

# Independent

Member APNS &amp; CPNE

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk

Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vol: XXVII No. 165, Shaban 14, 1447 AH Tuesday February 03, 2026 Pages 08, Price Rs.15

## PM urges KP govt to fulfill its responsibilities for law & order, health, education sectors

**Stresses the need to further intensify the provincial government's efforts to establish peace and security and strengthen its institutions to combat terrorism**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday assuring the federal government's support for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's uplift, urged the provincial government to fulfill its responsibilities to establish law and order in the province, besides providing education and health facilities to its people. The prime minister, in a meeting with Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sohail Afridi here, emphasized cooperation between the federal and provincial government for the development and prosperity of the KP's people, calling it essential for provincial law and order too.

The prime minister stressed the need to further intensify the provincial government's efforts to establish peace and security and strengthen its institutions to combat terrorism. He said that the federal and provincial governments would continue joint efforts to eliminate terrorism, urging the provincial government to fulfill its responsibilities for establishing law and order in the province as well as for public welfare. The prime minister said that as the KP government was empowered to ensure the uplift of the education and health

sectors, it should take the required measures.

Calling the KP province an important unit of the federation, he said the federal government had always been striving for the betterment of the KP's people and would continue similar within its jurisdiction.

Emphasizing close relations and effective coordination between the federation and the provinces as key to national progress and public service, Prime Minister Shehbaz also assured cooperation within the federal framework for development projects in KP, improvement of basic infrastructure, education,



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti presides over a high-level review meeting on progress of Trauma Centres at the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

## Senate passes resolution unanimously to flay recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan

**MPs call for political approach to address Balochistan law & order**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate on Monday unanimously passed a resolution condemning the recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan and expressed deep condolences to the bereaved families, while wishing a speedy recovery to the injured.

The resolution was moved by Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar in the House.

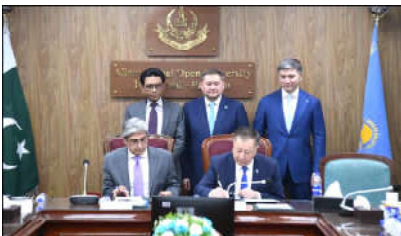
The House paid tribute to the courage and sacrifices of the security forces and law-enforcement agencies who continue to lay down their lives in the line

of duty for the protection of citizens and the defence of the motherland.

"It reaffirms the Senate's commitment to peace, development, and political inclusion in Balochistan, recognizing that sustainable security is inseparable from socio-economic progress, good governance, and respect for constitutional rights," the resolution said.

The House reiterated the resolve of the Pakistani nation that terrorism shall not be allowed to succeed,

*Continued on page 2*



KARACHI: Pakistan-Kazakhstan educational ties reach new heights as Federal Minister Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui leads high-level engagement and eight MoUs are signed between leading universities, and dedicated educational center.

## Balochistan cut off from the Digital World as internet ban spark widespread anger

**Independent Report**

QUETTA: Daily life across Quetta and other parts of Balochistan has been thrown into disarray following the suspension of internet services, leaving residents without access to essential communication tools and triggering growing public concern.

The shutdown has disrupted routine activities across multiple sectors, severely affecting newspapers, businesses, students, and official institutions, while also cutting off contact with Pakistanis living abroad. Citizens say the absence of internet connectivity has paralyzed professional, educational, and commercial operations at a time when digital access is considered a basic necessity. The internet suspen-

sion was ordered by the Balochistan government through the Home Department in the aftermath of recent tragic incidents in Quetta and other areas of the province. The restrictions have been enforced uniformly across Baloch-majority and Pashtun-majority regions. Residents argue that depriving people of modern communication facilities in the current era feels like a regression of several decades, fostering frustration and a sense of isolation among the public.

Alongside the internet ban, the government has imposed Section 144, enforcing restrictions on tinted-glass vehicles and prohibiting double riding on motorcycles. In response, police

*Continued on page 2*

## Jatak appointed Balochistan Home Minister

QUETTA (INP): MPA Ali Madad Jatak has been appointed as the new home minister of Balochistan, marking an important change in the provincial cabinet.

According to media reports, Ali Madad Jatak has been given the Balochistan home minister portfolio.

The appointment brings an end to a two-year period during which the key ministry remained with the chief minister of the province.

Ali Madad Jatak took oath as the home minister in Quetta. Balochistan Governor Jafar Mandokhail administered the oath to the newly appointed home minister.

## Quetta police draw red line: Looters of govt assets to be tried as terror accomplices

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Quetta Police have issued a strong caution to individuals who allegedly exploited the turmoil during recent terror attacks to unlawfully take possession of government property, warning that strict legal action will follow against violators.

Police officials stated that while the people of Quetta are widely recognized for their courage, hospitality, and peaceful nature, the recent incidents exposed the actions of certain elements who misused the chaotic situation. During security operations against terrorists, some individuals reportedly removed government-owned motorcycles, vehicles, and rickshaws that were under official custody.

Authorities announced that a targeted operation will be initiated shortly to recover all stolen government property. Any person found holding such items after the deadline will be treated as an aider or abettor of terrorism and prosecuted under anti-terrorism laws.

The Quetta Police reiterated their commitment to serving the public and maintaining order under all circumstances.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sohail Afridi calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## CM Bugti pushes emergency health overhaul, orders new Trauma Centres to go live without delay

**Independent Report**

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti has reiterated that serving the public remains the foremost responsibility of the provincial government, declaring that the immediate activation of newly constructed trauma centres is a decisive step toward saving lives through timely and effective medical intervention.

The Chief Minister made these remarks while presiding over a high-level review meeting on the progress of trauma centres at the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Sunday. The meeting was attended by Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Chief Secretary

Imran Zarkoon, Secretary Communications and Works Babar Khan, Managing Director Trauma Centre Arbab Kamran Kasi, along with other relevant officials.

During the briefing, the Secretary Health informed the Chief Minister about the newly established trauma centre on Spini Road, Quetta, highlighting its increased capacity, modern emergency treatment facilities, and expanded clinical network. Details regarding the required human resources and financial allocations necessary for the centre's effective operation were also shared.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti issued clear instructions that the new trauma centre must be made fully operational at the earliest. He emphasized that recruitment of staff should be conducted strictly on

merit to ensure transparency, professionalism, and efficient delivery of healthcare services.

While addressing the meeting, the Chief Minister stressed that fully functional trauma centres play a vital role in providing immediate medical care, particularly during emergencies. He noted that the activation of the new facility would enable patients to receive faster and improved treatment, significantly reducing preventable loss of life.

The Chief Minister further directed that the trauma centre at Sheikh Zayed Hospital be completed on a priority basis, underlining that strengthening trauma and emergency care facilities is essential for improving the overall healthcare response across Balochistan and ensuring swift medical assistance for citizens in critical situations.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail administering oath from Haji Ali Madad Jattak as Provincial Minister. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti is also present.

## Ali Madad Jattak sworn in as Provincial Minister

QUETTA (APP): Member of the Balochistan Assembly Ali Madad Jattak took oath as a provincial minister during a ceremony at the Governor House in Quetta on Monday.

Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail administered the oath to the provincial minister, with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz

Bugti also present on the occasion.

The ceremony was attended by Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai, provincial ministers, members of the assembly, Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, provincial secretaries, and prominent political figures.

## 22 more terrorists of Fitna al Hindustan killed in Balochistan

**Interior Minister hails security forces for eliminating 'Fitna-e-Hindustan' Terrorists**

QUETTA (APP): As many as 22 more terrorists were killed by security forces as sanitization operations against terrorists belonging to Fitna al Hindustan continued in Balochistan.

Security sources said that around 177 terrorists have been killed in operations carried out over the last three days.

The sources said that security forces, including intelligence agencies and police, are tightening the noose around terrorists and their facilitators at various locations.

There are also reports of further losses and fatalities among the terrorists and

their facilitators, the security sources said. Meanwhile, Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has lauded the security forces, police, and intelligence agencies for eliminating 22 militants linked with the group referred to as "Fitna-e-Hindustan" during a major counterterrorism operation in Balochistan.

In a statement on Monday, the minister said the timely and effective action of the security apparatus had successfully foiled a significant terrorist plot aimed at destabilising

*Continued on page 2*



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan addressing the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners Conference.

## Field Marshal reaffirms Pak commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with Libya

RAWALPINDI (APP):

Commander-in-Chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, Field Marshal Khalifa Abu al-Qasim Haftar, along with Lieutenant General Saddam Khalifa Haftar, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, here on Monday at the General Headquarters (GHQ).

During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on matters of mutual interest, with particular focus on security dynamics in respective regions and professional cooperation, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

The discussion underscored the importance of continued engagement and collaboration between the

Armed Forces of Pakistan and Libya.

Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir welcomed the distinguished guests and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with Libya.

He emphasized Pakistan's support for peace, stability, and institutional development in Libya.

The meeting was held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere, reflecting the longstanding friendly relations between Pakistan and Libya.

Earlier, on arrival at Noor Khan Airbase, Field Marshal Khalifa Abu-al-Qasim Haftar was received by Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ.

The dignitary also paid homage to Shuhada and laid wreath at martyrs memorial at GHQ.



Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir meets with Field Marshal Khalifa Abu-Al-Qasim Haftar, Commander-in-Chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

## Balochistan unrest driven by smuggling losses, not rights movement: Khawaja

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Monday said that the ongoing unrest in Balochistan was no longer political in nature and was being driven instead by organized criminal networks seeking to recover financial losses following government action against smuggling.

Speaking during a debate on the law and order situation in the National Assembly, the minister said that what was being projected as a "rights movement" had collapsed and transformed into a criminal enterprise motivated by illicit profits.

