, center-right multimillionaire Samuel Doria Medina and hard-right former president Jorge Quiroga have vowed to end. Doria Medina and Quiroga have also pledged to close loss-making public companies, and both they and leading left-wing candidate Andronico Rodriguez have vowed to cut fuel subsidies, among other austerity measures. On a walkabout in La Paz last week Quiroga told AFP that Bolivians could expect "radical change (to) regain 20 lost years" if he were elected. "I believe a period is coming, to quote Churchill, of blood, toil, and tears. We must buckle up," said Pacheco.

Iraq announces nationwide power outage amid 'record' heat

BAGHDAD (AFP): Power was out across Iraq as scorching summer temperatures pushed electricity grid demand to unprecedented levels, authorities said. The outage came amid a heatwave that Iraqi meteorological services expect to last more than a week, with temperatures climbing as high as 50C in parts of the country. Mitigating the grid interruption was the fact that most households rely on private generators, acquired to compensate for daily power cuts to public electricity.

The electricity ministry

said the grid suffered a "total outage" after two transmission lines were shut down "due to a record rise in temperatures, increased consumer demand, and increased electrical load in the provinces of Babylon and Karbala, which are experiencing an influx of millions of pilgrims" for a major Shiite Muslim religious commemoration. The shutdown caused "a sudden and accidental loss of more than 6,000 megawatts on the grid", the ministry added, with power plants also halting operations. "Our teams are

currently mobilised on the ground to gradually restore the grid over the next few hours," the ministry said. The northern Kurdistan region was spared. The autonomous territory has worked to modernise its power sector and was able to provide round-the-clock state electricity to a third of its population. Authorities later announced that power was being restored in stages in the southern provinces of Dhi Qar and Maysan, with the strategic port city of Basra expected to have electricity back by dawn on Tuesday. Electricity

shortages are a frequent complaint in Iraq, which is sometimes rocked by protests when outages worsen in the hot summer months. Heatwaves in Iraq are "more intense and more frequent" than they were in the 20th century, meteorological service spokesman Amer al-Jaberi told AFP, blaming climate change and human factors. He said gas emissions and fumes from private generators "contribute to the rise in temperatures", and called for the creation of a "green belt" around Baghdad "so the city can breathe a little".

Jellyfish force French nuclear plant shutdown

PARIS (AFP): A nuclear plant in northern France was temporarily shut down after a swarm of jellyfish clogged pumps used to cool the reactors, energy group EDF said. The automatic shutdowns of four units "had no impact on the safety of the facilities, the safety of personnel, or the environment", EDF said on its website.

"These shutdowns are the result of the massive and unpredictable presence of jellyfish in the filter drums of the pumping stations," the Gravelines plant operator said. The site was fully shut after the incident, with its two other units already offline for maintenance. Teams were carrying out inspections to restart the production units "in complete safety", EDF said, adding the units were expected to restart. "There is no risk of a power shortage," the company added, saying other energy sources, including solar power, were operational. Gravelines is Western Europe's largest nuclear power plant with six reactors, each with the capacity to produce 900 megawatts. The site is due to open two next-generation reactors, each with a capacity of 1,600 megawatts, by 2040.

This is not the first time jellyfish have shut down a nuclear facility, though EDF said such incidents were "quite rare", adding the last impact on its operations was in the 1990s. There have been cases of plants in other countries shutting down due to jellyfish invasions, notably a three-day closure in Sweden in 2013 and a 1999 incident in Japan that caused a major drop in output. Experts say overfishing, plastic pollution and climate change have created conditions allowing jellyfish to thrive and reproduce.

Refugees in Kenya impacted by food aid cuts

NAIROBI: The World Food Programme (WFP) has said it will need to drastically cut rations to refugees in Kenya due to reductions in global aid, including major funding cuts from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Residents of the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps were beginning to feel the impact of food aid cuts as the WFP implemented a new assistance system there in which certain groups are prioritised over others.

The WFP said aid is being cut by 60 percent for the most vulnerable groups, including pregnant women and disabled people, and by 80 percent for refugees with some kind of income. The two camps host nearly 800,000 people fleeing conflict and drought in Somalia and South Sudan, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "WFP's operations supporting refugees in Kenya are under immense strain," Baimankay Sankoh, WFP's deputy country director in Kenya, said in May. "With available resources stretched to their limits, we have had to make the difficult decision to again reduce food assistance. This will have a serious impact on vulnerable refugees, increasing the risk of hunger and malnutrition." "There has been a lot of tension in the last couple of weeks or so," Al Jazeera's Catherine Soi said, reporting from Kakuma.

"People were very angry about what WFP is calling the priority food distribution, where some people will not get food at all and others are going to get a small fraction of the food." These tensions boiled over, triggering protests last week, which left one person dead and several others injured, said Soi, adding that WFP officials she spoke with said the aid cuts from organisations like USAID meant they have had to make "very difficult decisions about who gets to eat and who doesn't". WFP worker Thomas Chica explained to Soi that the new system was rolled out after assessments were conducted by WFP and its partners. — Al Jazeera

Sudan's Rapid Support Forces kill 40 people in Darfur

CAIRO (AP): Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces launched attacks in a famine-stricken displacement camp outside of el-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur province, killing 40 people, local rights groups said.

The Emergency Response Rooms group working at the Abu Shouk displacement camp said in a statement on Facebook that the RSF - which is at war with the Sudanese military - raided parts of the camp targeting citizens inside their homes. The community activist group, which provides assistance across Sudan, said at least 19 people were also injured.

The Abu Shouk displacement camp outside of el-Fasher, which houses around 450,000 displaced people, has been repeatedly attacked over the course of the war. The Sudanese military has control over el-Fasher despite frequent strikes by the RSF.

Meanwhile, the Resistance Committees in el-Fasher confirmed the attacks, saying on Facebook that the scene "reflected the extent of the horrific violations committed against innocent, defenseless people." The Resistance Committees are a group of local citizens from the community that includes human rights activists. The Humanitarian Research Lab at Yale University posted satellite imagery showing 40 vehicles present at the Abu

Shouk Camp. In an effort to corroborate reports of the RSF attacks, the lab said the vehicles were in the northwest neighborhoods of the camp.

In its report, Yale HRL said it gathered and analyzed photos and footage allegedly "showing RSF shooting at people crawling away from them and berating and using ethnic slurs." Other satellite imagery gathered by the group apparently showed the RSF blocking routes that people use to escape el-Fasher by controlling points across the el-Fasher to Kutum road north of the city and an opening in the direction of Mellit, North Darfur. The civil war in Sudan erupted in April 2023 in the capital Khartoum before spreading across the country following simmering tensions between the RSF and the army. The fighting has killed over 40,000 people, displaced as many as 12 million and pushed many to the brink of famine. The Abu Shouk camp is one of two camps with strong famine conditions, according to humanitarians.

The Sudanese army said it clashed with RSF fighters in el-Fasher beginning at around 6 a.m. and ending in the afternoon. It claimed it defeated the paramilitary group, according to its posts on social media. "Our forces repelled a large-scale attack from several axes by the terrorist militia and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy in lives and

equipment, as more than 16 combat vehicles were destroyed and burned and 34 vehicles, including armored cars, were captured," the army claimed in a statement. The RSF said on its Telegram channel that it made advances in el-Fasher and seized military equipment, without providing further details. Darfur Gov. Mini Arko Minawi said on Facebook that el-Fasher "triumphed over those who betrayed their land" in an apparent reference to the RSF in fight.

Meanwhile, in North Kordofan province the RSF has been accused of displacing over 3,000 families from 66 villages due to fighting since early August, according to the Sudan Doctors Network. The group also said the RSF looted the properties of those people and stole their money and livestock. Those displaced ended up arriving at Khartoum and White Nile provinces last week. The recent attacks on the villages in the province killed 18 civilians and injured dozens, according to the latest update by the United Nations. UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric warned of the "extreme dire situation" in Sudan, while Edem Wosornum, the operations and advocacy director at the UN's humanitarian affairs agency, sounded the alarm over the situation in el-Fasher, saying over 60 people died from malnutrition in only one week, mostly women and children.

Azerbaijan, Armenia publish text of deal

TBILISI/BAKU (Reuters): Armenia and Azerbaijan published the text of a US-brokered peace agreement, pledging to respect each other's territorial integrity and formally put an end to nearly four decades of conflict. The deal was struck in Washington, when Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan met with US President Donald Trump at the White House.

The text of the agreement, which was initiated by the countries' foreign ministers, says Yerevan and Baku will relinquish all claims to each other's territory, refrain from using force against one another and pledge to respect international law. "This agreement is a solid foundation for establishing a reliable and lasting peace, the result of an agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan that reflects the balanced interests of the two countries," Pashinyan wrote on Facebook. Armenia and Azerbaijan, neighbours in the South Caucasus region, have been locked in conflict since the late 1980s over Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous region at the southern end of the Karabakh mountain range, within Azerbaijan. Baku took back full control of the region in 2023, prompt-

ing almost all of the territory's 100,000 ethnic Armenians to flee to Armenia.

The European Union, NATO member Turkey and Russia have welcomed the accord, although Moscow, a traditional broker and ally of Armenia, was left out and warned against foreign meddling. The deal explicitly bans the deployment of third-party forces along the countries' shared border, a possible reference to Russia, which has previously deployed peacekeepers to the region and still has extensive military and security interests in Armenia. The European Union also has a mission deployed at the border to monitor ceasefire violations, which Baku has repeatedly demanded it withdraw. The peace deal has not yet been signed by the two rivals, who both gained their independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

In a major hurdle to peace, Azerbaijan is demanding that Armenia change its constitution, which Baku says makes an implicit claim on Azerbaijani territory. Baku said "further actions" were required to sign the peace agreement, including amendments to Armenia's constitution that would "eliminate territorial claims

against Azerbaijan." Aliyev, who has led Azerbaijan since 2003, told reporters in Washington last week that Yerevan "has some homework to do" regarding its founding charter, adding that after the changes have been made, "the peace agreement can be signed at any time." Pashinyan this year called for a referendum to change the constitution, but no date for it has been set yet. The potential peace deal would transform the South Caucasus, an energy-rich region neighbouring Russia, Europe, Turkey and Iran that is crisscrossed by oil and gas pipelines but has been hamstrung by closed borders and decades-old ethnic conflicts.

At the White House meeting, the United States gained exclusive development rights to a strategic transit corridor in the region that the Trump administration said would boost bilateral economic ties and allow for greater exports of energy. The management and development of that corridor, which will run through southern Armenia and connect most of Azerbaijani territory with Nakhchivan, an Azerbaijani exclave that borders Baku's ally Turkey, was also a stumbling block to initial peace efforts.

Colombia presidential hopeful dies after June rally shooting

BOGOTA (AFP): Colombian presidential candidate Miguel Uribe has died two months after being shot at a campaign rally, his family said, as the attack rekindled fears of a return to the nation's violent past. The 39-year-old conservative senator, a grandson of former president Julio Cesar Turbay (1978-1982), was shot in the head and leg on June 7 at a rally in the capital Bogota by a suspected 15-year-old hitman.

Despite signs of progress in recent weeks, his doctors announced he had suffered a new brain hemorrhage. "To break up a family is the most horrific act of violence that can be committed," his widow Maria Claudia Tarazona said at his wake, where she thanked her husband's medical team for their efforts. She attended the state ceremony at Congress in Bogota, where Uribe's body will remain for public viewing.

Authorities have arrested six suspects linked to the

attack, including the alleged shooter, who was captured at the scene by Uribe's bodyguards. Following a nationwide manhunt, police announced the arrest of an alleged mastermind behind the attack, Elder Jose Arteaga Hernandez, alias "El Costeno." Police have also pointed to a dissident wing of the defunct FARC guerrilla group as being behind the assassination. The attack on Uribe, a leading candidate ahead of the 2026 presidential election, has reopened old wounds in a country wracked by violence. His own mother, journalist Diana Turbay, was killed in a botched 1991 police operation to free her from cocaine kingpin Pablo Escobar's Medellin cartel.

Four presidential candidates were assassinated during the worst phase of violence in the 1980s and 1990s under Escobar, who terrorized citizens of Bogota, Medellin and elsewhere with a campaign of

bombings. Writing on X, left-wing President Gustavo Petro, of whom Uribe was a fierce critic, said the government's role was to "repudiate crime... regardless of ideology" and assured the safety of Colombians was his top priority. "Today is a sad day for the country," Vice President Francia Marquez said on social media. "Violence cannot continue to mark our destiny. Democracy is not built with bullets or blood, it is built with respect, with dialogue." Uribe had fiercely criticized Petro's strategy of "total peace," based on engaging all of Colombia's remaining armed groups, including drug traffickers, in dialogue. He announced in October he would seek to succeed the term-limited Petro in the May 2026 election. Uribe was elected to Bogota's city council at age 26, later becoming its youngest-ever chairperson and then the mayor's right-hand man.

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Antarctica not arena for bloc confrontation

AUSTRALIA'S ABC News claimed on Sunday that the United States administration's funding cuts to science programs in Antarctica "could create a void for China and Russia to fill", which should be a cause of concern for Canberra.

To interpret China's normal scientific activities in Antarctica as a "threat" to Australia's national interest reflects a misguided and narrow mindset that ignores international law. It also brings to light the political bias and selfishness harbored by some in Australia who regard Antarctica as their country's own backyard.

In contrast to China's growing scientific footprint in Antarctica, the US, the traditional leader in Antarctic diplomacy and research, has significantly reduced funding for both Antarctica's largest research and logistics station, McMurdo, and the National Science Foundation which funds US research in Antarctica.

China now has five research stations on the continent, with the latest outpost, Qinling, officially opened and put into operation in February last year. The country has also, for the first time, overtaken the US in the number of research papers on Antarctica published in the past year.