"This is essentially a

business loss issue.

The agitation is being run to recover those losses," he told the House, adding that criminal elements had taken over the narrative to shield illegal activities.

The discussion followed the adoption of a motion moved by Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Fazal Chaudhary to debate the country's prevailing security situation.

Citing oil smuggling as a key example, the defence minister said fuel imported from Iran under permits at prices between Rs40 and Rs60 per litre was illegally

*Continued on page 2*



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti in a meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

## Tarar reviews progress on Central Monitoring Project and NCF establishment

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar chaired a review meeting on projects being undertaken by the Directorate of Electronic Media and Publications (DEMP).

The minister was briefed on the progress of the Central Monitoring Project and the establishment of the National Centre of Films (NCF).

Officials informed the meeting that the Central Monitoring Project, launched in January 2023,

is scheduled for completion by June 2026, with its scope being expanded and technology upgraded.

Tarar emphasized the timely completion of the project, noting that the Central Monitoring Unit is aligned with modern requirements and will assist in compiling narrative-related reports and formulating effective strategies.

He added that the initiative would also benefit the private sector by providing facilities to analyze

*Continued on page 2*



## President, PM call for fair implementation of IWT

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif have reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the conservation and sustainable management of wetlands.

On the occasion of World Wetlands Day, being observed on Monday (Nisbat), the President said Pakistan is a signatory to the Ramsar Convention 1971, which promotes the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and their resources for present and future generations.

The President said Sindh bears a disproportionate burden due to wetland degradation, historical water stress and sea-level rise.

He said protecting these ecosystems is not only an environmental responsibility but also a matter of public welfare and

national resilience.

Asif Zardari said Pakistan remains concerned over unilateral actions by India affecting the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960, a legally binding agreement that has governed equitable water sharing in the Indus Basin for decades.

He said the suspension of treaty mechanisms, including the sharing of hydrological data, undermines trust and predictability when climate pressures require greater cooperation.

The President said water must never be used as a tool of coercion, and the weaponization of water as an instrument of war against Pakistan must be rejected, as the disruption of river flows threatens millions of lives, livelihoods, and food systems in a country reliant on the Indus Basin.

In his message, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

said Pakistan strongly rejects any attempt to use water as a weapon of war, deeming it a serious violation of international law.

He said Pakistan, while adhering to international laws, believes in the full and fair implementation of the Indus Water Treaty 1960.

The Prime Minister said Pakistan will continue to raise its voice globally for the fair, legal and peaceful use of water resources between countries.

Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that our water resources, including lakes and glaciers, inland water bodies and coastal and mangrove biodiversity, are crucial for environmental conservation, climate change mitigation and water management. He said the conservation of water resources is not just an environmental duty to combat climate change.



Libyan Arab Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Khalifa Abu-Al-Qasim Haftar reviews guard of honor at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

## FCCP upholds order to pay Rs3.85m insurance claim, dismisses appeal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan has dismissed an appeal filed by M/s Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Limited against the payment of an insurance claim, upholding the judgments of the Islamabad High Court and the Federal Insurance Ombudsman that directed the company to pay Rs3.85 million to the nominee of a deceased policyholder.

A two-member bench comprising Justice Ali Baqar Najafi and Justice Muhammad Karim Khan Agha announced the verdict after hearing FCPLA No. 275 of 2025. The court ruled that there was no legal or constitutional defect

in the Islamabad High Court's decision warranting interference. According to the court record, the late Muhammad Waqas Anjum had obtained a takaful plan from M/s Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Limited on March 5, 2019, under which a death cover of Rs3.85 million was provided. However, he passed away on May 8, 2019, only a few days after the issuance of the policy.

He had nominated his sister, Arisha Kanwal, as the beneficiary, who subsequently filed the claim.

The takaful company rejected the claim on various grounds, including objections to the nominee's familial relationship.

## Pak declares public holiday on February 5 for Kashmir Solidarity Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal government has announced a nationwide public holiday on Thursday, February 5, 2026, to mark Kashmir Solidarity Day.

The decision applies across the country and aims to observe the day in support of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

According to a press release issued by the Cabinet Division in Islamabad, the holiday has been declared in line with an earlier circular issued by the Cabinet Secretariat. All public and private offices, educational institutions, and most businesses will remain closed on the day.

## PM reaffirms Commitment to UNESCO's values in advancing quality education, safeguarding cultural heritage

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to UNESCO's core values in advancing inclusive and quality education, safeguarding cultural heritage and strengthening resilience in the face of global challenges.

He was talking to Director General United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Dr. Khaled El-Enany, who called on him at the PM House.

While congratulating

Dr. Enany on his election as Director General, UNESCO, he commended the important work being carried out by UNESCO and expressed Pakistan's desire for continued collaboration with the organization, under Dr. Enany's able leadership.

The prime minister highlighted various initiatives being undertaken by the Government of Pakistan for the promotion of education, particularly the "Education Emergency" that aims to maximize the enrollment of out-of-school children.



ISLAMABAD: Director General United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), H.E. Dr. Khaled El-Enany called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Tarar reviews..

Continued from page 1

their content. The DEMP administration assured the minister that all necessary steps were being taken to meet the June 2026 deadline in line with the approved PC-I and work plan.

The meeting agreed to hold regular review sessions to monitor progress and address any obstacles. Participants were also briefed on the establishment of the National Centre of Films, created through the reorganization of DEMP's Film Wing. The minister said comprehensive measures would be taken to promote quality film production in Pakistan.

Officials highlighted that the NCF, as custodian of the National Film Policy 2018, ensures coordination with stakeholders in the film

and drama industry.

Under the policy, steps are being taken to implement incentives and promote Pakistan's cinema industry internationally through structured linkages, agreements, and participation in global platforms.

The ministry has introduced financial incentives to support the revival of the film industry, including exemptions on cinematographic equipment, tax relief for cinema operations and feature film production, and tax credits under the Film and Drama Finance Fund. It was further shared that memorandums of understanding have been signed with several countries to encourage cooperation in the film and drama sectors, including content exchange, joint productions, and participation.



Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah meets with Alexandra Berg von Linde, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Pakistan, and Per Albert Isaas, Ambassador of Norway, at CM House in Karachi.

## Senate passes..

Continued from page 1

and that the unity of the State and the will of the people will prevail over all forces of violence, extremism and terrorism.

The Senate urged the government to ensure a transparent, swift, and conclusive investigation into the incidents and bring the perpetrators, facilitators, and local and international sponsors of terrorism to justice in accordance with law.

The House called upon the Federal and Provincial Governments to further strengthen intelligence coordination, border security, and counter-terrorism mechanisms, with special focus on Balochistan.

awmakers in the Upper House of Parliament on Monday stressed the need for a comprehensive political approach to address the law and order situation in Balochistan.

They were of the view that a new National Action Plan (NAP) should be devised to bring peace and tranquility to the province.

Speaking in the Senate, former caretaker prime minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said that mere reliance on force alone would not bring lasting peace to the province.

He stressed the need for political dialogue, development, representation and confidence-building measures to ensure durable peace in Balochistan.

## 22 more..

Continued from page 1

the province. He praised the professionalism and coordination displayed by the security forces throughout the operation.

"I pay tribute to our security forces for their successful action against these terrorists and their facilitators," Naqvi said, adding that the nation takes pride in the courage and sacrifice of its armed personnel.

Reaffirming the government's resolve, the interior minister vowed that all elements associated with "Fitna-e-Hindustan" would be completely eliminated. "We will go to the last extent to ensure lasting peace in Balochistan," he said. Officials say security operations will continue across the province to dismantle remaining militant networks and prevent further attempts at creating unrest.

## Balochistan..

Continued from page 1

and special Eagle Squad units have set up checkpoints at key locations throughout the city. Local citizens allege that these measures have resulted in unnecessary inconvenience, claiming that ordinary people are being stopped and questioned, while suspicious elements often go unchecked.

Residents have voiced serious concerns that the ongoing restrictions are disrupting everyday life, trade, education, and communication across the province. They have urged the authorities to adopt a more balanced approach that ensures security objectives are met without placing undue strain on the public or undermining essential civilian needs.



Sindh Traditional Wrestling Malh held in Naundero organized by the Sports and Youth Affairs Department Government of Sindh.

**CORRIGENDUM / DATE EXTENSION**

With reference to advertisement published in daily newspapers vide PRQ No. 3313/19-01-2026 under TSE No. 252601946043, TSE No. 252601945793, it is informed that last date of submission for the tender is hereby extended to 9th February 2026 by 11 AM. All Other terms and condition shall remain the same.

**PRQ No.3566/02-02-2026**

Executive Engineer  
Patfeeder Canal Division  
Dera Murad Jamali.

**2 nd NOTICE FOR EXTENSION**

This is to inform all concerned that the Tender Notice for Upgradation Of 100 Primary Schools to Middle Level in Balochistan (PSDP No. 5274 Z.2025.2330) GBPS Deh Babani Rakhni District Barkhan BEMIS CODE 7067 TSE-252612933853, Upgradation Of 100 Primary Schools to Middle Level in Balochistan (PSDP No. 5274 Z.2025.2330) GGPS Shado Sooman District Barkhan BEMIS Code 12499 Tse-252612933773 and Upgradation of 50 Middle Schools to High level in Balochistan PSDP No. 5292 z.2025.2331 GBMDS Haji Zareen Loop District Barkhan BEMIS Code 7113 TSE-252612934413 which were published in the daily newspapers under PRQ No. 3011/31-12-2505, and PRQ No.3328/19-01-2026 are hereby extended and rescheduled. The bid submission deadline is now extended up to 20 th February-2026 at 10:00 AM, and the all bids will be opened on the same day at 11:00 AM. All other terms and conditions will remain the same

**PRQ No.3573/02-02-2026**

Executive Engineer (Buildings)  
CW, PP&H Department  
District Barkhan

**TENDER NOTICE**

The Chief Officer District Council Shaheed Sikanderabad Surab invites sealed percentage rate tender based on composite schedule of rates 2023 Government of Baluchistan from interested contractor / firms for the works mentioned below: **Grand-in-Aid 2025-26**

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated cost	Bid Security	Time limit	TSE
01	Drilling ,Development and Solarization of Local bore hole at Tehsil Surab.	Rs: 800000/-	2%	3 Months	TSE- 252602964893
02	Drilling ,Development and Solarization of Local bore hole at Mehrabad Surab.	Rs: 800000/-	2%	3 Months	TSE- 252602964873
03	Provision of Home Solar system at Shaheed Sikanderabad Surab.	Rs: 400000/-	2%	3 Months	TSE- 252602964853
04	Drilling ,Development of Local bore hole at Killi Haj Zia Gidder Surab	Rs: 400000/-	2%	3 Months	TSE- 252602964823
05	Supply & Installation of Solar Street Lights at off-grid areas of District Shaheed Sikanderabad Surab.	Rs: 3367880/-	2%	3 Months	TSE- 252602964803
06	Drilling and Development of Local Bore at Killi Ziber Shakar Dun Surab.	Rs: 2500000/-	2%	3 Months	TSE- 252602964773

The procurement shall be carried out in accordance with Baluchistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority Rules 2014. (amendment up to date) **Eligibility:** as per Bidding Documents will seen on BPPRA Website **Method of Procurement:** Single stage, One envelope Procedure. The bidding documents can be obtained from the undersigned office. **Bidding / Tender Documents:** Issuance: Tender form / document have issued to original contractor or authorized person from the date of advertisement published in News paper till submission date and time on production of amounting Rs. 1000/- (Non Refundable) as bidding documents charges deposit in shape of Green Challan in the account of Govt Head. (1994004154635567) in NBP Surab Bid security / earnest money, valid Engineering council certificate (Original) in required category, income tax certificate (NTN) etc. **Submission:** Last date for submission of document is 17-02-2026 at 10:00 AM. **Opening:** The tender will be opened on 17-02-2026 at 11:00 AM. Place of issuance, submission, inquiries and opening will be: **Address:** Office of the Chief Officer District Council Surab **E-Mail address:** mirsaeedahmedreki03@gmail.com **Terms & Conditions:** Bid Validity Period (90) Days. Note: It may be noted that no pay order will be accepted / entertained and firm's complete title / name should be written on the call deposit. (Pay order and Bank Draft will not be acceptable)

**Chief Officer**  
District Council Shaheed Sikanderabad Surab

**AB No.792/02-02-2026**

www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr\_gob @dpr\_gob @dpr\_gob

**CORRIGENDUM**

This office was called notice inviting tender for various development schemes under BSID published in Daily newspapers vide PRQ No.3372/21-01-2026 on 22 nd January 2026, in which the place of submission and opening was fixed on 09 th February 2026 at 114 wing Headquarter Naseerabad at Dera Murad Jamali. Now the said tender will submitted and opened at office of the Deputy Commissioner Usta Muhammad. All other conditions date and time will remain same as mentioned in bidding documents.

**PRQ No.3576/02-02-2026**

Executive Engineer (Road)  
CWPP&H Department District  
Usta Muhammad

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

**TSE # 252602963621** The Balochistan Public Service Commission, invites sealed bids from the eligible firms / bidders dealing in the Procurement of miscellaneous Stationery items as detailed here under - Tender Fee 1000/- and bid Security 2%

Name of Work	E/ Cost
Procurement of miscellaneous Stationery, items	Rs. 2 Million

**PRQ No.3567/02-02-2026**

www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr\_gob @dpr\_gob @dpr\_gob

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

The Executive Engineer PHE Division Harnai invites sealed percentage rates tenders based on composite schedule of rates, 2023 Government of Balochistan under Balochistan Special Development Initiative Phase-II 2025-26 from interested contractors/firms registered with Income Tax, Sales tax and Balochistan Revenue Authority for the works mentioned below:-

S. No.	Description	Estimate Cost	Earnest Money	Tender Fee	Time Limit
1	<b>SOLARIZED WSS AT MOHALLAH AKHTARABAD HARNAI TSE-252601962343</b>				
i	D/D of Bore	1.022M	9.831 M		
ii	Silt of Solar System.	3.028M		2%	Rs.1500/-
iii	Civil Work	4.830M			3 Months
iv	S/O HDPE Pipe 90mm 2000 Rft 63mm 1000 Rft	0.951M			
2	<b>GRAVITY FLOW WATER SUPPLY SCHEME SHIN KACH HARNAI TSE-252601962353</b>				
i	Const: of Sump Well	1.425M	9.895 M		
ii	Civil Work	4.730M		2%	Rs.1500/-
iii	S/O HDPE Pipe 110 mm 3800 90 mm 3000 63 mm 2200	3.739M			-do-
3	<b>SOLARIZED WSS AT TUKA BALAM MALAK ADAM KHAN HARNAI TSE-252601962363</b>				
i	Collecting Chamber	1.268M	5.941 M		
ii	Supply & Installation of Solar system	2.141M			
iii	Civil Work	1.157M		2%	Rs.1500/-
iv	S/O HDPE Pipe 75 mm 1500 63 mm 5000	1.374M			-do-
4	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF R.O PLANT FOR RAILWAY STATION HARNAI DISTRICT HARNAI TSE-252601962373</b>				
i	Supply/ Installation of R.O Plant	2.350M			
ii	Const: of Pre-Fabricated room	1.090M			
iii	Silt of Solar System	0.990M		2%	Rs.1500/-
iv	Water Quality test Charges	0.025M	4.455 M		-do-
5	<b>SOLARIZED WSS AT TALIB LEASE, SHEKH AQEEL, TUKA X, ZEHRU COAL AND FCPS HARNAI TSE-252601962383</b>				
i	D/D of Tube well 6Nos	5.797M			
ii	Silt of Solar System 6 Nos	9.036M			
iii	Civil work	3.350M		2%	Rs.1500/-
iv	S/O HDPE Pipe 90mm 1800 Rft 63mm 1000 Rft 50mm 6500	1.642M	19.825 M		-do-
6	<b>SOLARIZED WSS IS PAYING OF PIPE LINE DRINKING PURPOSE AR PMDC, LEASE AREA 40 LEASE AREA, AT HAZARA DAM LEASE AREA SHAHRAGH DISTRICT HARNAI TSE-252601962433</b>				
i	D/D of Bore	1.860M			
ii	Silt of Solar System	2.449M			
iii	Civil work	4.074M		2%	Rs.1500/-
iv	S/O HDPE Pipe 50mm 18000 Rft	3.514M	11.898 M		-do-
7	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF R.O PLANT AT SHAHRAGH NEAR PMDC DISTRICT HARNAI TSE-252601962443</b>				
i	Supply/ Installation of R.O Plant	2.350M			
ii	Const: of Pre-Fabricated room	1.090M			
iii	Silt of Solar System	0.990M			
iv	Water Quality test Charges	0.025M	4.455 M	2%	Rs.1500/-

**Bidding/Tender Document:- Issuance:-** Tender forms/documents will be issued from the date of advertisement published in news papers upto 02-02-2026 at 12.00 PM on presentation of requisite documents i.e Tender Fee (non-refundable) , Bid security/earnest money, Valid Engineering Council Certificate in relevant/required category must have registration (CED-6.) and (upto 25 Million) above in relevant category and specialized code is CE09 (ii) (Water Supply). Work Order of similar Nature (water Supply works) equal to 85% total bid cost amount of bid completed with completion certificate in last 03 Financial years and the work order should be online verifiable. Firm must have GST Authorized Representatives of company will only be allowed, having a specific Authorization letter for the Schemes mentioned above. (Authorization letter/ deed must be provided on Non- Judicial Stamp Paper Rs.100, attested by first class Magistrate). All pages of financial as well as technical bids must be signed, stamp & marked from 1" to last page. Affidavit of correctness of information provided is mandatory. **Procedure of Procurement:** Single Stage two Envelope Bidding Procedure. **Bid Security:-** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the undersigned from scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:-** The Bidding Documents can be obtained from the office of the undersigned, 1,000 PKR. **Tender Fee Challan Code No.C-02725-02.** **Submission:-** Last date for submission of documents from advertisement published in newspapers upto 16-02-2026 at 11:00 AM **Opening:-** The tenders will be opened 16-02-2026 at 12.00 PM **Place of issuance:** Submission, inquiries and opening will be:- **Address:- Deputy Commissioner District Harnai. Telephone No. 0833520035 Email address: azmirkhan.sdo@gmail.com** **Terms & Conditions:-** Under following conditions bid will be rejected. Conditional and telephonic bids/tenders. Bids not accompanied by bid security of required amount and form. Bids received after specified date and time. Black listed firm/contractors. Bid validity period (90 days). **Responsive bidder is required to submit following documents with bid.** List of similar assignment with cost under-taken over the past 5 years. Affidavit that firm has never been black listed. Note: It may be noted that no pay order will be accepted/entertained and firms completed title /name should be written on the call deposit.