China's increasing presence and contributions in the region, consistent with its status as a consultative party to the Antarctic Treaty, are conducted strictly in accordance with the Antarctic Treaty System and should be recognized as being an important international public good. These efforts enhance humanity's scientific understanding of the remote southernmost continent and promote peaceful cooperation on and sustainable development of Antarctica.

The country's upgraded infrastructure construction on the continent is not only a practical necessity for conducting research in one of the world's harshest environments, but also "provides a platform for China's cooperation with other countries in scientific exploration, promoting peace and sustainable development in Antarctica", as a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said on the opening of Qinling.

To understand how absurd the Antarctica-related anti-China rhetoric is, it is essential to have a look at the framework governing Antarctica, namely the Antarctic Treaty. The treaty was established in 1959 and entered into force in 1961. It designates the continent as a zone of peace and science while prohibiting military activity, mineral mining and nuclear tests. It emphasizes scientific research and international cooperation, a common-good spirit that has largely been upheld by all its signatories.

The Antarctic Treaty sets out the governance mechanism for Antarctica and provides a system framework for the protection of the continent. The robust governance structure ensures that any nation's activities, including China's, are subject to international scrutiny and regulation.

Yet despite that, efforts at denigrating China and describing it as a "threat" to the region have never ceased. The Centre for Strategic and International Studies, a US think tank, falsely warned during Qinling's construction that the facility, with a satellite ground station, will have inherent dual-use capabilities, a worry that ABC News raised again in its latest report. What they intentionally ignored is that the US already exercised its right of inspection under the treaty to examine Qinling in 2020, and its inspectors found no evidence of militarization.

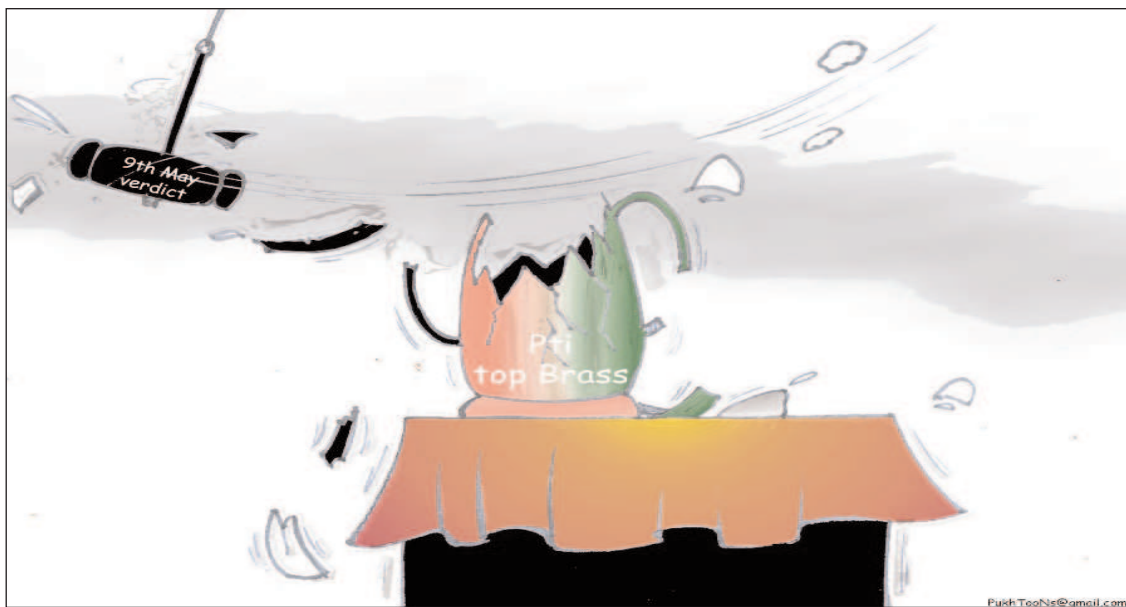
The intentional portrayal of China as a unilateral actor in Antarctica overlooks the collaborative nature of scientific research on the continent. Chinese scientists frequently participate in joint research projects with scientists from other countries, including Australia. This cooperation is facilitated by groups such as the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs, which promotes international scientific collaboration and data sharing. Over the past 40 years, China has become a key driving force in Antarctic scientific exploration.

The notion of a "Chinese threat" in Antarctica is ill-conceived and ill-intentioned. It not only distorts facts, but distracts public attention from more pressing global issues such as climate change, which poses a genuine threat to the continent's fragile ecosystem and our planet as a whole.

All countries involved must keep vigilance against moves that seek to turn Antarctica into another front of bloc confrontation based on ideology. The international community should work to ensure that Antarctica remains a continent of peace and science, benefiting all of humanity. China is willing to work with all parties to compose a new chapter of Antarctic research and protection.

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BLA Exposed: The Shadowy Connection Between Terrorism and Modi Backing

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

THE United States has formally declared the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), an organization notorious for spreading unrest and terrorism in Balochistan, as a terrorist entity. This decisive step comes after years of evidence that the BLA has repeatedly targeted innocent Pakistanis in cold blood, destabilized the region through acts of violence, and worked to further separatist designs against the sovereignty of Pakistan. It is now well-established that these conspiracies have been hatched with the covert assistance of the Modi government in India, which has long harboured malicious intentions toward Pakistan. The announcement is widely seen as a significant victory in Pakistan's ongoing war against terrorism, reaffirming the nation's stance that the perpetrators of violence will eventually face the weight of global justice.

For years, the Modi administration has extended material, logistical, and ideological support to the BLA, using it as a proxy to stoke ethnic divisions and weaken Pakistan internally. India's designs in this regard are neither new nor hidden; the pattern of interference stretches back decades.

The day is not far when Narendra Modi himself, for his persistent sponsorship of terrorist outfits and acts of state terror, will also stand condemned as a terrorist on the world stage.

His government's record is soaked in the blood of innocents—both Muslims and non-Muslims across India—through calculated campaigns of hate, persecution, and political violence.

The BLA's crimes speak for themselves. It has orchestrated targeted attacks on Chinese engineers and workers involved in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

(CPEC), seeking to sabotage developmental projects vital for Pakistan's economic future. Notable incidents include the attack on the Pearl Continental Hotel in Gwadar in May 11, 2019, which left several dead; the assault on the Pakistan Stock Exchange in Karachi in 29 June 2020, foiled by brave law enforcement personnel; and the November 23, 2018 strike on the Chinese consulate in Karachi. The group has repeatedly targeted security personnel, civilians, and economic infrastructure, often claiming responsibility with open pride. Its tactics are drawn from the most dangerous playbook of insurgency—combining guerrilla strikes with media propaganda to create fear and instability.

Behind the façade of political rhetoric, the BLA operates as a mercenary force for foreign powers hostile to Pakistan's territorial integrity. Evidence collected by Pakistan's intelligence agencies, later corroborated by independent observers, has traced arms, ammunition, and financial channels back to India. Confessions by captured militants have revealed training camps, safe havens, and funding pipelines across the border. India's notorious intelligence agency, RAW, has been repeatedly linked to these operations, with the notorious arrest of Commander Kulbhusan Jadhav serving as irrefutable proof of such interference. Narendra Modi's own history with terrorism is well-documented. His tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat saw one of the worst episodes of anti-Muslim violence in India's history, where thousands were killed in state-condoned riots.

International human rights organizations have termed these atrocities as state-sponsored pogroms. Moreover, credible reports

and investigations have implicated Modi and his allies in false-flag operations aimed at framing Pakistan. The burning of the Samjhauta Express in 18 February 2007, which claimed the lives of dozens of Pakistani and Indian passengers, and the 2008 Mumbai attacks, remain deeply controversial, with strong suspicions of state complicity in manipulating the narrative for political gains. Modi's involvement in such affairs was serious enough to result in a temporary ban on his entry into the United States.

The ideological foundations of his politics are no less dangerous. Modi, as a lifelong member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), upholds a vision rooted in Hindu supremacism, which refuses to accept the existence of a plural, multi-religious India. This ideology is the same that inspired violence during the Partition of 1947, the destruction of the Babri Masjid in December 6, 1992, and the current wave of mob lynchings and anti-minority legislation. The same toxic ideology was put into practice in 1971, when India openly supported and armed the Mukti Bahini in then-East Pakistan.

In an unguarded moment, standing alongside Sheikh Hasina Wajid in Dhaka, Modi proudly admitted to aiding these forces in dismembering Pakistan. This confession alone stands as a permanent indictment of his moral character and political intent. The fate of those who sow division and bloodshed is rarely different from that of their victims. Sheikh Hasina Wajid, who made her political fortune by aligning with Modi and perpetuating hostility toward Pakistan, now finds herself facing political collapse.

History has a way of catching up with those who

place personal ambition above peace. It is only a matter of time before Modi and his political machinery—built on propaganda, intimidation, and bloodshed—meet a similar fate.

Pakistan, despite being on the frontlines of the global war on terror for more than two decades, has borne the brunt of the sacrifices. Tens of thousands of its civilians and soldiers have laid down their lives to defend the nation's sovereignty and to preserve peace in the region. The recognition of the BLA as a terrorist group by the United States is a long-overdue vindication of Pakistan's stance. It strengthens the case for international action against state sponsors of terrorism, no matter how powerful or well-connected they may be.

The war against terrorism is not merely a military campaign—it is a battle of narratives and a test of political will. Pakistan's resilience, fortified by the blood of its martyrs and the unity of its people, has ensured that hostile designs have been thwarted time and again. While the BLA and its foreign patrons have sought to exploit local grievances, their agenda has been exposed as one serving foreign interests rather than the welfare of Balochistan's people.

The recent development is a reminder that global opinion can be swayed when facts are undeniable. It is also a call to continue exposing and isolating those who seek to destabilize Pakistan under the guise of politics, ethnic rights, or religious ideology. In the long arc of history, truth and justice, though often delayed, have a way of prevailing over lies and violence. The recognition of the BLA as a terrorist group may be one step, but it is a crucial one in dismantling the network of terror that thrives on deceit, bloodshed, and foreign sponsorship.

Anas raised his voice, but the world refused to listen

“I have lived pain in all its details and I have tasted pain and loss repeatedly. Despite this, I have never hesitated to convey the truth as it is, without distortion or falsification. May God be a witness against those who remained silent and accepted our killing, and against those who choked our breath and whose hearts were not moved by the scattered remains of our children and women, and who did nothing to stop the massacre our people have faced for more than a year and a half.”

This is what Anas al-Sharif wrote in his “will” prepared four months before his martyrdom. It was posted on his social media account several hours after an Israeli strike killed him and journalists Mohammed Qreieq, Ibrahim Zaher, Mohammed Noufal and Moamen Aliwa at a media tent near al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City.

Anas al-Sharif was one of Gaza's heroes. He was — without a doubt — the journalist closest to all our hearts.

People here in Gaza often hate the media. They see journalists either exaggerate and portray us as superhumans, able to withstand relentless bombing, the deprivation of food and water, and the loss of loved ones; or demonise us as “terrorists”, justifying the killing of our families and the destruction of our homes.

Anas was different; he did not distort the truth. He was one of us: raised in our

refugee camps, suffering with us under bombs and amid starvation, mourning his loved ones, refusing to leave his community. He stayed behind in Gaza, steadfast like an olive tree, a living example of a true Palestinian.

Anas started reporting for Al Jazeera at the start of the genocide, but he quickly became a familiar face. He and Ismail al-Ghoul did not stop broadcasting from northern Gaza even when they faced constant threats. Their warm friendship, and the funny and sad moments they shared, made us feel closer to them.

After the martyrdom of Ismail last year — may God have mercy on him — we felt we had lost a dear brother, and were left only with Anas.

Last month, when Anas broke down on camera while reporting on the starvation, people told him: “Keep going, Anas, don't stop, you are our voice.”

And indeed, he was our voice. We often imagined that when the end of the genocide comes, we will hear it announced by Anas al-Sharif's voice. There was no journalist in the world more deserving of declaring that moment than Anas.

For me, Anas was more than just a reporter. He was an inspiration. He was the reason I picked up my pen every time I lost hope that anything would change because of what I write. I saw Anas reporting tirelessly — hungry or full, in summer

or winter, threatened with death or surrounded by cameras.

His persistence convinced me I was wrong to believe that documenting the genocide was not moving anyone outside. Anas made me believe our story can reach where we cannot, crossing seas and oceans to every part of the world. And his resilience, working every day, every hour, forced me to hope ... hope that if we kept speaking, someone might listen.

Anas is now gone, and I feel I was wrong to hope, wrong to believe in the justice of this world, watching him appeal — with eyes overflowing with tears — to a global conscience that proved to be low and selective.

They did not deserve your tears, Anas! They did not deserve your self-sacrifice so they would know our story. They did not hear because they refuse to.

You raised your voice, Anas, but you were calling out to those without conscience.

I wished the war had ended before you were martyred so I could go find you in Gaza and tell you that our voices had succeeded, they had reached to the outside world and driven change. I would have told you that you were my role model and your work kept me going. And if at that moment, you had smiled and called me your colleague, I would have cried with joy.

Your coverage ended,

Anas, but the genocidal war did not. Today, we look helplessly at the vile occupation boasting about targeting you before the entire world — the same world you pleaded with until your last breath. Countries around the world remain silent; for them, economic deals and political interests are worth more than human lives.

Yet, the occupation will not silence us, Anas. It wants us to die without a voice because our voice, while we groan in pain and cry from loss, disturbs it, interferes with its genocidal drive.

Gaza will not give birth to another like you, Anas, nor someone like writer and poet Refaat Alareer, nor like hospital director Marwan al-Sultan. The occupation is targeting the best and brightest, those who have raised their voices and shown the world what Palestinians of dignity and integrity can do.

But we will not stay silent after these violent murders. Even if we know the world will not listen, we will keep speaking — because it is our fate and duty.