**Executive Engineer**  
Public Health Engineering  
Division Harnai

**PRQ No.3562/02-02-2026**

www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr\_gob @dpr\_gob @dpr\_gob



## Foiled plots expose enemy failure as security forces hold the line on peace in Balochistan

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Provincial Advisor for Environment and Climate Change Nasim Rehman Khan Malakhel has stated that the failure of attempts to disturb peace in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan clearly reflects the professionalism, alertness, and operational readiness of the security forces, police, and other law enforcement agencies.

In a statement, he said that prompt and decisive action by the concerned institutions effectively neutralized the plans of saboteurs and ensured the safety of citizens' lives and prop-

erty. He noted that coordinated efforts to target multiple locations simultaneously were intended to create fear and instability, but strong coordination, unity, and swift response by the institutions thwarted these designs.

Nasim Rehman Khan Malakhel said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, the security forces and police displayed outstanding bravery and professional competence, delivering a firm and unambiguous message to elements seeking to undermine peace. He stressed that Balochistan is a province

rooted in peace, tolerance, and cultural values, and cannot be turned into a battleground for chaos or disorder.

The provincial advisor paid heartfelt tribute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty for the protection of the people. He prayed for the elevation of their ranks and for strength and patience for the bereaved families. Reaffirming the government's commitment, he said the provincial administration stands firmly alongside the families of the martyrs and will continue to support them in every possible manner.



QUETTA: MPAs Engineer Zamrak Khan Achakzai, Syed Zafar Agha, Bilal Kakar and Naveed meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

## DG Khana Farhang hits out at western propaganda, hails Pak media for responsible coverage

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Director General Khana Farhang Iran, Syed Abul Hassan Meeri, has strongly criticized the United States and Israel for what he described as the deliberate spread of misleading narratives through international media, accusing them of fueling tension rather than promoting peace between Iran and the U.S.

Addressing a luncheon arranged in honor of senior journalists in Quetta, Meeri stated that Iran firmly believes in dialogue and negotiations as the preferred path forward. However, he warned that if the United States opts for the use of

force, Iran would respond with full strength and determination. He cautioned that any shift from diplomacy toward confrontation would have devastating consequences.

Meeri lauded Pakistan's role, particularly the media in Balochistan, for maintaining a neutral and fact-based approach in reporting developments related to Iran-U.S. tensions. He said such balanced journalism played a vital role in countering misinformation disseminated by Western media outlets.

He described mediation efforts by Pakistan and other countries between Tehran and Washington as

constructive and encouraging, expressing hope that the United States would also choose negotiations over escalation. Emphasizing the importance of accurate reporting, Meeri said the media remains the most effective platform for promoting truth and preventing conflict.

Rejecting claims that Iran supports terrorist organizations, Meeri asserted that Tehran has consistently condemned terrorism at the state level. He also denounced recent acts of violence and conveyed solidarity with the Balochistan government and the families affected by such incidents.



QUETTA: Director B-TEVTA Ghulam Mustafa Raisani presides over the meeting under Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti vision.

## National Party slams raid on BNP leader's home, labels action an assault on democracy

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Central Secretary Information and Spokesperson of the National Party, Ali Ahmed Langov, has strongly denounced the raid on the residence of Balochistan National Party (BNP) central leader Ghulam Nabi Marri in Killi Badu, Sariab, calling it a serious breach of the sanctity of private homes and a blatant violation of democratic values.

In his statement, Ali Ahmed Langov expressed grave concern over what he

described as an unlawful and damaging act. He said that conducting raids on the homes of political leaders and workers runs contrary to democratic traditions, established political norms, and constitutional principles, and cannot be justified in any democratic system.

He emphasized that political dissent and participation are fundamental components of democracy and are explicitly protected under the Constitution. Suppressing political ex-

pression and activities through coercive measures, he warned, does not address underlying issues but instead fuels political unrest and instability.

The NP spokesperson further stated that the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees every citizen the right to freedom of expression and peaceful political and democratic struggle. Any attempt to restrict these rights, he added, constitutes an unconstitutional and illegal act. Ali Ahmed Langov demanded a fair, transparent, and impartial investigation into the incident, sought identification of those responsible, and urged the authorities to avoid such wrongful and negative actions against political leaders and workers in the future.



JAFFARABAD: Deputy Commissioner Khalid Khan presides over the meeting to review evening session of anti-polio campaign.

## DC Chaman inspects schools and BHUs, calls for timely completion of BSDI projects

**Independent Report**  
CHAMAN: Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Habib Ahmed Bangulzai, conducted an extensive review of ongoing construction and renovation projects in schools and Basic Health Units (BHUs) under BSDI Phase I, underscoring the importance of timely completion to improve public services.

During his inspection, the DC visited the refurbished Jamal Shaheed Stadium Hall and the Government Boys High School Examination Hall, expressing satisfaction with the quality of completed work. He also evaluated ongoing construction at BHU Haji Saifullah, BHU Haji Habib

Khan, and BHU Haji Gul Shah Khan, where new building activities are underway.

Contractors provided briefings on the status of all ongoing projects, assuring that work would be completed within a week. Deputy Commissioner Bangulzai announced that all Phase I projects would be officially inaugurated next week, with the newly upgraded facilities immediately opened for public use and healthcare services.

The DC also reviewed doctor attendance and patient entry registers at the BHUs to ensure proper management and effective service delivery.



QUETTA: Newly appointed Provincial Minister Ali Madad Jattak, and MPA Zark Khan Mandokhail meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

## Corruption net tightens in Balochistan Ex-Municipal Chiefs nabbed in massive funds scandal

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Balochistan Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) has intensified its crackdown on corruption, arresting two former Chief Officers from different municipal bodies and recovering crucial evidence in a high-profile financial misconduct case. Officials confirmed on Saturday that the investigation is expanding, with further arrests and major revelations expected in the coming days.

According to an official press release, the operation was conducted under the supervision of the Deputy Director Investigation-I. Anti-corruption teams carried out targeted actions in the Municipal Committees of Mach, Musakhel, and Usta Muhammad, marking a significant breakthrough in cases involving large-scale financial irregularities.

Preliminary investigations revealed that certain former Chief Officers allegedly diverted and spent approximately Rs 239.7 million from development funds on non-developmental expenditures with mala fide intent, in clear violation of prescribed financial rules and regulations. The alleged misuse of funds reportedly disrupted public development schemes and caused substantial losses to the public exchequer.

The press release stated that the accused officials unlawfully utilized government resources, amounting to serious misconduct and abuse of authority, which resulted in considerable financial damage to the state treasury. As part of the ongoing action, Wali Muhammad and Muhammad Rafiq, former Chief Officers of the Municipal Committee Musakhel, have been taken into custody.

Meanwhile, raids are continuing to arrest other nominated accused, including Ali Muhammad, Yaqoob, Azad Khan, Majeed, Bashir Palal, Manzoor, and Bashir Saadi. Authorities expressed confidence that additional arrests will follow as the investigation progresses.

Reaffirming its stance, the Anti-Corruption Establishment Balochistan stated that, in line with the directives of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti and the Chief Secretary Balochistan, a zero-tolerance policy against corruption is being strictly enforced. Officials pledged that those found involved in the misuse of public funds would be held accountable and prosecuted strictly in accordance with the law, available evidence, and established procedures.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary for Communication & Works Babar Khan presides over the meeting to review ongoing development works of Zhob Zone.

## Border closures push youth to the brink as joblessness spirals out of control

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA/CHAMAN: Political and tribal leader Sardar Barat Khan Durrani has sounded a serious warning that unemployment in Chaman and other border regions of Balochistan has escalated to a dangerous level, plunging the youth into economic distress and widespread disillusionment.

While speaking to different delegations, Sardar Durrani said that the absence of industries, factories, and sustainable employment avenues across the province has left young people with little hope for the future. He stressed that Chaman's local economy is heavily reliant on border trade and cross-border movement, and prolonged border closures or restrictive policies have stripped thousands of families of their primary source of income.

Describing Chaman as

a key commercial center, Sardar Durrani stated that shutting down the border without offering alternative means of employment amounts to grave injustice. He urged the government to reopen the border on humanitarian grounds so that residents can support their families, or immediately introduce substitute job opportunities for those rendered unemployed. He further pointed out that the establishment of industries, factories, and economic zones in Balochistan could generate employment for thousands of young people and help ease the prevailing economic pressure. He remarked that the population of Balochistan is already grappling with underdevelopment, inflation, and poverty, and cutting off the sole livelihood source has only intensified public suffering.



SIBI: Deputy Commissioner Sibi Major (ret'd) Ilyas Kibzai presides over the meeting to review first day anti-polio campaign

## Three-Day business, cultural gala inaugurates at University of Gwadar

QUETTA (APP): The grand inauguration of the three-day 2<sup>nd</sup> Business and Cultural Gala at the University of Gwadar was held on Monday. The gala will continue from February 2 to February 4, featuring business exhibitions, student-led startups, cultural programs, and panel discussions, said a news release received here.

The primary objective of the gala is to highlight the region's business potential, students' creative thinking, and the rich cultural heri-

tage of Balochistan, while strengthening linkages between academia, the business community, and the local society, and enabling students to become job creators rather than job seekers. The inaugural ceremony was presided over by Vice Chancellor University of Gwadar Prof. Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir, while the Chief Guest was MPA Gwadar Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch.

In his address, the Vice Chancellor termed such activities essential for the ho-

stic development of students and stated that the Business and Cultural Gala plays a vital role in preparing youth for the practical demands of professional life. The Vice Chancellor also expressed special gratitude to Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and Governor Balochistan Mir Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, stating that the continuous patronage and support of the provincial government and the Governor's House are crucial for the academic and

developmental progress of the University of Gwadar.