We, the living Palestinians who survived this genocide, have to carry the legacy of our martyrs.

For me, that means speaking, writing, and exposing the crimes of this bloody and brutal occupation ... until the day you dreamed of, Anas — the day this genocide, the most horrific in modern history, ends. The day you return to your ancestral home in al-Majdal and I return to my village, Yibna.

Why is India so scared of my book on Kashmir that it has banned it?

Anuradha Bhasin

ON August 5, 2019, the Indian government stripped the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state of its special status under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, split it into two entities and demoted the two units to Union Territories under New Delhi's direct control.

As the sixth anniversary approached, the region was caught in the grip of rumours of a probable further division, or other administrative changes. Reports of unusual jet activity over Srinagar triggered widespread panic among residents.

This evoked harrowing memories of similar aerial activity coupled with a similarly bizarre set of rumours in the tense days leading up to August 5, 2019. People waited anxiously.

The bombshell that came on the sixth anniversary was an official order banning 25 books that focus on Jammu and Kashmir's history and politics — all accused of promoting “false narratives” and “secessionism” — a sweeping judgement that does not stand the test of scrutiny and is not based on any evidence.

My book A Dismantled State: The Untold Story of Kashmir After Article 370, published in December 2022 by HarperCollins, is one of them. The book is a rare chronicle of the day-to-day reality in Jammu and Kashmir after 2019. Based on ground research, extensive interviews and the collation of data from other primary and secondary sources, it punctured the Indian government's claims of “normalcy” in Jammu and Kashmir.

The government justified the actions of August 5, 2019 on the grounds that they would usher in peace and development in the region, while glossing over the unprecedented physical and cyber-restrictions imposed across the erstwhile state, during which thousands of people, including pro-India politicians (three former chief ministers included), were arrested. Barbed wire and military barricades turned the region, particularly the Kashmir Valley, into a curfewed zone, and communication channels — from internet to telephone lines — were pushed into some black hole.

Six months later, when some of these restrictions were slightly eased and the internet was partially restored, the stranglehold of the Indian state became even more oppressive, with an exacerbation of raids and crackdowns against journalists, political and social activists, and civil rights defenders. The policy of widespread detentions under laws like the Public Safety Act, which allows the government to detain anyone without charge for up to two years, was ramped up significantly.

These realities were hardly ever reported. Journalism was severely curtailed under the state's clampdown, particularly affecting local publications. Newspapers that refused to fall in line were choked financially until they were out of print. Those that did comply were rewarded with lavish government advertisements that kept the businesses going, minus the journalism.

Either co-opted or terrorised, the newspapers were no longer daily chroniclers of the events, developments and incidents in the region. Community voices were silenced while journalists no longer asked questions. The rich archives of some newspapers, showcasing the complex day-to-day history of the region, became inaccessible or were removed.

In the last six years, the government has been extremely intolerant of any criticism. Any word of dissent invites punitive measures ranging from mere intimidation and interrogation to confiscation of devices, and from the slapping of income tax and money laundering cases to terrorism accusations, sometimes accompanied by short detentions or prolonged arrests. While local journalism was reduced to an extension of the government's public relations department, all civil society voices were throttled by intimidation, leaving major gaps in information.

It was this vacuum that my book aimed to fill. Focused on the first two years of the revocation of Article 370, and in 12 chapters, I documented what was happening on the ground — the increased suppression of the masses, the lack of space for freedom of expression, the shrinking space for civil society and political activism, the criminalisation of dissent, the continuation of terrorism as opposed to the claims of peace and normalcy, and the hollowness of the development claims by the government even as the new policies and actions robbed the people of their homes and agricultural lands.

The book is a pursuit of truth — the naked truth, which challenged everything the Indian state was saying. A paranoid state whose only method of engagement in Jammu and Kashmir is through increasing its military footprint, merciless subjugation of the residents and silencing of all voices of dissent was obviously uncomfortable with what I documented. The book was a warning to the government that its methods of control, creation of a police and surveillance state, and misplaced development models were unsustainable and would fail.

In the last six years, the government has been pulling the wool over the eyes of the world by trumpeting its achievements of bringing peace, normalcy, tourism and development. The April 22 killings this year of 26 innocent civilians punctured this bubble. It was a wake-up call for the government to sit back and review its policies in Kashmir and begin course correction.

Instead, it clamped down even further with a horrific scale of demonisation of Kashmiris, ruthless detentions and even more brutal demolitions of houses. This, even as there was widespread public condemnation of terrorism, including vigils and calls to reject violence — something unprecedented in the more than three-decade-long history of rebellion in the region — and even as the investigators indicated foreign militants, not locals, were involved in the killings.

In the last three months, the government has demonstrated that its policy of control through harsh security measures and pervasive surveillance would be further accelerated. The ban on 25 books, many of which provide rich, well-researched, and layered historical, political and legal narratives about the complex and trouble-torn region, is an extension of the pattern. Through this ban, there is an attempt to erase every trace of a counter-narrative and alternate memory.

By branding all criticism of the state and narratives that are out of sync with the official version as “seditious”, the government can now seize and destroy these books. Not only are the written words being criminalised — even the act of reading will be wrongfully deemed a threat to the security and integrity of the nation. While this may not stop ideas and memory from being suppressed, policing what people write and read is likely to be further intensified.

Though senseless, shocking and irrational in scale and scope, the ban, which ironically coincides with a government-backed Chinara Book Festival in Srinagar, sends a chilling message: Knowledge and information will be regulated by the state. What people write and read will be decided by the state. The thought police will penetrate deeper.

Last year, during Jammu and Kashmir's first assembly elections as a Union Territory, India's home minister, Amit Shah, took a dig at the regional political parties and alleged that while “they (local politicians) gave the youth stones in their hands”, his government had given them “books and laptops”.

The hollowness of such claims is laid bare when the daily reality is one of confiscation of digital devices, including laptops, during raids and interrogations, alongside a blanket book ban that only reinforces the central message of my work: Kashmir is anything but normal.

— *Al Jazeera*

Prewar protectionism a lesson for world

Syria's legislative rebirth is urgently needed to break from the legal and political legacy of the former establishment and set the country on a path towards meaningful reform. But this process is more than a bureaucratic milestone, it is a test of the transitional authorities' political will to chart a truly inclusive course for the country. If Syrians are to believe in their leaders, the process must prove that it is not simply about filling seats, but about laying the foundations for a state that serves all its citizens.

PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 75.48 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark KSE-100 Index witnessed bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 75.48 more points, a positive of 0.05 percent, closing at 147,0056.32 points against 146,929.84 points last trading day.

A total of 691,658,929 shares were traded during the day as compared to 611,205,197 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 44.549 billion against Rs 44.004 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 482 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 208 of them recorded gains and 242 sustained losses,

whereas the share price of 32 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Yousuf Weaving with 46,269,963 shares at Rs 6.09 per share, Kohinoor Spinning with 39,944,966 shares at Rs6.47 per share and Invest Bank with 34,389,034 shares at Rs 9.68 per share.

PIA Holding Company LimitedB witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 156.85 per share price, closing at Rs 29,000.00, whereas the runner-up was Khyber Textile Mills Limited with Rs69.71 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,477.00.

Nestle Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs88.57 per

share closing at Rs 8,762.79 followed by Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited with Rs79.40 decline in its share price to close at Rs32,020.61.

Meanwhile, in the future market, as many as 323 companies traded shares in the market out of which 164 witnessed gain, 154 loss where the prices of 5 companies remained unchanged.

Rupee gains 04 paise against US Dollar

The Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 04 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 282.41 against the previous day's closing Rs 282.45.

However, according to

the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 284.2 and Rs 285.7, respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 68 pasia to close at Rs 328.15 against the last day's closing of Rs 328.83, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen came down by 01 pasia and closed at Rs 1.90, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound remained stagnant at Rs 380.07.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 01 paise each and closed at Rs 76.89 and Rs 75.25, respectively.

NCHR and Parliamentarians unite on National Minorities Day — to champion equality, religious freedom and inclusion



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) marked National Minority Day with a commemorative event at its Head Office in Islamabad, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to equality, religious freedom, and social inclusion.

The event was presided over by Manzoor Masih, Member Minorities, NCHR, who delivered a keynote address highlighting the Commission's ongoing

role in promoting and safeguarding the rights of minority communities. He underscored NCHR's initiatives aimed at ensuring social uplift, legal protection, and equal opportunities for all citizens irrespective of religion or belief.

Proceedings commenced with the national anthem, followed by a detailed presentation showcasing the mandate of NCHR and its efforts for advancing minority rights across Pakistan. The gathering brought together represen-

tatives from almost all religious communities, alongside members of the majority community, to demonstrate unity and solidarity.

Distinguished parliamentarians, including Ms. Asia Tanoli, MNA; Dr. Nelson Azeem, Parliamentary Secretary for Health; Ms. Farah Akbar Naz, Parliamentary Secretary for Education, Sports and Culture; and Ms. Mahjabeen Abbasi, MNA, graced the occasion and shared their perspectives. Prominent civil society members and NCHR staff also actively participated.

Speakers paid tribute to the historic role of minority communities in the creation of Pakistan and their continued contributions to the nation's progress. The participants commended NCHR on their work for minority issues. They also commended the govern-

ment's initiatives for minority rights, particularly the official declaration of National Minority Day in line with Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's landmark speech of August 11, 1947, which emphasized equality for all citizens and the freedom of religion.

While acknowledging the progress made, participants noted that certain challenges facing minority communities persist. They called for sustained and collective efforts by the government, civil society, and citizens to foster an inclusive and harmonious Pakistan for all.

The event concluded with a cake-cutting ceremony to mark National Minority Day, followed by a luncheon bringing together all participants in a spirit of fellowship and unity.

Major business community meeting held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Former President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) and Group Leader of United Business Group (UBG), Ghazanfar Bilour, has termed the recent meeting with Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, as extremely constructive and encouraging. During the meeting, the Army Chief expressed his best wishes for the country's business community, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and assured that the establishment-like the federal government will play an active role in resolving the issues faced by the business sector.

Bilour made these remarks while addressing a high-level meeting of the business community, co-chaired by Haji Muhammad Afzal, FPCCI Regional Chairman. The meeting saw strong participation from chamber presidents, association heads, and business leaders representing all districts of the province, including Aun Ali Syed, Vice President FPCCI KP, symbolizing rare unity among the province's business circles.

SVP Sarhad Chamber

Jalil Jan, Vice President Shehryar Khan, former president Fawad Ishaq, President of Mardan Small Traders Taj Muhammad, Group Leader Ehsanullah Bacha, former FPCCI Vice President Haji Ifitkhar, President of Kurram Chamber Niaz Muhammad, President of Abbottabad Chamber Haji Maqbool Khan, former President of Swabi Chamber Babar Humayun, Vice President of Swat Chamber Khalid Khan, Adnan Ali (Swat Chamber), Nawaz Mandori (Mardan Small Traders & Small Industry), Car Dealers Chairman Bakht Mir Jan Durrani, former Sarhad Chamber President Faiz Muhammad Faizi, Jahan Alam Bacha and Habibullah (Lower Dir Chamber), Zahida Ifitkhar (Mardan Women Chamber), Rabia Basri (Peshawar Women Chamber), Senior Vice President Swat Chamber Khursheed Iqbal, Muhammad Shahenshah (Nowshera Chamber), Lali Shah (President Bajaur Chamber), Executive Member Bannu Chamber Hazrat Bilal, Haji Qadeerullah (Waziristan Chamber), and Atta-ur-Rehman and Malik Ashiq (Hattar Industrial Area).

In their joint address,

Ghazanfar Bilour and Haji Muhammad Afzal reaffirmed that UBG, FPCCI, and the Sarhad Chamber are jointly coordinating with both the federal government and the establishment to advocate for business-friendly reforms and solutions. They emphasized the need to declare the tribal districts as permanent tax-free zones to boost investment and commercial activity in the region.

The speakers also highlighted the urgent need for tangible steps to promote free trade with neighboring countries and to resolve issues related to border trade. They shared that a comprehensive briefing on the border situation and business-related concerns was given to the Army Chief, who responded positively and assured full support.

Participants unanimously stressed that restoring peace and security in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is essential for the revival and expansion of business activities. It was also decided that a joint meeting of business community representatives, chambers, and associations will be convened every two months to review progress on issue resolution and coordination efforts.

CAP curates 'Dastaan-e-Azaadi'

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Citizens Archive of Pakistan (CAP) has curated Dastaan-e-Azaadi, an exhibition commemorating 78 years of Pakistan, hosted at the Sindh Archives.

This exhibition presents a visual and narrative journey through the Partition of 1947, featuring rare archival material and first-hand accounts from the CAP Archive; bringing history alive through the lived experiences of independence and migration that shaped the nation's identity.

Dastaan-e-Azaadi opened on August 2 and was attended by esteemed guests and government officials including Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, Provincial Minister of Sindh for Energy, Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, Minister for Culture, Tourism, Antiquities & Archives for the Government of Sindh, Saeed Ghani Khaskheli, Provincial Minister for Information, Labor & Human Resources, Cemal Sangu, Consul General of the Republic of Turkey in Karachi, Senator Nisar Ahmad Khuhro, PPP's President, Sindh and Madad Ali Sindh, writer, journalist Former Federal Minister of Education.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Rana Tanveer chairing Board of Governors Meeting of National Seed Development and Regulatory Authority.

Gold prices dip by Rs500 to Rs358,300 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed a decrease of Rs500 on Tuesday and was sold at Rs358,300 against its sale at Rs358,800 on the previous trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs 429 to Rs.307,184 from Rs 307,613 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat went down by Rs 393 to Rs 281,595 from Rs 281,988. The rates of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged and was traded at Rs.4,013 and Rs 3,440 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$5 to \$3,356 from \$3,361 whereas silver remained stagnant at \$37.80, the Association reported.

Lucky Investments asset manager rating upgraded

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Lucky Investments Limited ("Lucky Investments") has been awarded an upgraded Asset Manager Rating of AM2+ with a Stable Outlook by the Pakistan Credit Rating Agency Limited (PACRA).

This achievement reflects the Company's exceptional growth in the Islamic asset management sector, securing over 4% market share within just a few months of operations.

As a full-fledged Islamic asset management company, Lucky Investments is committed to becoming the premier choice for Shariah-compliant investment solutions in Pakistan. Its vision is anchored in sustainable growth, financial inclusion, integrity, and innovation.

Commenting on the development, Mohammad Shoaib, CFA, CEO of

Lucky Investments, said: "We are grateful to Allah (SWT) and to our valued investors for making this milestone possible. The upgraded rating is a testament to our strong sponsor backing, robust governance framework, and professional management team.

We are determined to set new industry benchmarks and will continue to uphold the trust our stakeholders have placed in us."

PACRA's upgraded rating highlights Lucky Investments' solid capital base, sound governance, and strategic sponsor involvement, with active participation on the Board and key committees. It also recognizes the Company's experienced leadership team and proven market track record.

The Stable Outlook reflects the Company's forward-looking initiatives

and its growth potential as these strategies mature. Lucky Investments remains focused on strengthening its institutional framework, creating long-term value, and adhering to global best practices in Islamic finance.

Since the launch of its first fund in April 2025, Lucky Investments' Assets Under Management (AUM) have crossed PKR 80 billion. With its newly acquired Voluntary Pension Scheme (VPS) license, the Company is set to launch its VPS offerings soon, further encouraging retail investor participation in line with its long-term strategy.

In addition, Lucky Investments is actively collaborating with provincial and federal governments to establish dedicated pension funds for government employees.

PepsiCo Pakistan convened Misal-e-Basti Policy Dialogue

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: PepsiCo Pakistan convened the Misal-e-Basti Policy Dialogue, a closed-door high-level roundtable titled Advancing Water Stewardship through Model Communities, with its strategic partner Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). The dialogue earned widespread institutional backing, bringing together senior leadership from the federal government, development institutions, diplomatic community, private sector, academia, and policy circles to mobilize cross-sector momentum for scaling community-based water and climate resilience models into national frameworks.

The dialogue placed a spotlight on Misal-e-Basti, a pioneering Water Stewardship Model Community in Chak RS, Shujabad, near Multan, launched by PepsiCo Pakistan in collaboration with WWF-Pakistan and independently evaluated by SDPI. Launched on World Water Day 2023, the project was inaugurated a year later and, by mid-2025, had undergone a full independent impact assessment by SDPI. The initiative was designed to tackle critical challenges in freshwater availability, wastewater management, sanitation, and hygiene, while building climate resilience and economic opportunity.



The dialogue underscored a paradigm shift in policymaking, from top-down approaches to integrated, community-centered frameworks, with Misal-e-Basti serving as a field-tested, scalable model that links grassroots impact with policy-level transformation. Insights from the dialogue will directly inform SDPI's forthcoming policy recommendations, positioning Misal-e-Basti as a national blueprint for advancing water stewardship and climate resilience.

Before intervention, Chak RS faced severe water insecurity, with 70 percent of residents lacking safe drinking water and 98 percent affected by waterborne diseases. Today, through solar-powered water filtration, rainwater harvesting, floating treatment wetlands, ablation water reuse, and community-led hygiene awareness programs, Misal-e-Basti provides clean drinking water to over 15,000 people, replenishes 20 million liters annually,

reduces waterborne illnesses by 45 percent, and prevents 80,000 kilograms of carbon emissions each year. The improved access has also lowered household healthcare costs, restored local biodiversity, and freed up time for women and children to focus on education and livelihoods.

These measurable results framed the roundtable discussions, where participants emphasized the urgency of translating successful models like Misal-e-Basti into policy action. The project's ability to blend technology, nature-based solutions, and community ownership was repeatedly highlighted as a template that can inform scalable frameworks for water security and climate adaptation in Pakistan.

Chief Guest Dr. Shezra Mansab Ali Khan Kharral, Minister of State for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, commended the initiative, stating, "Misal-e-Basti by PepsiCo Pakistan exempli-

fies how cross-sector collaboration between the public, private, and development sectors, alongside policy think tanks and most importantly the community, can scale solutions that advance sustainable development, climate resilience, and socio-economic progress. This model must be scaled up and embedded into national policy."

For PepsiCo Pakistan, Misal-e-Basti represents a rare example of a private sector initiative intentionally designed with policy integration in mind. Zakiuddin Khalid, Business Head of PepsiCo Pakistan Foods, noted, "Misal-e-Basti shows how a community project, built with strategic partnerships and local ownership, can influence the national policy conversation. This integration of grassroots impact with policy ambition is unique in the private sector, and we call on more partners to join us in taking this framework to other water-stressed communities across Pakistan."

Qalam Qafila Pakistan organizes All-Pakistan mushaira



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: As part of the Independence Day celebrations, Qalam Qafila Pakistan organized an All-Pakistan Mushaira titled "Shining Stars of the Homeland" at the Hazrat Imam Khomeini Hall, Cultural Center of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Peshawar. The event was held in memory of the renowned figure of the Pakistan Movement and close com-

panion of the Father of the Nation, Sardar Rabnawaz Khan Kaukab Sarhadi - a distinguished poet, orator, journalist, and columnist - and his son, the prominent national poet Sardar Farooq Jan Babar Azad.

The Consul General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Peshawar, Ali Banafsheh Khah, was the Chief Guest at the event. The Presidential Panel of the Mushaira included: Dr. Nazir Tabassum (Tamgha-

e-Imtiaz), Naseem Sahar, Hassan Abbas Raza, Dr. Farhat Abbas, and Wafa Chishti. Special guests included Aziz Ejaz (Director General, Iranian Cultural Center Peshawar), Dr. Hussain Chakami, Dr. Shahab Safdar, Dr. Ubaid Baghz Amar, Dr. Saadia Kamal, Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, Rukhsana Niazi, Nusrat Yab Khan Nusrat, and Salma Qasir.

The session was jointly moderated by Nayyar

Sarhadi, son of the late Kaukab Sarhadi and Chairman of Qalam Qafila Pakistan, along with Professor Malik Arshad Hussain. Speakers including Dr. Shaheen Umar (Principal, Frontier Degree College for Women, Peshawar), renowned columnist Aasim Shahid, poet Syed Jamal Zaidi, Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi (President ECO Peshawar), Dr. Saadia Kamal (President, Pakistan Federal Union of

Journalists), Shehzada Kaukab Farooq (son of Farooq Babar Azad) and Tasawar Zaman Babar (grandson of Kaukab Sarhadi), paid tribute to the literary, political, social, and national services of Kokab Sarhadi and Farooq Babar Azad.

The Chief Guest, Consul General Ali Banafsheh Khah, and Dr. Hussain Chakami (Director General of the Iranian Cultural Center) shared enlightening remarks, stating that Kokab Sarhadi set a shining example akin to the Ansar of Madinah during the rehabilitation of migrants at the time of partition. He was a close companion of Quaid-e-Azam, a strong proponent of Muslim unity, a fearless journalist, and a revered poet and intellectual. His youth was spent in Iran and

other Islamic countries. A practitioner of Hafiz Shirazi's poetry, he was a man of high moral character and spiritual disposition.

The speakers expressed regret that today, those who made no contribution to the Pakistan Movement are being honored with prestigious awards, while true heroes, whose sacrifices and services are embedded in the very foundation of this land, remain unknown to the younger generation. They emphasized that it is the need of the hour to introduce such distinguished personalities like Kaukab Sarhadi to future generations so that they may follow in their footsteps.

The ceremony began with the National Anthem of Pakistan followed by the National Anthem of the Islamic Republic of Iran,

with all attendees standing in respect. Shehzada Shoaib Qadri recited the Holy Qur'an, and a naat written by Farooq Babar Azad was presented.

Renowned poets from across the country including Dr. Nazir Tabassum, Naseem Sahar, Hassan Abbas Raza, Dr. Farhat Abbas, Raza Chishti, Aziz Ejaz, Dr. Shahab Safdar, Dr. Ubaid Baghz Amar, Sajjad Baloch, Rukhsana Niazi, Rifaat Anjum, Nusrat Yab Khan Nusrat, Salma Qasir, Malik Arshad Hussain, Nayyar Sarhadi, Nasir Chaudhry, Syed Jamal Zaidi, Ali Shuar Bangash, Akhtar Seemab, Azeem Niazi, Naseem Sahar Junior, Samina Qadir, Nazakat Mirza, Syed Rizwan Haider, and many others presented their patriotic poetry, earning great

appreciation from the audience.

On this occasion, the Kokab Memorial Cricket Team was also formally announced. The Chief Guest, Consul General Ali Banafsheh Khah, presented the team captain Mir Murtaza Kasuriya with a specially designed captain's uniform.

This was the first major event dedicated to paying tribute to the shining stars of the nation - Kaukab Sarhadi and Farooq Babar Azad - in celebration of Pakistan's Independence. The event was attended by a large number of men and women, and distinguished guests were served a formal dinner. The poetic contributions - both romantic and patriotic - deeply moved the audience and received enthusiastic applause.



In brief

Noor Zaman finishes as runner-up

CHENGDU (APP): Pakistan's squash sensation Noor Zaman concluded his World Games 2025 campaign as the plate event runner-up, forced to retire in the final against South Africa's Dewald van Niekerk due to illness in Chengdu, China on Tuesday. Noor showed tremendous grit in the opening games, narrowly losing 10-12, 8-12, while visibly struggling with fever. After going down 0-2, he made the difficult decision to retire, prioritizing his health. "Noor gave everything he had despite being unwell," Pakistan's coach Fahim Gul told APP. "His fighting spirit in those first two games, while running a fever, shows his champion mentality. Health comes first, and we're proud of his silver-medal." According to Fahim, they arrived late in Chengdu, hence could not acclimatise with the conditions, which impacted their preparation.

Islamabad, KP, Punjab teams reach final

ISLAMABAD (APP): The teams of Islamabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have qualified for the final for the team event of Azadi Cup Tenpin Bowling Championship here at the Leisure Bowling Club, F-7, Islamabad team players include Ijaz -ur -Rehman, Daniyal Ijaz, Afzal Akhtar and Ayaz-ur -Rehman. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa team, comprises Naveed Khan, Daniyal Shah, Fahim Akbar, Akhil Shah, Akhil Akhtar, Fahim Akhtar, Akhil Shah, and Fahim Akbar has qualified for final. Muhammad Hussain Chatha, Saleem Baig, Shahzad Rana and Junaid Shafique from Punjab qualified for final. Men and women from across the country are participating in nine categories competitions in the championship. The prizes will be distributed among the players at concluding ceremony of the championship to be held on August 14.

Pakistan team camp to begin on August 16

ISLAMABAD (APP): The national team's training camp for the AFC U-23 Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers will commence on August 16 in Abbottabad. Head coach Nolberto Solano is scheduled to arrive in Pakistan on August 15 and will oversee the camp, which is set to run for two weeks under his supervision, said a press release. A total of 50 players, initially selected through try-outs, will participate in the training camp. The final 23-member squad will be announced at a later stage. As part of the qualifiers, Pakistan will play their first match against Iraq on September 3, followed by a game against host nation Cambodia on September 6. The team will conclude the group stage with a match against Oman on September 9.

PHF president served show-cause notice

ISLAMABAD (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) issued a show-cause notice to the President Hockey Federation of Pakistan (PHF) Tariq Bugti, for not holding elections and financial embezzlement. In the show-cause notice, Tariq Bugti was asked to submit his satisfactory reply within seven days. Tariq Bugti is also facing allegations of violations of rules and regulations and misuse of official funds. Pakistan Sports Board directed Tariq Bugti to submit details of expenditures which he paid by using unauthorized bank accounts.

Brevis smashes record ton as South Africa level T20 series

DARWIN (AFP): Dewald Brevis belted South Africa's highest Twenty20 individual score with a blistering 125 not out from 56 balls as the tourists stayed alive in the three-match series after a 53-run victory over Australia in Darwin on Tuesday.

Australia's decision to bowl backfired as South Africa powered to a massive 218-7 on the back of Brevis' maiden century in international cricket.

The 22-year-old rescued South Africa from a shaky 57-3 and dominated a 126-run partnership with Tristan Stubbs (31).

"I'm extremely grateful, just happy to be out here on the winning side," said Brevis, who surpassed Faf du Plessis' 119 against the West Indies in 2015.

Playing just his ninth T20 international, Brevis smashed eight sixes to leave Australia's powerful batting line-up with an uphill task.

Australia's daunting chase was made more difficult after the early wickets of opener Travis Head (five

and Cameron Green (nine).

Australia's hopes rested with in-form Tim David, fresh off his match-winning 83 in their 17-run victory in the series-opener at the same venue.

Promoted to number four, David started with a trio of boundaries and then bludgeoned several massive sixes, including one that landed on the roof.

But David's 24-ball assault ended on 50 when he hit spearhead Kagiso Rabada straight to cover.

Australia's chase ran out of steam, bowled out for 165 in the 18th over with quicks Corbin Bosch and Kwena Maphaka picking up three wickets each.

"Chasing that down was always going to be tough and we needed a few partnerships, which we couldn't do," Australia captain Mitchell Marsh said.

Without several key batsmen for this tour, South Africa had struggled to fire in the opening game.

Captain Aiden Markram signalled his intent with a sublime boundary off the first ball of the innings, rat-

ting quick Josh Hazlewood. But Markram (18) fell tamely to a fired-up Glenn Maxwell, who celebrated another wicket when he had Lhuan-dre Pretorius (10) stumped to leave South Africa in trouble.