He appreciated the Chief Minister's initiatives for higher education and youth empowerment, and described the Governor's keen interest and guidance in educational institutions as a source of strength for the university.

Addressing the ceremony, MPA Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch urged the youth to focus on business and entrepreneurial activities along with their academic pursuits.



QUETTA: Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Quetta Muhammad Anwar Kakar presides over the District Committee meeting.

## 50 garbage containers handed over to GMC

GWADAR (INP): In order to keep Gwadar city neat and clean, the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) has handed over 50 large-sized garbage containers to the Gwadar Municipal Committee (GMC).

These garbage containers will be placed in the area of the newly renovated Gwadar's oldest business center "Mullah Fazal Chowk".

The containers were handed over by GDA Superintendent Engineer Nadir Baloch and Gwadar Municipal Committee Chairman Majid Johar, ac-

cording to a Gwadar Pro's report on Monday.

A GDA official told Gwadar Pro that provision of these 50 large-sized garbage containers aims to prevent the vicinity of "Mullah Fazal Chowk" from getting littered. They will help enhance the beauty of city, he added. Later, Gwadar Smart Environment Sanitation System and Landfill Project will also yield a positive impact. It will help lift, recycle and dump all kinds of residential and commercial waste through state-of-the-art SOPs and modern machinery.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Education Rahela Hameed Khan Durrani meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

## DC Naseerabad calls for maximum participation in polio drive to protect children

**Independent Report**  
NASEERABAD: Deputy Commissioner Naseerabad, Captain (Retd.) Zulfiqar Ali Karar, has highlighted the critical need for coordinated efforts across all departments to eradicate the polio virus, urging parents to ensure that every child receives polio drops to prevent lifelong disability.

Chairing an evening review meeting on the first day of the ongoing campaign, DC Karar assessed the performance of polio teams in the district. The session was attended by Union Council Medical Officers (UCMOs), area in-charge polio workers, and other relevant officials.



## Balochistan launches initiative to send youth abroad for employment opportunities

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: In line with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti's vision to empower the province's youth, authorities have taken a major step to provide unemployed young people with dignified employment opportunities both in Europe and Gulf countries.

A key meeting was convened at the office of the Balochistan Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (B-TEVTA),

chaired by Director Ghulam Hussain Raisani, to develop actionable strategies for facilitating overseas employment for the province's youth.

Representatives from relevant departments, including Finance, Information & Broadcasting, and the Benazir Income Support Program, participated in the session, reviewing administrative procedures and discussing practical steps to make the initiative effective and beneficial.



CHAMAN: Deputy Commissioner Chaman Habib Ahmed Bangulzai giving directions to polio team on the eve of anti-polio campaign.

## DC Chaman calls for united effort as polio drive kicks off to safeguard children

**Independent Report**  
CHAMAN: Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Habib Ahmed Bangulzai, has emphasized that every child is entitled to a healthy future, urging society and the state to take all necessary steps to protect children from preventable illnesses.

On the first day of the ongoing polio vaccination campaign, DC Bangulzai visited field operations to assess the performance of polio teams.

He highlighted that the polio virus poses a serious threat of lifelong paralysis and disability in children, and stressed that complete vaccination of all children under five remains the only effective safeguard.

During the visit, he engaged directly with parents and community elders, underlining the importance and efficacy of the polio vaccine.

He called upon the media, teachers, religious scholars, educated parents, tribal leaders, and all responsible citizens to actively support the campaign and demonstrate collective responsibility in eradicating polio.

The Deputy Commissioner also inspected finger marking and wall marking to ensure accurate documentation.

He instructed polio teams to leave no child unvaccinated and directed security personnel to maintain vigilance, monitor suspicious activities, and ensure the safety of vaccination staff until the campaign is fully completed.

DC Bangulzai reiterated that coordinated efforts between authorities and the public are vital for eradicating polio and securing a healthier future for Balochistan's next generation.



**Subsidised relief**

The generous relief package recently announced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for an industry burdened with high energy prices, elevated financing costs and an excessive tax burden was a necessary intervention. The move should help to ease cost pressures on producers, bolster domestic productivity and shore up export competitiveness.

With competition intensifying globally — particularly after India's free trade deal with the EU, which threatens Pakistan's preferential advantage — the government had no option but to move swiftly to improve exporters' 'competitiveness' to maintain the market share. The package, welcomed by the business community, consists of a cut of Rs4.04 per unit in electricity prices, reduction in wheeling charges to under Rs9 per unit and a decrease in the cost of export refinance to 4.5pc from 7.5pc.

The total size of the relief, however, is unclear as are the steps the government intends to take to offset the resulting revenue loss. It is also not clear if the shortfall will be passed on to other consumers, or if the government will subsidise industry from the budget. This intervention comes on the heels of the State Bank's decision to slash the cash reserve requirement for banks — a move aimed at injecting additional liquidity into the system to push private sector credit for supporting growth. Together, these steps signal a desire to pivot from stabilisation to growth.

The relief is nonetheless undermined by conflicting signals from the state itself. Even as industry welcomed the package, foreign investors complained that the FBR had issued demand notices for payment of the super tax following the court ruling upholding its legality. This underscores the fact that subsidies cannot substitute for long-delayed structural reforms to improve the investment climate and export competitiveness. Subsidised energy and credit, and symbolic gestures like blue passports for leading exporters, may help save the current exports. But it will not address the deeper weaknesses: low productivity, regulatory unpredictability, high taxation, weak contract enforcement and a narrow product and market base. Past experience shows that subsidies — a way of compensating businesses for the economy's inefficiencies — have never boosted productivity or exports.

That said, the government must proceed with restraint as it reorients its economic policy towards growth. A premature or poorly coordinated growth stimulus could jeopardise the country's hard-won, still fragile macroeconomic stability. The economy's transition to growth hinges on its ability to expand exports and attract non-debt-creating foreign private investment. These goals cannot be achieved through ad hoc policies and subsidies. Pakistan's growth challenge lies in comprehensively implementing deep-seated policy and governance reforms aimed at sustainably alleviating the business environment rather than subsidising producers and exporters when under pressure.

**Maleeha Lodhi**

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's speech at Davos was one of the clearest enunciations of the strategic adjustment countries, especially middle powers, need to make when faced with a bullying superpower in a fractured world. Without naming the US, he stressed the need for middle powers to resist economic coercion by powerful countries by acting together because if they didn't, they will 'not be on the table but on the menu'.

While Carney spoke pointedly about the imperative to adapt, countries have already been adjusting to new geopolitical realities and power shifts in a transforming world. Adjustments are of different kinds, from diversifying trade partners to shifts in geopolitical alignments. Some trends have been accelerated by President Donald Trump's policies, but they were already in evidence in an increasingly multipolar world characterised by structural changes, new power balances and shift in economic power from the West to the

rest.

Consider how the EU and others have been boosting trade with China and how Beijing has been diversifying its markets. In 2020, China overtook the US to become the EU's biggest trading partner. The EU is also China's largest trading partner, and not as often thought the US. With Washington pursuing a contain-China strategy and tariff war, Beijing has been diversifying its export destinations away from America, a policy it stepped up after Trump's return to power. This has paid dividends. It accounts for China's record trade surplus of \$1 trillion today with a boom in exports to Southeast Asia and Europe while Chinese exports to the US have declined. The 'strategic' trade and energy partnership between Canada and China is another illustration of countries pursuing trade diversion. As is the recent EU-India free trade agreement. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer's visit to China last week marks an effort to upgrade business ties between the two countries.

Meanwhile, South-South trade has increased significantly and now ac-

counts for about a quarter of global trade. It has more than doubled between 2007 and 2023 and is projected to rise even further. This indicates the Global South is seeking to chart its own course by leveraging a multipolar environment. How much of the rise in South-South trade is attributable to US tariff policies? It is estimated around 40-45 per cent of the growth since 2018 is due to the disruption caused by US tariffs. Global South countries are trading more with each other and have an increasing number of free trade arrangements between them. They are also investing more among themselves. Their trade with China has increased exponentially and now surpasses that with the US.

On the geopolitical front, Global South nations, with many middle powers among them, have sought greater global influence and a bigger voice through organisations such as the 11-member BRICS, which is a vehicle for political and diplomatic coordination in different areas. They also seek to make their collective influence felt in international affairs through regional

organisations such as the GCC and SCO. Meanwhile, middle powers from the Global South have been pursuing policies of multi-alignment while also playing off the China-US rivalry to enhance their leverage. This has made countries such as Türkiye, more influential international actors. A different kind of adjustment is being forced on Europe by Trump's downgrading of the continent, as reflected in his national security strategy, repeated insults of European leaders, disdain of Nato and of course his threat to seize Greenland. The transatlantic alliance is in shambles and the breakdown of trust unprecedented. Although European leaders first tried to flatter and ingratiate Trump, that did not work. The US president only saw it as weakness and pressed his demands on them more forcefully without ceasing his harsh criticism of Europe.

From currying favour with Trump, European countries were obliged to change course. Now a pushback is taking shape reflecting the recognition that Europe can no longer count on the US as an ally and security guarantor.

Public opinion in the continent shifted even before European leaders began to consider policy options. A poll commissioned by the European Council on Foreign Relations found most Europeans did not see the US as a reliable ally any more. Of course, it will not be easy for Europe to reduce its military dependence on Washington. But the need to begin that process is now a major policy concern in European capitals, even as they seek better relations with the US.

Turning to the Middle East, here adjustments by regional powers to America's gradual disengagement are underway in different forms. While wanting to strengthen relations with Washington, Saudi Arabia for example, has sought to expand its options and also boost ties with China. Its rapprochement with Iran is motivated, among other factors, by the need to address security concerns to pursue its ambitious domestic economic goals but also in anticipation of America's reduced military and diplomatic footprint in the region. As is its effort to mend ties with Qatar and Türkiye.