Likened to legendary South Africa batsman AB de Villiers, Brevis turned the innings on its head to power past his previous highest T20 international score of 41.

Brevis received a life on 56 when substitute fielder Matthew Kuhnemann fumbled on the boundary off the bowling of an increasingly frustrated Maxwell.

Brevis made Australia pay and in a flash he was saluting the crowd after reaching his century with a boundary off his 41st delivery. Maxwell and quick Ben Dwarshuis picked up two wickets apiece in an unusually ragged effort in the field for Australia, whose nine-match T20 win streak ended. The series-decider will be played in the Queensland city of Cairns on Saturday.



DARWIN: Dewald Brevis goes airborne.

Arshad Nadeem returns home after successful surgery in UK

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's star javelin thrower has returned home after undergoing successful leg surgery followed by a rehabilitation period in the United Kingdom. He had been experiencing pain in his calf muscle, which had affected his training intensity.

The 28-year-old star underwent the procedure in

Cambridge under the care of renowned UK-based specialist Dr Ali Bajwa, with the medical team confirming that partial muscle damage in Nadeem's calf had been surgically repaired.

Nadeem, who made history by becoming Pakistan's first-ever Olympic gold medalist in athletics, is now set to resume training in Lahore

in the coming days under medical supervision. He has completed post-surgery rehab in London to regain strength and will begin light training in Lahore as per the doctors' advice.

Arshad Nadeem's return has sparked excitement among fans, as he remains Pakistan's biggest hope for another global medal in athletics.

Pakistan hockey get nod to play in Pro League

FAISLABAD (Monitoring Desk): The government has given a green signal to Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) for participation in Pro League.

According to the sources, Advisor on Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanaullah, presided the meeting in which the issue of Pro League was

overlooked. Rana Mujahid, the secretary of PHF briefed about the league, he gave a briefing on the impact of participating in the Pro League on Pakistan Hockey. PHF, PSB and IPC ministry have agreed on the national team's participation in the league.

The secretary PHF will

meet the Additional Secretary Finance in the upcoming days and once the financial matters will settle. The Government and PHF will make an announcement regarding the participation in Pro League. The Secretary IPC and Deputy DG Shahid Islam also participated in the meeting.



FAISALABAD: Action-packed moments from the football match between Faisalabad Blue and Faisalabad White at Divisional Public School and College Ground during Marka-e-Haq Sports Competition on the occasion of Independence Day. —APP Photo



TAROUBA: Shai Hope went from 60 to 100 in 15 balls, West Indies vs Pakistan, 3rd ODI.

Italian athlete dies at World Games in China

CHENGDU (AFP/APP): Italian orienteering athlete Mattia Debertolis died on Tuesday after being found unresponsive during competition at the World Games in China's Chengdu, organisers said.

The 29-year-old was discovered unconscious during an orienteering event on August 8 and died four days later, said a joint statement from World Games organisers and the International Orienteering Federation (IOF).

The World Games is a multisport event held every four years for disciplines not included in the Olympics. "Despite receiving immediate expert medical care at one of China's leading medical institutions, he passed away," the statement said.

It did not provide details on the cause of death. The event took place in intense heat and humidity, with temperatures above 30 degrees. Orienteering sees athletes navigate an unmarked course with a map and compass, punching in at designated spots along the route in the quickest time. Debertolis, from Primiero in eastern Italy, was taking part in the final of the men's middle-distance, the first medal event of the Games.

The six-kilometre (3.7 miles) course featured 180 metres of ascent and 20 control points that athletes must visit. Footage from the World Games' social media accounts showed athletes running through crop fields and villages on a largely rural course.

The winner, Switzerland's Riccardo Rancan, completed the course in 45 minutes and 22 seconds. "I needed to acclimatise quickly with hot and humid conditions. I think I managed quite well," Chinese state media quoted Rancan as saying.

Debertolis was listed as "Did Not Finish" in official results, along with 11 other athletes.

- Black armbands - He was ranked 137th in the men's Orienteering World Rankings and had been competing since 2014, according to the IOF website. He participated in several World Championships and World Cups as part of the Italian team.

Alongside his training, Debertolis was studying for a PhD at the KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, where he lived.

President of the Italian Orienteering Federation (FISO), Alfio Giomi, invited the national team to wear black armbands while competing in the World Mountain Bike Orienteering Championships, which begin on Tuesday in Poland.

Fatima, Muneeba ascends in ICC Women's Rankings

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan captain Fatima Sana and Left-handed opener Muneeba Ali's has moved up in the ICC Women's T20I Player Rankings.

Pakistan may have lost the series, but individual performances were rewarded. Fatima Sana has hopped four places up to 59th. The skipper also moved up one place to joint-39th in the bowling rankings after her haul of four for 26 in the series opener. She ended the series as the leading wicket taker with a total of six scalps.

Meanwhile, Muneeba Ali's match-winning unbeaten century in the final match helped her advance three slots to joint-

32nd in the batters' list (personal best points of 526), said a press release.

Ireland all-rounder Orla Prendergast has made notable progress in the ICC Rankings after her team beat Pakistan 2-1 in Dublin.

Prendergast, who was named the Player of the Series, finished with 144 runs and four wickets, progressing in all three lists. She made her first appearance inside the top 20 of the batting rankings after advancing eight slots to joint-19th place, thanks to her scores of 51 and 64 in the second and third matches, amassing career-best ratings points of 602.

She has also entered the top 50 of the bowling rank-

ings for the first time after taking three for 28 in the series opener that helped her team to victory by 11 runs. Her all-round performance shot her up to sixth among the all-rounders with personal-best rating points of 298.

There were movements for her teammates as well. Amy Hunter climbed up one place to 29th among batters while Laura Delany jumped five slots to 50th thanks to her score of 42 runs in the second match – her first time in the top 50 with career-best rating points of 448.

Ava Canning is 48th in the bowlers' list, while Jane Maguire has moved to 50th from last week's 54th.

Asif through to semifinals with dominant win over Britain's Cosker

CHENGDU (APP): Pakistan's Muhammad Asif delivered a masterclass performance in the billiards event on Tuesday, dismantling Britain's Zac Cosker 2-0 in the quarterfinals of the World Games 2025.

The clinical victory at the Civil Aviation Flight University's Tianfu Campus Gymnasium booked Asif's place in the final four, keeping Pakistan's medal hopes alive.

From the opening break, Asif imposed his

will on the match, leaving his opponent scrambling.

The first frame saw the Pakistani star construct a commanding 79-15 win through a combination of precise potting and tactical safety play that left Cosker frustrated.

The second frame proved even more one-sided as Asif piled on the pressure with an 81-39 demolition, showcasing why he is considered one of the tournament's most dangerous contenders.

"This wasn't just about

winning; it was about making a statement," Asif told APP the match.

"When you reach this stage, every opponent is world-class. I'm looking forward to make a podium finish and give a gift to my nation on the Independence Day," he added.

The victory marks Asif's third consecutive win in Chengdu without dropping a single match, having previously defeated China's Liang Xiaolong and Germany's Alexander Widau.

Turkish climber Gul Noor makes history on K2



ISLAMABAD (APP): Gul Noor Tambet has etched her name in mountaineering history by becoming the first Turkish woman to reach the summit of K2, the second-highest mountain in the world. After months of perseverance, Gul successfully conquered the treacherous peak on Monday, August 11, at 4 pm, said a press release.

Gul arrived in Pakistan in June and initially scaled the majestic Tirich Mir

peak. Undeterred by the harsh weather conditions that forced several climbers to retreat from the base camp in July, she pressed on, driven by her passion for mountaineering. Her determination paid off as she reached the summit of K2, a feat that marks her as a trailblazer for Turkish climbers.

This remarkable achievement is not Gul's first, into high-altitude mountaineering. She has previously climbed the Seven Summits and over 30 high mountains across the globe, in Turkey, Russia, Georgia, Nepal, Argentina, and the United States. She had also summited Mount Everest making her the first Turkish woman to do so.

Her mountaineering journey began at 17, and she now balances her passion with her profession as a marketing professor at San Francisco State University in the United States.

Gul shared her exhilaration and gratitude with her team by posting a photo from the summit on her Instagram.

Former referee Coote given eight-week ban over Klopp comments

LONDON (AFP): Disgraced former Premier League referee David Coote has been given an eight-week suspension by the Football Association and told to attend an education programme over disparaging comments he made about ex-Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp.

Coote was sacked in December by Professional Game Match Officials Ltd (PGMOL) after a video

circulated on social media the previous month of him making derogatory remarks about Klopp and Liverpool in 2020.

He has been further sanctioned by the FA for an "aggravated breach" of rule E3.2, because of the reference he made to Klopp's German nationality in the video.

The FA's written reasons for the verdict announced Tuesday said

Coote expressed "deep remorse" and acknowledged his comments were "crass and inappropriate".

Coote was charged by the FA in June, with the English game's ruling body saying at the time he would face no further action in regard to separate allegations of gambling misconduct, which he had strenuously denied. The FA said those allegations had been fully investigated.

A video showing Coote snorting white powder, reportedly during Euro 2024, emerged in November.

Earlier this year European football's governing body UEFA banned Coote from any officiating activity until June 2026.

In a January interview Coote came out as gay and said his struggle to hide his sexuality had contributed to bad choices.



In brief

IRSA releases 375,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 375,200 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 400,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1546.50 feet which was 144.50 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 268,200 cusecs and 253,300 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1206.50 feet, which was 156.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 16,900 cusecs and 7,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 274,400, 215,200, 164,000 and 87,300 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 30,800 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 55,200 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

RDA organizes Independence Day rally

RAWALPINDI (APP): In connection with the celebration of Pakistan's Independence Day, the Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) organized a vibrant rally from the RDA office to Murree Road, led by Director General RDA, Kinza Murtaza. The rally aimed to promote patriotism, highlight the importance of independence, and foster national unity. Participants included RDA officers and staff, students and teachers from Government Islamia School, and members of the public. With national flags in hands and patriotic songs echoing in the air, the rally fashioned an atmosphere filled with love for the homeland. The DG RDA Kinza Murtaza said, "Independence Day reminds us of the tremendous sacrifices made by our forefathers for the creation of Pakistan. We must fulfil our responsibilities with honesty, sincerity, and hard work to build a prosperous and developed Pakistan." After the event, a special prayer was offered for the country's peace, progress, and prosperity.

Six dengue cases reported

RAWALPINDI (APP): The District Health Authority Rawalpindi, in coordination with other departments, has taken decisive action against Bahria Town, sealing its head office due to dengue violations. The operation, led by AC Saddar Hakim Khan, targeted the Bahria Town Phase-8 head office. In a latest update on dengue prevention and control, the authority reported six new cases of which 4 in Rawalpindi and 2 in Murree. Of total 58 confirmed cases this year, 11 required hospitalization, with no fatalities recorded. The cases are split with 30 in Rawalpindi district and 28 in Murree district. Key affected areas include Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi 26 cases, Potohar Rural 14, Rawalpindi Cantt 3, Taxila Cantt 4, Kahuta 2, Gujar Khan and other union councils with 1 case each.

Security arrangements reviewed

RAWALPINDI (INP): Senior Superintendent of Police SSP Operations Kashif Zulfiqar visited the route of the main procession and reviewed the security arrangements for chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), informed police spokesman here Tuesday. SP Rawal Muhammad Saad Arshad, SDPOs, SHOAs and other officers were also present. SSP (Operations) reviewed the security arrangements and gave instructions to the officers.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. —APP Photo

Belgium Ambassador meets advisor to Chairman Senate

ISLAMABAD (APP): Advisor to the Chairman of the Senate, Misbah Khar, Tuesday met with the Ambassador of Belgium to Pakistan, Charles-Idesbald van der Gracht de Rommerswael, to discuss avenues for enhancing parliamentary cooperation and engagement in upcoming international forums.

Ms. Khar briefed the Ambassador on the objectives and vision of the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference (ISC) — a dynamic new global platform dedicated to fostering collaboration and connectivity among parliaments worldwide, said a news release. The ISC currently

includes 45 parliamentary speakers representing diverse regions. She informed the Ambassador that, in recent elections held in Malaysia, the Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, was unanimously elected as the inaugural President of the organisation — a testament to Pakistan's active leadership in promoting global parliamentary diplomacy.

The Ambassador was also briefed on preparations for the upcoming ISC meeting, scheduled to take place in Islamabad on 11–12 November 2025. The update covered the conference agenda, proposed sessions, thematic priorities, and the expect-

ed participation of high-level delegations from across the globe.

She underscored that the conference will serve as an important platform for parliamentary leaders to deliberate on pressing global issues, including peace, multilateral cooperation, and sustainable development. She informed about the conference's goal of fostering impactful dialogue and developing actionable strategies to address shared challenges.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening parliamentary ties and enhancing people-to-people exchanges between Pakistan and Belgium.

ICT admin declares public holiday on August 13

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has announced a public holiday on Wednesday, August 13, 2025, across the Federal Capital. According to a notification issued by the District Magistrate, all private institutions, including schools, colleges, universities, businesses, and offices, will remain closed within the limits of Islamabad.

Meanwhile, the order, however, excludes offices providing essential services. These include the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI), Capital Development Authority (CDA),

ICT Administration, Islamabad Police, Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO), Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), and hospitals, which will remain open and operational.

The notification also clarifies that all federal ministries, divisions, attached departments, and subordinate offices located in Islamabad will remain open on the day.

Pakistani nation's resolve remains unbeaten; Danyal Ch

RAWALPINDI (APP): Federal Parliamentary Secretary, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry on Tuesday said that Pakistani nation is united to combat any challenge, with a great unbeaten spirit.

He remarked this during the 'Potohar Awards' ceremony at Radio Pakistan, Rawalpindi which was organized to mark the 78th Independence Day.