Against the backdrop of eroding faith in the US defence umbrella and America's blind support of Israel, the Saudi-Pakistani strategic defence deal reflects Riyadh's effort to diversify its security partnerships.

The greater prominence of middle powers is another key aspect of changing geopolitics. Structural changes and the dispersal of power in the international system has created an enabling environment for middle powers to wield more influence. Moreover, the US-China competition has offered opportunities and leeway to countries to increase their leverage by playing off that rivalry and pursue an 'independent' course. As Alec Russell wrote in a Financial Times op-ed some time back, "The age of the Western set menu is over. And the new menu, while heavily influenced by two lead chefs, is still being written" — a reference to middle powers asserting their right to have a seat at the table. In fact, it is now the two superpowers' turn to adjust to this reality by paying more attention to middle powers and to woo them.

**Conflicts of the future**

**Umair Javed**

Several people (myself included) have written about the harmful impact of LLM (large language model) chatbots on basic learning processes in educational institutions. Learning is not merely accessing content, it is thinking with and through content. This is why those who claim that schooling (or processual education at any stage) can be easily replaced with an LLM subscription and internet access are selling a dangerous fiction.

Over a longer period, I am more optimistic that institutionalised learning will stay relevant, perhaps even without excessive reliance on technology. Already we see schools across several high-achieving educational contexts experimenting with tech-free classes and reporting improved student learning performance. Schools and universities themselves will continue to act as key sites of human socialisation, which should remain relevant in a world increasingly fragmented, insular and diffused.

What is far less clear, and where the possibility

of rupture and crisis is more plausible, is the labour market itself. For just over half a decade, I've been teaching a class on markets and the roles they play across different societies in history. The premise of this class is to familiarise students with how our current reality, where needs and wants are mostly satisfied through market-based exchange (money swapped in exchange for commodities) is a historically contingent outcome. The other purpose is to show how this contingency itself is subject to considerable variation — many societies differ in the extent to which they allow markets to shape the lives, livelihoods, and afterlives of their citizens.

As one would expect, the issue of AI has dominated quite a few of my in-class conversations these past few years. Students are often curious about the global future that mass adoption of AI will herald. Many are concerned with their own personal futures, with regards to skills, employment, and career trajectories. There is a vague, though pervasive, concern that the future is uncertain and that received wisdom

on what's needed to live a materially successful life simply won't be applicable in the years ahead.

These concerns are valid. Young people the world over remain disillusioned with the abrogation of political and social rights, mass violence, and mounting economic inequality. Increased uncertainty about their fate in a rapidly changing labour market exacerbates their disillusionment even further.

One set of mainstream views on AI's impact on the labour market tends to view it as something that will enhance labour productivity to a very high degree, i.e., make humans do certain tasks much more efficiently. This view draws on an understanding of employment as 'task bundles'. Technology can thus help with some tasks and not with others. Human capability in specific jobs can then be enhanced because of increased task efficiency. The prediction follows that productivity gains from this enhanced efficiency will lead to greater and/or more sustained growth. Yes, some jobs will be made redundant but just like cash-tell-

ers were readjusted into the economy after the invention of the ATM, everyone will (eventually) land on their feet.

There are a couple of issues with this mainstream view, even if we take the dramatic productivity enhancement value of AI as a given (which though promised isn't very visible as yet). Most obvious of these is what happens during the 'adjustment period' when a subset of workers is displaced and made redundant. These losses may be concentrated in some sectors, or even in some geographic locations. Countries dependent on business process outsourcing or IT exports, for example, may face a bigger crisis than those trading in other types of goods and services.

Another issue is that the jump from productivity enhancement to broad-based economic growth is a bit of a mystery. What is the pathway to this growth? As Malcolm Harris asks, what happens if you're able to code faster, or do document filing more efficiently? Companies save on time and resources, and probably on labour

costs, which increases their profit margins but does that necessarily increase output? Will economies produce more stuff or provide more services just because it's faster to do it? The former niche Marxian view that the world economy already suffers from a problem of overcapacity is now something many mainstream economists openly admit. So again, a worthy question to pose is if LLMs improve productivity and remove labour-based bottlenecks, how does that necessarily deliver growth?

And this brings us to the main issue with the current system in which AI is being touted as the centrepiece of the future. In the most techno-futurist scenario, often peddled by Silicon Valley entrepreneurs and their acolytes, humans will largely be made redundant by a combination of AI and robotics across all industries. This combination means that there is no human labour contribution to total output and thus no share for human labour in total income. Everything will flow back into the hands of those who own capital (ie, AI

and robots). This configuration of income flowing on the basis of ownership is how most of the world is currently organised.

Think about what this scenario means for societal functioning as a whole. If the only income available to be spent is in the hands of those who control technology (ie, productive resources), what happens to the basic needs of those who simply used to sell their labour power? In the absence of any profit to be made selling to incomeless humans, will these populations be left to waste?

I don't think such a future will arrive, though it is telling that it's the one most frequently pushed by the tech world. If the supposed productivity gains are ever realised, there will be fierce political conflict over the distribution of those returns. But it is quite clear, and somewhat ironic, that the supposed technology revolution unleashed by capitalism will also require us to rethink the centrality that markets and private ownership of resources play in our lives.

**Headline-making tweet**

**Sulema Jahangir**

The recent judgement of Additional District and Sessions Judge Majoka sentencing lawyers Imaan Mazari-Hazir and her spouse Hadi Chattha to a total of 17 years in prison on multiple charges in a case pertaining to social media posts, has made national and international headlines. If the court's intention was to indicate condemnation for a post it perceived as inflammatory towards government institutions, the sentence has clearly had the opposite effect.

Condemnation of a biased and vindictive justice system has flowed thick and fast from opinion-makers, lawyers and others within Pakistan and abroad. The post and posters may not have generated such a following if ignored. Rather the sentence has laid bare a judicial system that has shown no hesitation in punishing anyone who dissents, even if through reposting a tweet.

Admittedly, our justice system is at a low point with the passage of the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Amendments, but even so, a sentence of 17 years' imprisonment for social media posts makes a mockery of justice. Pakistan's judiciary has seldom inspired confidence in ordinary litigants, but people have still approached courts in the hope that some rationality will follow. This judgement overturns any expectation of rationality, proportionality or reasonableness. While the current administration has engrossed itself in administrative matters and managing IMF loans, it has dug a deep grave for hard-fought democratic rights.

The PML-N government is known for passing punitive laws when in power. In the

past, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and other PML-N leaders have expressed regret for passing such laws including the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Amendment Act (Peca), 2016, and the NAB Ordinance when those same laws were used to victimise its own leaders and workers. Sadly, no lessons were learnt and 2025 was possibly the deadliest year for eroding what little democratic rights remained.

In January 2025, Peca 2025 was passed introducing widely defined offences and regulatory bodies that expanded government control over online content. In June, the Anti-Terrorism (Balochistan Amendment) Act, 2025, was enacted which granted law enforcement agencies in Balochistan the power to detain individuals for up to three months without being formally charged. In August, the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2025, extended to all of Pakistan and granted security forces the power to use lethal force and to detain individuals without formal charges for up to three months.

Meanwhile, as was predicted, the newly formed Constitutional Bench started back-tracking. In May 2025, the Constitutional Bench, via a five-to-two majority decision declared military trials of civilians constitutional, reversing the Supreme Court's October 2023 decision. In a weak and poorly reasoned judgement, the court declared that while civilians can be tried in military courts, the government should legislate to provide a right of appeal to the high courts within 45 days. No such legislation has followed. However, all 105 civilians were tried in military courts for the May 9 riots, and all the

accused convicted. As is common with military trials there were no judgements that were handed down but the results were made known through ISPR statements. In November, the 27<sup>th</sup> Amendment was passed which most lawyers felt dealt a final blow to the independence of the judiciary.

So far, this year has fared no better. The laws under Peca were used to silence several journalists who were working on stories related to corruption of public funds to others found to be either damaging the 'ideology of Pakistan' or 'containing aspersions against members of the armed forces, judiciary, parliament or provincial assembly'. However, the re-cent sentence of 17 years awarded to the couple without any regard to due process has only confirmed the public's perception of the state of our judiciary.

Imaan Mazari-Hazir has been targeted by the state not just for her advocacy for missing persons and those accused of blasphemy but also for her anti-establishment views. The clamping down on her through dubious FIRs that resurfaced at convenient times sends a chilling message to bar associations, lawyers and human rights defenders. It is sad that post the lawyers movement of 2007, the hard-fought victories towards judicial independence have been so willingly bartered away by the current government. While one can hope that the sentence against Mazari and Chattha will be quashed on appeal, the damage to judicial independence will not only terrorise those who dissent now but will also return to haunt those who may be compelled to dissent in the future.

**Policed visibility**

**Laraib Niaz**

The unsettling opening scene of Aik Aur Pakeezah, the latest socially pertinent television show by Kashf Foundation, unfolds in a shabby, dimly lit hotel room. Two men force their way inside despite the pleas of a terrified couple. The men harass the couple, force them to strip and film them on camera. What follows in the first few episodes is not just the aftermath of a crime, but a harrowing portrait of how the idea of honour operates in our society.

The couple is ostracised but it is the woman who bears the true weight of the incident. She is beaten and threatened by her own family and reminded that her very existence is now a threat. Her brothers repeatedly shame their father for allowing the girl to live. The message is clear; now that her video has circulated, her right to freedom and life itself is inhibited. Inspired by the real-life and harrowing Usman Mirza case, the show highlights just in its first few episodes that the so-called honour in our society is predominantly a burden for women to carry.

The show echoes real life cases in Pakistan where mercy towards victims is deemed dishonourable. When Qandeel Baloch was killed by her brother, he proudly professed righteousness. When 18-year-old Zeenat Rafiq was burnt alive for marrying a man of her choice, her mother emphasised how she had brought 'shame to the family'. There are countless less-publicised cases in which women have been murdered or imprisoned within their homes because of suspicion or

rumour of perceived misconduct.

This is because 'izzat' occupies a central place in the regulation of female conduct in our society. 'Izzat' governs family standing, marriage prospects, social mobility, and the implementation of masculine authority.

My own research in schools in Pakistan showed how early this regulation begins. Girls are taught, explicitly and implicitly, that they need to monitor their behaviour, how they speak, what they wear and even their body language as it reflects on their fathers and brothers. Shame, honour and chastity here are pivotal codes for the regulation of patriarchal authority.

This helps explain why a photograph or video carries such destructive power in this country. It is seen as tangible evidence of shame and dishonour. There are well-documented cases where the circulation of women's images without any accompanying sexual element has triggered defamation, boycott and deadly violence. Just last year, a 16-year-old girl in Rawalpindi was allegedly shot dead by her father as she refused to delete her TikTok account. Another 14-year-old girl was killed by male relatives after posting supposedly 'dishonourable' videos online.

In such instances, an image seemingly invites judgement for not just the woman, but also for the men associated with her.

One wonders whether the honour of men is so fragile that it gets tainted by mere photographs of women associated with them.

Anthropological research across South Asia has long shown that

women's sexuality functions as a symbolic marker of boundary for families and communities. In Pakistan, tightly knit family systems where individual actions cannot be seen in isolation further amplify these boundaries. A woman's perceived transgression whether it is true or forced or even entirely fabricated, is understood as evidence that male authority was weak. This logic is not unique to Pakistan. In India, research on honour-based violence documents similar patterns, particularly with inter-faith and inter-caste couples. Just recently, an interfaith couple was beaten to death and stuffed in gunny bags. Indian scholarship has shown that digital visibility has intensified

defined honour, faith and caste-related surveillance, with social media becoming a new trigger for punishment. Across contexts, technology has served to exacerbate honour codes.

This is why Aik Aur Pakeezah is important. It forces us to ask uncomfortable questions such as why is a woman's safety considered negotiable once her image circulates or there is even a slight stain on her character? And why does society reserve its harshest moral judgement for victims rather than perpetrators of violence?

By placing these questions at the centre of popular culture, the foundation has taken a brave and necessary step.

A step to hold a mirror to society and help unsettle it. Perhaps that is where change starts, watching the ripple of destruction caused by 'honour' and interrogating what we have allowed it to become.



## CM Maryam inaugurates PTC headquarters, EV Command & Control Centre

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Monday inaugurated the Punjab Transport Company (PTC) headquarters and the Electric Vehicle (EV) Command and Control Centre, aimed at providing clean, safe, and modern public transport to the people.

During the visit, the chief minister inspected a state-of-the-art automatic washing plant for electric buses, where buses were washed and dried through a fully automated process. She was informed that the facility recycled water for reuse. She also reviewed the latest electric bus charging station, where Yutong's 160-kilowatt charging system was capable of fully charging an electric bus within 105 minutes.

The chief minister visited the EV Command and Control Centre and sought a clear timeline for the induction of 1,500 new buses. She directed that the electric bus charging system be shifted to solar energy at the earliest and instructed officials to identify new routes for the operation of

green electric buses. She also ordered improved arrangements in view of rising passenger numbers and directed that additional buses be deployed on routes where commuters faced long waiting times.

She further directed that carbon credits under the Green Bus Project be claimed. Appreciating the performance of the staff, the chief minister said that the dedication displayed by electric bus crews, particularly in assisting special persons, was commendable. She noted that the launch of green buses had broken ridership records across Punjab.

CM Maryam Nawaz said that the government aimed to launch metro bus service projects in Faisalabad and Gujranwala at the earliest. She said that electric buses were providing a comfortable travel facility to the public, adding that the Punjab government was giving top priority to the convenience and safety of citizens, especially women and children.

She said that smart travel systems were offer-

ing faster and easier commuting, while electric buses were playing a key role in reducing air pollution and smog. "Providing clean, safe and modern public transport to the people of Punjab is our foremost priority," she added.

Earlier, PTC Chief Executive Officer Kausar Khan gave a detailed briefing, saying that over 15.5 million passengers had travelled on electric buses across Punjab so far. He said that more than 3.8 million women and over 1.5 million students had benefited from free travel, while around 750,000 senior citizens and 300,000 special persons had also availed free transport facilities.

The briefing further revealed that the Punjab Transport Company had launched the "Empower Her" initiative to promote women's economic independence. Under the programme, special tuck shops had been established at e-bus stations for widowed and divorced women, providing them with safe, dignified, and self-reliant business opportunities.



Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah launches province-wide anti-polio campaign in Karachi.

## Kundi meets BISP Chairperson, OGDCL MD to review welfare, energy programmes in KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi held a meeting with Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid here on Monday to discuss matters related to financial assistance for poor and deserving segments of the population in the province.

During the meeting, the BISP Chairperson briefed the Governor on various ongoing programmes being implemented in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under BISP. The discussion also focused on proposals to further enhance transparency in the mechanism of financial assistance and stipends provided under the programme.

The provision of financial aid to flood-affected families was a key point of discussion.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi emphasized

that the registration of flood-affected households in the province should be completed at the earliest to ensure timely disbursement of financial assistance to deserving families before the start of Ramadan.

Senator Rubina Khalid assured the Governor that the process of releasing funds under BISP would be expedited to facilitate eligible beneficiaries without delay.

It was also agreed during the meeting that deserving affected families from Tirah Valley would be provided financial assistance under the Benazir Income Support Programme.

Meanwhile, a meeting held between Governor Faisal Karim Kundi and Managing Director Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) Ahmad Hayat in Islamabad, during which issues related to gas reserves and their economic benefits were discussed.



HYDERABAD: A view of Allah Wali Masjid illuminated with colorful lights in connection with Shab-e-Barat.

## KP assembly debates women empowerment, lapsing of funds, NFC performance

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Monday witnessed a wide-ranging debate on women empowerment policies, the performance of the Social Welfare Department, financial management and issues related to the National Finance Commission (NFC).

The session was chaired by Speaker Muhammad Israr. During the question hour, PPP MPA Ashbar Jadoon criticized the government's women development initiatives, saying these were largely confined to handicraft centers and failed to equip women with modern skills. She stressed the need to promote training in IT, nursing and other contemporary fields, particularly in underdeveloped districts where even basic vocational institutions were lacking.

Provincial Law Minister Aftab Alam agreed that women empowerment could not be restricted to traditional skills alone and said the government was working on introducing modern skill development programs.

On his recommendation, the Speaker referred the matter to the standing committee to formulate workable proposals and review the effectiveness of existing handicraft centers. PML-N MPA Amina Sardar raised objections over the prolonged contractual appointment of a Social Welfare Officer in Abbottabad, arguing that the law allowed such appointments only for a limited period.

She also alleged irregularities related to food supplies at Dar-ul-Aman and questioned the authority

behind the continued appointment.

Responding to the concerns, the law minister said the department was facing an acute staff shortage, with several posts lying vacant, which necessitated the continuation of contractual arrangements.

The Speaker subsequently referred the issue to the standing committee for further investigation. PML-N member Shazia Jadoon questioned the lapse of more than Rs30 million from the Social Welfare Department's budget during the current fiscal year, saying the unutilized funds could have been used for public welfare projects.

The law minister explained that multiple schemes were delayed due to pending court cases, making it impossible to reallocate the funds.



MULTAN: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Syed Imran Ahmed Shah talking to media at Nishtar Hospital.

## WB President lauds Punjab govt's heritage preservation efforts

RAWALPINDI (APP): World Bank Group President Ajay Pal Singh Banga, accompanied by Federal Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb, visited the historic Taxila Museum on Monday. Provincial Minister for Local Government and Community Development Punjab Zeeshan Rafiq warmly received the distinguished guests on behalf of the Punjab government.

During the visit, the delegation was given a detailed tour of the museum, which serves as Pakistan's premier center for ancient artifacts and historical relics.

The World Bank President and his team expressed strong appreciation for the efforts of the Government of Punjab, particularly the Directorate General of Archaeology Punjab

in preserving, restoring, and presenting the country's historical and cultural heritage along modern lines. They described these initiatives as exemplifying the highest academic standards and exceptional professional care.

The World Bank President commended the heritage-friendly vision of the Punjab government under the leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, describing the approach of safeguarding historic sites as development assets as a 'model worthy of emulation'. He also paid tribute to Senior Minister Punjab Maryam Aurangzeb for her active role and personal interest in promoting culture and heritage.

The visiting delegation received a comprehensive briefing on the ongoing conservation and development

works under the 'Taxila Heritage City Project'. A detailed documentary presentation outlined the master plan for the overall development of the museum and surrounding heritage sites.

Secretary Tourism Punjab Sukrat Amaan Rana explained the key features of the Taxila Heritage City Master Plan, stating that the project will play a pivotal role in preserving historical heritage, boosting tourism, and strengthening the local economy.

Director General Archaeology Punjab, Zaheer Abbas Malik provided a step-by-step briefing on the project's implementation, emphasizing adherence to international conservation principles, community involvement, and inter-departmental collaboration.