Speaking on the occasion, he emphasized that Pakistan was born from the great sacrifices of our elders and the spirit of 'La Ilaha ilAllah, which cannot be defeated.

Barrister Chaudhry highlighted the recent struggle on May 6, where the entire nation united like an steel wall to defeat an enemy with far superior resources. He reiterated that the spirit of 1947 and the Islamic faith remain invincible, keeping the nation into a strong entity. He stressed that the progress of the country and its people hinges on performance and dedication.

Congratulating the artists awarded for their outstand-

ing contributions, he underscored that recognition should be based on merit and achievement, not criticism or slander. He said that success in offices or at government level, depends on deliverance, and only those who work diligently deserve opportunities to advance. He urged the younger generation to carry forward the legacy of freedom passed down by their elders.

Underlining the importance of reconciliation over hatred or revenge, Barrister Chaudhry described revenge as a characteristic of the weak, while reconciliation plays pivotal role for countries' progress. He emphasized the importance of teaching children to respect and obey their parents, as this strengthens societal fabric. "Educators and societal role models should guide the new generation positively", he urged while observing the weakening of family values in Western societies as a cautionary example.

For the progress of Radio Pakistan, he announced plans to collab-

orate with DG Radio, Saeed Sheikh to make it further professional and financial organization. He highlighted that his ministry will render for betterment of Radio Pakistan as was done for Pakistan Television Corporation.

"My presence at PBC today must fetch some good fuots for the Radio Pakistan", he said reiterating his commitment to chalk out a plan for PBC's improvement. He proposed a mechanism to financially support Radio Pakistan through excise and taxation department by leveraging the use of radios in vehicles, aiming to strengthen the institution.

He also lauded DG Radio, Station Director Musarat Shahrukh and the Rawalpindi station staff for their commendable performance. The event featured Senator Irfan Siddiqui as the chief guest. Awards were distributed among various artists, scriptwriters, program hosts, producers, poets, and technical staff for their exceptional contributions.

IGP Rizvi urges responsible Independence Day celebrations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Inspector General (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi on Tuesday extended heartfelt congratulations to the people of Pakistan and overseas Pakistanis on the occasion of the country's 78th Independence Day.

IGP Rizvi said Independence Day is a great blessing and a momentous occasion that should be celebrated with full spirit. He emphasized that while celebrating, citizens should also be mindful of those around them, showing respect and care

for others.

He urged the public to avoid hooliganism, one-wheeling, and aerial firing, warning that such acts will not be tolerated. "Families and women visiting parks must not be harassed under any circumstances," he stressed.

The IGP said Islamabad Police had devised a comprehensive security plan for Independence Day celebrations, deploying over 4,000 officers across the city to maintain law and order. He said strict action would be taken against those involved in aerial firing, creating public disorder, or

harassing families. "Such unlawful activities will not be allowed under any circumstances," he remarked.

Rizvi said every police officer in Islamabad would be on duty to protect the public. "This Independence Day is also significant as it marks a historic victory for the nation, and we take pride in our armed forces," he added.

He advised citizens to report any emergencies or suspicious activities by calling 15, 1915, 1715, or 1815, assuring that the Islamabad Police would remain on the roads 24/7 to serve and protect.

Pakistan, Ukraine to strengthen cultural ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Ukraine have agreed to deepen cooperation in culture and heritage, with both sides underscoring the role of cultural diplomacy in strengthening bilateral relations.

This was revealed during a meeting between Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division Aurangzeb Khan Khichi and First Secretary at the Embassy of Ukraine, Ms. Oksana Patriaeva.

Both welcomed proposals to expand people-to-people linkages and showcase the two countries' rich cultural traditions. Ms. Patriaeva proposed setting up a Ukrainian Book Corner at the National Library of Pakistan to introduce Ukrainian literature, history, and arts to local audiences.

She also expressed interest in cultural exchange programs, film collaborations, exhibitions, and arts-based initiatives. "Pakistan is a beautiful country with warm-hearted people. We have always valued the support of the Government



of Pakistan and want to further strengthen cultural contacts," she said.

The Minister assured full support for the initiatives, designating a focal person to coordinate the process. He suggested joint exhibitions, cultural shows, and exchange programs, as well as expanding existing MoUs on culture, heritage, and literature. He also invited Ukraine to participate in Lok Virsa's annual Lok Mela with a dedicated pavilion featuring Ukrainian cuisine, crafts, and performances.

Ms. Patriaeva welcomed the invitation and shared plans to bring Ukrainian artists and films to Pakistan, along with visits to heritage sites such as Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. Highlighting the government's efforts to revive the film industry, the Minister offered Ukrainian cultural delegations the use of galleries in Karachi and Lahore for exhibitions.

The meeting concluded with both sides agreeing to fast-track cultural cooperation and explore new avenues for heritage-based engagement.

Data shows decrease in wild poliovirus in environmental samples

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan has recorded a notable decline in positive polio environmental samples, reflecting progress in curbing the virus, though limited transmission continues in some parts of the country, official surveillance data shows.

According to official sources, the environmental surveillance system collected total 127 sewage samples from 87 districts during month of July, 2025. The Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health (NIH) Islamabad has confirmed 75 sewage samples as negative and 42 as positive.

They said 10 samples are currently being processed in the lab while the overall trend shows a decline in positive detections, reflecting the impact of high-quality campaigns, the virus continues to circulate in certain areas. As per results, 22 negative, and one positive sewerage samples were reported from Balochistan while 24 negative, seven positive and three samples were under process in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In Punjab, 15 negative, 12 positive and four samples were under process

while in Sindh 10 negative and 19 positive samples were reported besides one negative, three positive, and one sample under process in Islamabad.

In Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), two negative and one sample was under process while in Gilgit Baltistan one negative and one sample was under process. The July data shows steady progress in containment. Balochistan reported a marked reduction, with only one positive site in July, down from 15 in January.

As many as 22 of the 23 sites in the province tested negative. In Quetta Block, six out of seven sites tested negative. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, positive sites dropped from 14 in January to seven in July. Total 24 sites in the province tested negative. Of these seven positive sites in July, three are from South Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In Peshawar, four out of six sites tested negative.

In Punjab, the number of positive sites decreased from 15 in March to 12 in July. In Sindh, the number of districts with positive detections has also declined compared to previous months, from 20 in March to 12 in

July. In AJK and GB, all the tested samples so far are negative. Over the past year, the Pakistan Polio Programme has conducted six high-quality vaccination campaigns, four of them nationwide, each reaching over 45 million children. These sustained efforts have significantly reduced both polio cases and positive environmental samples nationwide, demonstrating strong progress toward interrupting transmission.

The next sub-national polio vaccination campaign is scheduled for September 1- 7, 2025. The campaign aims to vaccinate 28 million children across 91 districts in all provinces and regions, with the goal of rapidly boosting immunity and closing protection gaps. Parents and caregivers have been asked to ensure their children receive polio drops during this round. In addition to polio drops, the government provides free routine immunization for children up to 15 months of age, offering broader protection against preventable diseases. Repeated polio vaccination alongside routine immunization strengthens immunity and prevents lifelong paralysis.

NCRC launches reports on children and minority rights

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: To mark National Minorities Day, the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) launched two key publications: the State of Children in Pakistan 2024 and the Situation Analysis of Children from Minority Religions in Pakistan. The event brought together provincial government representatives, human rights defenders, academics, police officials, civil society leaders, labour rights experts, artists, and development partners to discuss systemic challenges facing children—particularly those from religious minority backgrounds.

NCRC Chairperson Ms. Ayesha Raza Farooq welcomed participants and reaffirmed the Commission's mandate as an independent watchdog for children's rights. She said:

"Both these reports are aligned with our mandate—to generate evidence, identify policy gaps, and guide duty-bearers

toward systemic solutions. While progress has been made—such as improved birth registration and legal reforms—millions of children remain vulnerable due to fragmented efforts, lack of coordination, and limited political will. The Commission is working with governments to harmonize child protection laws, raise the age of marriage to 18, ensure inclusive education, and strengthen safeguarding systems, especially for children from minority communities. But we cannot do this alone. Policymakers, educators, law enforcers, civil society, and faith leaders must act together. Every child, regardless of religion or background, deserves dignity, safety, and opportunity."

Mr. Pirbhu Lal Satyani, NCRC Member Sindh/Minorities, presented the Situation Analysis of Children from Minority Religions in Pakistan, highlighting barriers to education, incidents of forced conversion, child

labour, and discrimination in public services.

A panel discussion, moderated by Valerie Khan, Senior Technical Advisor at NCRC, featured perspectives from diverse sectors:

- Sarwat Gilani, actor and NCRC Brand Ambassador, emphasized the media's role in dismantling stereotypes and promoting children's voices, alongside the influence of parenting and cultural values.

- Shahzad Roy, musician and education activist, called for curriculum reform to promote inclusivity from early education and stressed the need for comprehensive teacher training.

- Fatima Matanat, Legal Aid Society, pointed to enforcement gaps in laws addressing forced conversions and protection for vulnerable children.

- Zulfiqar Shah, labour rights expert, linked bonded labour practices in Sindh to systemic neglect of children's rights, warning of rising out-of-school



children fueling child labour and violence.

- Ambreen Zahra, Sindh Child Protection Authority, outlined the Authority's coordination with the Labour and Education Departments, calling for greater media engagement, expanded district-level presence, and increased resource allocation.

- Anis Haroon, Member NCHR, underscored the role of parenting in build-

ing children's confidence to resist abuse and assert their rights, noting that family and societal attitudes are critical in prevention.

Lal Chand Ukrani, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Sindh for Minority Affairs, reaffirmed the provincial government's commitment to children's rights. He stressed the urgency of legislating against forced conversions in Sindh and

noted that, in other areas, the situation for minorities is improving. In order to fulfill Pakistan's Constitutional and International obligations, we need to protect the rights of minorities.

Rajvir Singh Sodha, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Human Rights, said schools must remain neutral, inclusive spaces focused on education rather than religious division. He emphasized

that the responsibility to ensure inclusivity lies not only with the government but also with the majority population. He also linked population control to reducing child exploitation.

The event concluded with a call for coordinated action between government, civil society, and communities to ensure every child in Pakistan grows up free from discrimination, with equal access to opportunities.

1 killed, 4 hurt in accident
LASHKARGAH (Pajhwok): One individual has been killed and four others injured in a traffic accident in Helmand, an official said on Tuesday. Police spokesman Mullah Ezatullah Haqqani said that the incident occurred on Monday night when a vehicle veered off the road and overturned on the Helmand-Kandahar highway near Lashkargah City. He confirmed that one individual died and four others sustained injuries, blaming the accident on reckless driving.

Mustafa Azdil met Islamjar
HERAT (BNA): Governor Herat Mawlana Islamjar met with Mohammad Mustafa Azdil, head of the Turkish Education Foundation in Afghanistan. Azdil provided information about the foundation's activities in the field of education and assured full readiness for any type of cooperation in this area. The Governor fondly recalled the deep and historical ties between the two countries and expressed appreciation for Turkish Education Foundation's scientific contributions to the education.

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

Chinese investors ready to invest in Afghanistan

KABUL (BNA): Mawlawi Ahmadullah Zahid, the Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce of Afghanistan, emphasized the country's commitment to fostering a conducive investment environment. During the discussions, representatives from China expressed keen interest in various sectors, including electricity generation, manufacturing, and construction. They sought cooperation from the Ministry to explore these opportunities further. Zahid welcomed their interest and underscored Afghanistan's status as a safe and promising destination for investment. The Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce highlighted that the government has implemented unparalleled facilities to encourage investment across multiple sectors.

Maidan Wardak orchards yield nearly 5,500 metric tons this year

MAIDAN WARDAK (TOLONews): Officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock in Maidan Wardak report an increase in apricot production in the province this year. According to their figures, nearly 5,400 metric tons of apricots were harvested from the province's orchards, reflecting a 30% increase compared to last year. Although the harvest has significantly increased, officials say many orchards have been affected by drought, which has reduced the quality of the harvest compared to previous years. Aid Mohammad Zahiri, the head of agricultural affairs for the Ministry in Maidan Wardak, says: "We see a 30% increase in apricot harvests compared to last year, but due to the drought, the quality is not as good as in previous years." Some orchard owners in Maidan Wardak complain about the low prices of agricultural products. Gul Wazir, a 56-year-old orchardist from Jaghato district who has been involved in orchard farming for two decades, says that although this year's apricot harvest is noticeably larger, he has had to sell a kilogram of apricots for only 40 Afghanis due to the lack of a proper market. This has significantly limited the orchardists' income. Gul Wazir adds: "I have four or five hundred trees, but this year's income is very low. Last year, we sold a kilogram of apricots for 200 Afghanis, but this year, the market price is only 30 or 40 Afghanis. There is a lack of water, and the income is not enough to cover the costs of the orchard." Other orchardists mention drought, lack of cold storage, low export rates of fresh fruits, and low prices as serious challenges they face. They add that if no fundamental solutions are found, many orchardists may consider switching to other crops. Shafiqullah, another orchardist, says: "Some people have uprooted their orchards, and if the situation remains the same, others will also give up farming. Currently, a kilogram of apricots is sold for 30 or 40 Afghanis." Sayed Habib Ilham, another orchardist, says: "If we had cold storage, we could keep our produce for a while and sell it at a better price. Our produce should be offered to international markets. If the market and drought conditions remain the same, many orchardists will quit farming because they work all year but end up losing their harvest." Meanwhile, officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock in Maidan Wardak say that in collaboration with the Ministry, they have started efforts to build necessary cold storage facilities and find suitable international markets for the province's fresh fruits. Currently, apricot orchards have been planted on 1,500 hectares of land in Maidan Wardak, but due to persistent drought and the lack of a suitable market, they are at serious risk of disappearing.

Returnees in Ghazni complain about rising house rents

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): A number of returnees from Iran and Pakistan in southern Ghazni province of Afghanistan have complained about a sharp rise in house rents, saying they cannot afford the increased costs and are calling on the government to address the issue as soon as possible. According to the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, over the past three months, around 1.8 million Afghans have been forcibly deported from Iran, nearly 185,000 from Pakistan, and 5,134 from Turkey. Mohammad Azim, a returnee from Pakistan now living in Ghazni city, told Pajhwok Afghan News that he returned several months ago but has still been unable to find a house at an affordable rent. He said he is currently staying with relatives and noted that rental prices in the province have doubled or even tripled due to the influx of returnees. He urged the government to take action on the matter. Mohammad Sohail, another returnee who recently came back from Iran, also complained about the rising cost of rent. He said that prior to the return of refugees, rental prices were relatively low, but with the surge in returnees, not only has support been lacking, but rents have also increased further. Meanwhile, other Ghazni city residents who rent homes also reported that landlords have raised rents in response to the growing number of returnees. Khalid, a resident of the city, told Pajhwok: "Rents used to be fairly reasonable, but in recent weeks—following the forced return of refugees from Iran—prices have gone up significantly, and it's become difficult to find a house in the city." Another resident, Abdul Rahim, said: "I used to pay 9,000 Afghanis in rent, but the landlord has now asked for 14,000 Afghanis." He added that he is now being forced to relocate to the outskirts of the city. He called on the government to take serious steps to prevent landlords from arbitrarily raising rents. Anargul, the head of a local property office, confirmed that rents in the city have increased noticeably compared to the past. He attributed the hike primarily to the return of refugees from Iran and Pakistan and noted that some property owners are taking advantage of the situation. He said houses that were previously rented for 6,000 to 8,000 Afghanis are now being let for between 12,000 and 15,000 Afghanis. He added that the mass return of refugees has made it extremely difficult to find rental accommodation in the city. Meanwhile, Dar Mohammad Kakar, the Resettlement Officer at the Ghazni Directorate of Refugees and Repatriation, said a joint committee was established earlier this year—comprising the governor's office, the Department of Justice, the Department of Refugees, and other relevant departments—to address issues facing returnees. He said the committee had issued guidance urging Ghazni residents to maintain fair rental prices, but investigations will be carried out and legal action taken against those who violate the guidelines. Kakar also called on residents to cooperate with returnees during the ongoing crisis and to avoid raising rental prices.

2,539 carats of emeralds sold for \$347,850

PARAKH (Pajhwok): The Department of Mines and Petroleum in central Panjshir province has sold 2,539 carats of emeralds for 347,850 US dollars at the ninth auction, an official said on Tuesday. A statement quoting Governor Hafiz Mohammad Agha Hakim said the high-quality emeralds of Panjshir have been able to connect Afghanistan with global markets and play an important role in attracting the attention of domestic and foreign investors. He said this amount of emeralds has been sold to domestic and foreign traders. "This auction was held in the presence of national and international traders and relevant institutions, and its process was transparent and competitive", he said. According to the statement, after being examined and packaged, the mined emeralds were placed in the presence of the auction's supervisory board to maintain transparency and trust in the sales process. It said Lyon, a Chinese trader, also participated in the auction.

Farah residents cite full security

KABUL (BNA): As Afghanistan marks four years since the Islamic Emirate returned to power, residents of Farah Province say security has been fully restored and development work is progressing across the province. Ziauddin, a resident of Farah, told Bakhtar News Agency he now lives in a calm environment with no fear, anxiety, or security threats. He said the asphalt-ing of roads, creation of green spaces, and the ongoing construction of the Bakhshabad Dam are among the province's most notable achievements since the change in governance. Another resident, Abdul Jabbar, described the security situation nationwide—and in Farah in particular—as unprecedented, adding that it has created the conditions for development projects to be carried out without hindrance.

Futsal “B” League started

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): The Futsal B League tournament featuring 10 teams has begun in southern Ghazni province, an official said on Tuesday. Physical Education and Sports director Bilal Mujahid told Pajhwok Afghan News the participating teams have been divided into different groups. The competition will last about a month and a half, he added. Mujahid said Sanai Ghaznavi futsal team won the tournament's first match against Afghan Naveen team 7-2. According to him, the tournament was launched to identify the best futsal team of the year. Athletes are happy that the "B" League futsal competition has begun in the province. Meanwhile, Ahmad,

Floodwater threat prevention project launched in Kandahar

KANDAHAR CITY (TOLONews): Residents of the old city area in the 6th district of Kandahar used to face financial losses every year due to the arrival of floodwaters. A new project has now started to rebuild the floodwater channels and pathways in their area. A Kandahar resident, Wali Ahmad, says: "Three times during the winter season, floodwaters have entered our house, causing us financial damage. All the canals and flood pathways here must be rebuilt." Another resident of Kandahar, Abdullah, also says: "The people of this area are facing many problems because mountain floodwaters come down onto people's houses and destroy their homes. The authorities have not paid attention to this issue before." Abdul Razzaq also says: "If our canals, drains, and flood pathways are rebuilt, it will be a big help to us." The project, worth 14 million Afghanis, will be implemented over a period of four months. Officials from Kandahar Municipality state that the purpose of this project is to prevent floodwaters in the city, and to rebuild urban sewage systems, drains, and flood channels. Kandahar Municipality spokesman, Saifullah Asim, said: "This project costs 14 million Afghanis, which will be provided by the municipality. It will involve the comprehensive reconstruction of 5,000 cubic meters of drains, canals, and channels." The project's engineer, Mohebullah, said: "The main goal of this project is to remove sewage and floodwaters from Kandahar city, eliminate existing obstacles to the sewage system, and rebuild the damaged areas." In Kandahar city, every year, people suffer financial losses due to the lack of a proper urban sewage system, but officials say they are working to solve the issue.

Kabul pursues overseas job opportunities

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) says Qatar has offered 3,100 legal job opportunities for Afghan workers, with talks also under way with five other countries to secure further employment prospects for Afghan citizens. Samiullah Ibrahim, MoLSA spokesman, told Pajhwok Afghan News on Monday that the ministry is engaging with various countries to provide legal employment opportunities, particularly for unemployed Afghans. Under a recent agreement, Qatar has allocated 3,100 legal jobs for Afghan workers. Registration for the programme has closed and the documents of applicants are currently being reviewed. "Once document checks are complete, applicants will undergo a practical test to ensure that only skilled and qualified individuals are sent to Qatar," Ibrahim said, adding that this was only the beginning of the process and more opportunities would follow in the near future. Ibrahim said that the ministry has also held meetings with labour officials from Oman, Russia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia to arrange legal employment for Afghans in those countries. Once agreements are finalised, citizens will be invited to register, and—following assessment—will be sent abroad legally. Talks have also addressed the challenges faced by Afghan workers already employed in these countries. The spokesman emphasised the ministry's commitment to fairness and transparency, assuring citizens that there would be no favouritism, fraud, or forgery in the Qatar recruitment process. Only those meeting the criteria—including a minimum of one year of unemployment—would be selected. Qatar is seeking Afghan workers in fields such as electrical engineering, electric vehicle mechanics, pharmacy, livestock farming and hospitality. Applicants must meet educational requirements, possess relevant work experience, demonstrate language skills and be aged between 18 and 45. Ibrahim noted that many applicants did not meet these conditions but still flocked to registration centres, causing disorder. He urged citizens to familiarise themselves with the job requirements before applying to avoid depriving eligible candidates of their chance.



Kabul residents complain about chicken meat price hike

KABUL (Pajhwok): Residents of Kabul are complaining about increased chicken meat price compared to last month and are asking the government to control it, while officials say 80 percent of poultry farms in the country currently do not have chickens. Pajhwok Afghan News reported a month ago the price of one kilogram of chicken meat was 220 Afghanis, but now it has increased to 320 Afghanis. Mahmood, a resident of Kabul who had come to buy chicken from Chicken Market Alley in Shahr-e-Naw, told Pajhwok the price of chicken meat has been rising for about a month, but he does not know why the price has increased. According to him, he used to buy a kilo of chicken breast for 220afis, but today he bought it for 320afis. He asked officials to pay attention to reducing the chicken meat price because most people are financially incapable to buy it. Meanwhile, Ahmad, another resident, complained about the surge in price of chicken meat and called for its control. Previously, he bought a kilo of chicken meat, including legs, breasts and other for 180afis, but now it has surged to 280afis, he added. Syed Fahim, a chicken meat seller in Kolula Poshta area, explained the price of chicken meat had increased since July 5. According to him, the price of chicken meat has increased by 100 afis per kilogram. Regarding the reason for the increase in chicken meat price, he claimed: "Chickens are being sold out on farms and when the farm is over, prices went up. Prices increase two to three times a year, but then prices fall again." He urged the Islamic Emirate to establish state-owned chicken farms to keep prices under control. Kochai, another chicken seller in Qasabi Alley, added he would sell a kilo of chicken for 220afis, but now he was selling a kilo for 320afis. Kochai believed the rise in chicken meat price was due to the shortage of chicks in poultry farms, but explained: "Some farmers who suffered during the winter are now trying to make a profit." He sells about 100 kilos of chicken meat daily, while a month ago he was selling nearly 250 kilos of chicken meat. He asked the government to determine the selling price of chicken meat for farmers so that prices can be controlled. Dr. Wasim Safi, chairman of the executive board for Afghanistan Chamber of Agricultural and Livestock Production, confirmed the increase in poultry prices and said six months ago, the price of poultry meat reached about 90 Afghanis per kilogram due to the huge increase of chicks on farms, which had severely affected farmers. This situation continued several times, and farmers suffered losses and were unable to buy and raise chickens again, he explained.

Heat waves accelerate spread of infectious diseases

KABUL (Pajhwok): Doctors say with the intensification of the summer heat, infectious diseases—especially diarrhea—have increased in Kabul city. They urge citizens to observe both personal and environmental hygiene and avoid eating leftover food. A specialized infectious disease hospital operates in Kabul for such patients, and every year during this season, it admits the highest number of adult patients. Dr. Faridullah Omari, a trainer and specialist at Kabul's infectious disease hospital, told Pajhwok Afghan News that every year, with the rise in temperature, infectious diseases spread. He considers the lack of personal and environmental hygiene and the improper washing of vegetables and fruits as major causes of these illnesses. Although he did not provide specific statistics on the increase in infectious patients, but said they hospitalized 50 people with diarrhea each day, whereas before the heat began, the number was limited to only a few individuals. According to him, this year, the majority of patients visiting this hospital are returning migrants and people living in tents. It is worth noting that for children with infectious diseases, in addition to the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health, the Ataturk National Children's Hospital is also operating. According to Dr. Rafiuddin Naseri, a pediatric professor at the Ataturk National Children's Hospital, there has also been an increase in cases of infectious diseases, especially diarrhea. He said that in the month of Hamal (March–April), 312 children; in the month of Jawza (May–June), 385 patients; and in the month of Saratan (June–July), 457 children with diarrhea were admitted to the hospital. He added: "Based on the available statistics, it is evident that the number of patients with this disease—especially diarrhea—has increased considerably month by month." According to him, every year, the number of people affected by infectious diseases, particularly diarrhea, rises in the summer season not only in Afghanistan but worldwide. He said that according to available global statistics, between 3 to 5 billion people contract diarrhea annually, with deaths also recorded among them. Dr. Naseri considers the causes of increased infectious diseases and diarrhea during this season to be the extreme heat and the lack of hygiene. Dr. Faridullah Omari says leftover or stale food should be avoided, as eating such food is one of the causes of these diseases. He emphasized the importance of environmental and personal hygiene, stating that vegetables and fruits should be thoroughly washed before consumption, then soaked for a few minutes in a chlorine solution or salt water, and that drinking water should be boiled. He added: "It is summer, and your body needs more fluids; when you drink more fluids, that water must be safe—meaning, do not use water from open canals and lakes." Meanwhile, Dr. Naseri also recommends: "Prevention is better than cure; every individual must maintain personal hygiene and wash their hands with soap and water after using the toilet." He said that parents must be very careful about their children's hygiene and should explain to children not to drink from open water sources. He added: "My message to all respected families is that if their children or family members develop diarrhea, they should visit doctors and hospitals as soon as possible." Patients and caregivers Nadera, a Kabul resident who had visited the Afghan-Turk Hospital, said: "It has been 20 days since we returned from Iran, and my son developed diarrhea and vomiting due to the heat, but his condition has now improved." She expressed satisfaction with the hospital's services, saying that the staff treated all patients equally. Similarly, Salim Shah,



another resident of Kabul who is hospitalized at the infectious disease hospital, said: "A few days ago, I developed diarrhea due to the heat, but now, thanks to God, I am fine." He also expressed satisfaction with the healthcare services provided to patients at this hospital.



ISLAMABAD: President, Asif Ali Zardari exchanging views with Mohamed Karmoune, Ambassador of Morocco during a meeting at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

SC questions HC dismissal of Imran’s bail pleas

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan’s Chief Justice, Yahya Afridi, on Tuesday questioned the Lahore High Court’s rejection of former Prime Minister Imran Khan’s bail applications. A three-judge Supreme Court bench, led by the Chief Justice and including Justice Shafi Siddiqui and Justice Mianqul Hasan Aurangzeb, heard eight appeals from Khan. The court issued notices to the Punjab provincial administration and instructed the prosecution to address specific legal points.

Chief Justice Afridi questioned the High Court’s commentary on the case’s merits during a bail hearing. He asked, “Can definitive observations be made in a bail proceeding?” and requested legal counsel

to clarify this crucial legal matter.

The Chief Justice emphasized that the Supreme Court would avoid any prejudicial findings and would base its decision solely on legal merit. The hearing was adjourned until August 19, with instructions for both sides’ lawyers to be prepared to discuss the legal issues raised.

Khan appealed to the Supreme Court under Article 185(3) of the Constitution, challenging the Lahore High Court’s June 24, 2025 order denying his post-arrest bail related to the May 9 incidents. Currently detained at Adiala Jail, Khan seeks post-arrest bail in FIR No. 103/2023, filed on May 12, 2023, at Lahore’s Sarwar Road Police Station.

He faces numerous grave accusations under the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC), 1860, including Sections 324, 395, 436, 427, 290, 291, 148, 149, 337L(ii), 34, 109, 120-B, 121, 121A, 131, 146, 153, 153-A, 153-B, and 505, along with Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), 1997.

On June 24, 2025, the Lahore High Court denied Khan’s post-arrest bail, stating that the allegations fell under the prohibitory clause of Section 497 of the Criminal Procedure Code (Cr.P.C.). The court found that Khan’s legal team failed to establish any grounds for further investigation into his purported involvement. The High Court also distinguished Khan’s case from his co-accused, justifying different legal handling.

Pakistan committed to enhance ties with Morocco

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has stated that Pakistan and Morocco enjoy fraternal ties, based on common faith, shared values, and mutual respect, which need to be further strengthened for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

He made these remarks during a meeting with the Ambassador of Morocco, Mohamed Karmoune, who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr in Islamabad on Tuesday. The President said Pakistan is committed to further enhancing bilateral cooperation with Morocco in diverse fields. He expressed gratitude to Morocco for its support to Pakistan during the 2022 floods, noting that such gestures reflect the depth of friendship between the two nations.

President Zardari emphasized that Pakistan attaches great importance to its economic relations with Morocco and highlighted the vast potential for expanding economic cooperation between the two countries. He observed that Africa is poised for significant economic growth in the coming years, and Morocco, with its remarkable economic development, is well-placed to lead this transformation and contribute to regional prosperity.

Reaffirming that Pakistan and Morocco enjoy close and brotherly ties, the President expressed his best wishes for the continued health of King of Morocco Mohammed VI. He also requested the Ambassador to convey the goodwill and warm regards of the people of Pakistan to the King and the people of Morocco.

Gohar urges dialogue to address political crisis

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has called for dialogue to address the current political crisis in the country. Speaking to the media at the Peshawar High Court, Barrister Gohar expressed concerns about the growing divide in the country and the need for political parties to come together to find a solution.

Barrister Gohar emphasized the need for dialogue to address the political crisis, stating that political issues require political solutions. He expressed concerns about the disqualification of PTI lawmakers and the impact on the party’s representation in the National Assembly.

Barrister Gohar highlighted the importance of respecting the mandate given by the people, stating that PTI has a significant presence in the country with 70% of the people supporting the party. He criticized the Election Commission for allegedly treating PTI unfairly, particularly with regard to the party’s intra-party elections.

Barrister Gohar demanded fair treatment for PTI and its leaders, stating that the party has been subjected to discrimination and bias. The PTI has been facing challenges in the political arena, including the disqualification of its lawmakers and allegations of unfair treatment by the Election Commission.

KP cabinet review law, order situation in province

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The 36th meeting of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cabinet was held here on Tuesday, with Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair. Cabinet members, Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary, Senior Member Board of Revenue, and Administrative Secretaries attended the meeting.

During the meeting, Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur addressed the law and order situation and condemned the anti-state elements attempting to destabilize the country, reiterating that terrorism is unequivocally unacceptable as it impacts all citizens equally.

Chief Minister highlighted the provincial government’s proactive strategy, which began with the establishment of Jirgas to build public trust and enlist community support in the fight against terrorism. He emphasized that the proliferation of terrorism will not be tolerated and that the government’s writ will be upheld without compromise.

Chief Minister clarified that operations and the forced displacement of civilians are not his government’s policy. He confirmed that no authorization has been given for such actions. Addressing the situation in Bajaur, he said that following the collapse of negotiations, authorities are now conducting targeted actions. To ensure the safety of residents, Section 144 has been imposed to protect the local population.

The Chief Minister stressed the provincial government’s duty to provide all necessary support to individuals who voluntarily relocate due to these targeted actions, assuring that there will be no negligence in this critical responsibility. He also affirmed that any civilian casualties resulting from counter-terrorism efforts are unacceptable, regardless of the party responsible.

Chief Minister said that the federal government has expressed a willingness to engage in negotiations with Afghanistan. He stated that the provincial government is currently preparing its groundwork in this regard. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial cabinet, concluded a lengthy meeting today, granting approval for a wide range of departmental agenda items aimed at advancing the province’s development goals.



Among the key decisions, the cabinet approved the creation of 36 new posts of field assistant in BPS-9 for the Directorate General Agriculture Extension, a move aimed at strengthening agricultural support services across the province. Cabinet gave its consent for the purchase of land for the Institute of Management Sciences (IMSiences), a step that will facilitate the expansion and growth of the institution. It also approved creation of new posts in the Directorate of Works & Implementation of the Sports & Youth Affairs Department; appointment as Independent Members of Provincial Public Safety Commission, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for a period of four years.

To enhance tourism infrastructure, a significant increase was approved for the ADP scheme for the "construction of access roads to tourist areas in Hazara Division." The project’s cost has been revised from Rs. 3,500 million to Rs. 4,278.276 million. The Cabinet greenlit the hiring of necessary staff for the Directorate of Anti-Corruption Establishment Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the Market Based Salary (MBS) Policy 2025. This measure is designed to bolster the directorate’s capacity to combat corruption effectively. It also granted approval for the notification of Lower Tanawal Beer Valley as a Community Managed Game Reserve, which will help protect local wildlife and promote sustainable management practices.

The cabinet approved submitting the West Pakistan Historical Mosques and Shrines Fund Cess (Amendment) Act, 2025 to the Provincial Assembly for enactment. It also approved submitting the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Endowment Fund (Kalash Community) Bill, 2025 to the Provincial Assembly for enactment. An amount of Rs. 100 million was approved for setting up an endowment fund for the Kalash community, to be spent on their social and cultural preservation, promotion, and cultural-cum-religious festivals, includ-

ing funeral ceremonies. The cabinet also approved the Provincial Motor Vehicle Ordinance (Amendment) Act, 2025, and accorded approval to the revised rates for number plates in terms of Section 25(6) of the Provincial Motor Vehicles Ordinance, 1965. The cabinet approved amendments to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zakat & Ushr Act, 2011, and the Provincial Ombudsman Employees (Terms and Conditions of Service) Rules, 2025.

The Cabinet approved Rural Areas (Village Councils) 25 Cleanliness Program. The provincial government will fund the program for one year, after which it will become self-sustaining through outsourced services, community fee collection, and a digital payment system. Excluding 579 NCs, which are covered by WSSCs/TMAs the program will be implemented in 3633 VCs of the province. It also approved the release of fund for purchase of land for Kalash Valley roads amounting to Rs. 1583.807 million. The Cabinet approved bridge financing amounting to Rs. 507.241 Million for the 30 PSDP scheme "Widening & Carpeting of Booni Buzund Thorkow Road (28KMS) District Upper Chitral.

The cabinet approved the establishment of a Temporary Displaced Persons (TDPs) camp in the Bajaur Sports Complex and also sanctioned immediate funds for the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA). Under the PDMA Civilian Victims Compensation Regulations 2019, the cabinet approved a special compensation of Rs. 10 million for each deceased person and Rs. 2.5 million for each injured person, to be given to the legal heirs and the injured from the Tirah, Khyber incident.

It also approved removal of two members of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Medical Teaching Institutions Appellate Tribunal on account of misconduct under Rule 8 (1) (c) of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Medical Teaching Institutions Appellate Tribunal Rules, 2020.

PHC suspends appointment of new opposition leaders

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) suspended the appointment of new opposition leaders in both the National Assembly and the Senate while hearing petitions challenging the disqualification notifications of PTI leaders Omar Ayub and Shibli Faraz, on Tuesday.

PHC divisional bench comprising of Justice Syed Arshad Ali and Justice Dr. Khurshid Iqbal heard the petitions and issued notices

to the Election Commission of Pakistan and other respondents, seeking their replies by 15th August.

PHC interim order prevents the nomination of new opposition leaders in the two houses of Parliament until further proceedings. Three major positions held by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in the National Assembly had been withdrawn, as the posts of Opposition Leader, Parliamentary Leader, and Deputy Parliamentary Leader have officially been

declared vacant.

The Speaker of the National Assembly is expected to issue a notification for the appointment of a new Opposition Leader soon. PTI-backed independent members will also be required to submit fresh nominations for the roles of Parliamentary Leader and Deputy Parliamentary Leader. Additionally, PTI leader Omar Ayub has been delisted from both the Public Accounts Committee and the Finance Committee following his disqualification.



KHAR: Administration shifting local people to safer places as operation against militant hideouts continues. - F.P. photo

‘Russia seeks full Ukrainian withdrawal from Donetsk’

KYIV: Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said Russia wants Ukraine to withdraw from the entire eastern region of Donetsk as part of a ceasefire deal, in advance of a meeting between Russian leader Vladimir Putin and United States President Donald Trump in Alaska on Friday, where land swap issues to end the war will be focal.

Zelenskyy revealed the demand on Tuesday, before reiterating that Kyiv, which still controls 9,000 square kilometres (3,500 square miles) of Donetsk, where the fiercest fighting of the war is currently taking place, would not agree to this stipulation, as it was unconstitutional and would incentivise future Russian aggression. Speaking about the Alaska summit, the Ukrainian president said that he viewed Putin’s invitation to the US as a "personal victory" for the

Russian leader.

On the battlefield, the Ukrainian military sent reserves to stem Russian advances near two key cities in Donetsk, as Moscow attempted to gain more territory before the talks on Friday. On Tuesday, the Ukrainian General Staff said its forces were involved in "difficult" fighting close to Pokrovsk and Dobropillia, with extra soldiers needed to block attacks by small groups of Russian troops.

The development suggests intensifying struggles in the Donetsk area, where Moscow-backed separatists have mainly held sway since the conflict there erupted there 2014, instigated by the Kremlin and deepened by Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Some of the advancing clusters of Russian soldiers had been destroyed, while others were still being engaged in combat, the Ukrainian army

added.

Russia’s advance is one of the most dramatic in the past year, with its soldiers infiltrating 17km (10 miles) past Ukrainian lines over the last three days, according to Pasi Poininen, a military analyst with the Finland-based Black Bird Group. Moscow, which has further isolated the destroyed town of Kostiantynivka, one of the last remaining urban areas Ukraine holds in the Donetsk, hopes to encircle the nearby city of Pokrovsk.

"A lot will depend on availability, quantity and quality of Ukrainian reserves," Poininen wrote on X. Ukraine’s DeepState blog, which has close connections to the Ukrainian military, described the situation as "quite chaotic", as Russian troops are "infiltrating deeper, trying to quickly consolidate and accumulate forces for further advancement". — Aljazeera

Flooding wreaks havoc in Gilgit

F.P. Report

GILGIT: Over 50 workers survived the wrath of Hunza River as flooding wreaked havoc in Gulmit and Gojal areas, Gilgit Baltistan government’s spokesman said.

Regional government’s spokesman Faizullah Firaq has said that the landslides occurred at Shahrah-e-Resham. "Hunza administration has been directed to step up relief operations in the affected area". Flooding has also hit Shigar area of Baltistan, spokesman said. "Floodwater hit the agricultural land and swept away trees in Shigar".

"Shahrah-e-Resham has been blocked by the landsliding at Hunza and stranded passengers," spokesman Faizullah Firaq said. "The restoration work of the road will be started soon," he said. Gilgit Baltistan region facing worst flooding devastation, he added. Earlier, an outburst of the Shispar Glacial Lake in Hunza intensified land erosion and evacuations from several parts of the region.

Scores of houses damaged, and several acres of land submerged in Hassanabad village of Hunza in flooding. The area facing severe infrastructure damage and required urgent relief. A landslide during repair work of the Ferry Meadows track in Gilgit left two persons dead and two others injured.

Russia-US diplomats hold phone call

MOSCOW: The top diplomats from Russia and the United States have held a phone call ahead of a planned meeting this week between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, according to Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In a post on Telegram on Tuesday, the ministry said Sergei Lavrov said the two sides had reaffirmed their intention to hold successful talks. The US Department of State did not immediately confirm the talks. But speaking shortly after the announcement, White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt revealed that Trump would meet with Putin in the city of Anchorage. She said the pair would discuss ending Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. — Aljazeera

16 private member bills introduced in NA

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: As many as 16 private member bills were introduced in the National Assembly on Tuesday.

The bills were included the Islamabad Capital Territory food Fortification Bill, 2025, the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (Section 498D and schedule II), the Public Interest Disclosures (Amendment) Bill, 2025, the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (Articles 1, 51, 59, 106, 154, 175A, 198 and 218), the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (Section 498D and

Schedule II), the Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2025, the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (Articles 140A and 160A), the Guardians and Wards (Amendment) Bill, 2025, the Legal Practitioners and Bar Councils (Amendment) Bill, 2025, the Prevention of Obscenity and Indecency in Digital Media Bill, 2025, the Allied Institute, Multan Bill, 2025, the Service Tribunals (Amendment) Bill, 2025, the National Database and Registration Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2025, the Islamabad Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Bill, 2025, the

Multi-Vendor Electricity Distribution Bill, 2025 and the Toll Plaza Rationalization and Equity Bill, 2025.

The bills were introduced by Shaista Pervaiz, Shazia Marri, Dr Sharmila Faruqi, Muhammad Riaz Fatyana, Sahibzada Sibghatullah, Awaish Haider Jakhar, Nosheen Ifthikhar, Shahida Rehmani, Khawaja Izhar ul Hassan, Sohail Sultan, Sehar Kamran, and Syed Abrar Ali Shah in the House. The Chair referred all the bills to the concerned standing committees for detailed deliberation after not opposing them by the treasury benches.