## LHC orders release of 25 illegally confined brick kiln workers

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday ordered the release of 25 brick kiln workers, including women and children, who had been kept in illegal confinement.

Justice Tanveer Ahmed Sheikh heard a petition filed by Muhammad Hassan, during which the police produced the brick kiln workers, along with their children, after recovering them from illegal confinement.

During the hearing, the

petitioner's counsel informed the court that brick kiln owners Rana Dildar and Rana Akram, operating in Raiwind, had unlawfully confined the workers and were not paying them wages in accordance with the approved rates under the relevant laws.

Counsel for the brick kiln owners denied the allegations, maintaining that the workers had received advance payments and were working voluntarily under an agreement.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture and UNESCO Director-General Dr. Khaled El-Enany held a high-level meeting, agreeing to expand cooperation in heritage preservation and cultural promotion.

## "Game Over" narrative falls flat as state bets on youth through laptops": Amna

ISLAMABAD (APP): Focal Person for the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) and Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Syeda Amnah Batool, stated on Monday that the narrative of despair regarding Pakistan's future, often echoed in coffee shops and social media spaces is fragile and unfounded. She emphasized that the true reality is the laptop in the hands of the youth, serving as a "key to the future" that connects them to the global economy.

In a post on the social media platform X, the PMYP Focal Person contrasted the "doom and gloom" slogans circulating online with the practical struggles and achievements of the youth.

She remarked that while stories claiming "it's over for Pakistan" might go viral, they lack substance. She clarified that while some are merely talking, Pakistan's "digital natives" are carving out a new national identity through Artificial Intelligence (AI) and e-commerce. Addressing the

significance of the Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme, she asserted that these devices should not be viewed merely as electronic machines. Instead, they represent a 'gateway' for talented individuals who were previously held back by a lack of resources. This laptop is your office, your university, and your creative studio. Through this, the State is sending a clear message: "we believe in your potential and we are investing in your dreams," she stated.

Amnah Batool urged the youth to utilize this connectivity to compete with talent in Silicon Valley, London, and Tokyo, rather than wasting time on unproductive debates in coffee houses. She highlighted that freelancers and developers are already bringing valuable foreign exchange into the country, proving that for those who work hard, digital borders no longer exist. Furthermore, she clarified that the distribution of laptops is not based on political patronage or charity, but is carried out strictly through a transparent.

## SC allows father to meet daughter in spousal dispute

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court, while hearing a case relating to a dispute between a husband and wife, on Monday directed that the father be allowed to meet his daughter, giving priority to the welfare of the child.

During the hearing, the child's father informed the court that his daughter was present in the courtroom and that he wished to meet her. Responding to the father's request, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail remarked that such cruelty should not be inflicted.

Justice Mandokhail observed that children suffer the most in disputes between spouses and that this issue frequently arises in such cases. The court directed that the father be allowed to meet his daughter inside the courtroom.

Following the court's remarks, the meeting between the father and the daughter was arranged in the courtroom.

Subsequently, the Supreme Court adjourned further hearing of the case.

## Govt expands welfare, digital reforms to improve healthcare access: Imran

MULTAN (APP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Syed Imran Ahmed Shah said on Monday the government is strengthening social protection and healthcare support through increased funding and digital reforms to ensure transparent and timely assistance to deserving citizens.

Speaking to the media during his visit to Nishtar Hospital Multan, he said the visit was carried out on the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to review healthcare facilities and welfare initiatives aimed at serving underprivileged patients.

The minister said Nishtar Hospital is one of Pakistan's largest healthcare institutions, catering not only to South Punjab but

also to patients from Sindh and Balochistan. He added Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) is playing an active role in supporting patients requiring costly medical treatment.

He said the PBM budget has been enhanced from Rs10 billion to Rs14 billion, while medical grants have been increased to over Rs3 billion. The treatment ceiling per patient has also been raised from Rs1 million to Rs1.5 million to facilitate patients suffering from serious illnesses. Syed Imran Ahmed Shah stated that by January 2026, around 4,000 patients had been treated at Nishtar Hospital under PBM at a cost of Rs620 million, while over 600 patients have so far received free treatment at the hospital under the programme.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi meets Chairperson BISP Rubina Khalid at his office.

## CM warns of strict action on blocking roads during JI's protest on Feb 14

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah expressing his views on the anticipated, protest by Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) leader Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman on February 14, warned that obstructing major public roads such as Shaheed-e-Millat Road (Shahrah-e-Faisal), would not be tolerated and strict action would be taken against violators.

Talking to the media after anti-polio campaign on Monday, he again urged parents to fully cooperate with vaccination teams visiting their homes. He advised that if a polio team did not visit a household,

parents should immediately approach the nearest Basic Health Unit or inform the local administration to ensure their children are vaccinated.

Shah emphasised that polio eradication efforts must continue until environmental samples test negative for the virus. Citing WHO verification, he categorically stated that polio drops do not cause any illness and appealed to religious scholars, teachers, elected representatives, political leaders and social figures to play their role in convincing people to vaccinate their children.

## Punjab govt taking concrete measures to establish business friendly environment: Malik

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Assembly (PA) Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan on Monday articulated a comprehensive and balanced stance on matters concerning national security, economic development, sports ethics, and the preservation of cultural traditions.

According to a press release issued here, the speaker stated that externally driven conspiracies had been fully exposed, affirming that the Pakistani

nation possessed the resolve, unity, and capacity to confront all challenges.

He reiterated that the nation was firmly united in the fight against terrorism and emphasized that no compromise would be made on the country's national security and sovereignty.

Emphasizing economic revival, Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan underscored that the confidence and encouragement of the business community was an urgent national priority.



HYDERABAD: A health worker administers polio vaccine drops to a child during an anti-polio campaign at Government Bhitai Hospital.

## Governor hosts mass wedding ceremony for 35 brides in Fateh Jang

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: A grand ceremony of 35 mass marriages was organized in Attock under the patronage of Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan.

Addressing the ceremony, Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that he felt proud to have supported the marriage of 35 deserving girls. He said that these girls are as dear to him as his two daughters. The Punjab

Governor said that before the big Eid, an even bigger ceremony would be organized.

The Punjab Governor said that mass marriage ceremonies will be organized throughout Punjab. He said that in his presence, no daughter will sit at home due to lack of dowry and resources. He said that he is also from the middle class like them, therefore, he understands their problems.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan addressing a grand ceremony of 35 mass marriages organized in Attock.



## Aurangzeb reaffirms stability, stronger FX as Wafi Energy signals \$100m investment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday reaffirmed the government's commitment to sustaining macroeconomic stability, strengthening foreign exchange buffers, and enhancing investor confidence.

He reiterated this during a meeting with a delegation of Wafi Energy Pakistan Ltd, which signaled a potential investment of up to USD 100 million in Pakistan over the next two to three years, a news release said.

The delegation, led by Javaid Akhtar, Chief Finance Officer Asyad Group (Board Member), included Zubair Shaikh, Chief Executive Officer and Zarrar Mahmud, Chief Finance Officer of Wafi Energy Pakistan Ltd.

The interaction provided an opportunity to review the company's current operations, future investment outlook, and matters relevant to the oil marketing and energy sector.

During the meeting, the Finance Minister emphasized that sustained macroeconomic stability remained the cornerstone of

the government's economic strategy and was essential for maintaining investor confidence.

He noted that improvements in foreign exchange availability were a direct outcome of broader macroeconomic discipline and reforms, and that strengthening external buffers will enable smoother facilitation of legitimate business transactions, including dividend repatriation and cross-border payments.

The Finance Minister observed that improving macroeconomic indicators were already translating into greater confidence among both domestic and foreign investors, and underscored that such developments represent fundamental elements of a healthy investment climate.

He highlighted that local investor participation played an important role in further encouraging foreign investment inflows.

The discussion also covered the role of public-private partnership models and structured finance as effective mechanisms for delivering large-scale infrastructure projects.

Aurangzeb noted that

successful experiences at the provincial level demonstrate the potential of such models and emphasized the need to further encourage structured finance solutions and stronger engagement with the banking sector to support infrastructure development.

The delegation informed the minister that Wafi Energy Pakistan Ltd has benefited from improved operating conditions amid greater macroeconomic stability and shared its intention to expand its retail and storage footprint over the coming years as part of a broader growth strategy.

The delegation reiterated its confidence in Pakistan's economic outlook and highlighted growing interest among international and regional stakeholders in expanding engagement with Pakistan.

The delegation briefed the Finance Minister on Wafi Energy Pakistan's current operations in the country and shared that the company operates an extensive nationwide retail network, supported by ongoing investments in modernization and efficiency.



**DUBAI: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and HRD, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, meeting with H.E. Rabab Abdullah Al-Osaimi, Director-General of Kuwait's Public Authority for Manpower, on the sidelines of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue 2026.**

## Pakistan, Uzbekistan reaffirms commitment to deepening strategic economic Partnership

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 10th Session of the Pakistan-Uzbekistan Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) on Trade, Economic, and Scientific-Technical Cooperation was held under the co-chairmanship, Haroon Akhtar Khan, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Industries and Production, and Laziz Kudratov, Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Islamabad.

The engagement enabled a comprehensive review of bilateral relations and established a forward-looking roadmap to strengthen joint efforts in major economic and social sectors, said a release issued here on Monday.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the steady progress achieved since the previous IGC session in 2025 and reaffirmed their resolve to expand bilateral trade, investment, and economic engagement.

The Parties underscored the importance of the Preferential Trade Agreement, welcomed progress under Phase II concessions, and agreed to expedite institutional mechanisms to achieve the agreed target of \$2 billion in bilateral trade.

Emphasis was placed on trade facilitation, improved logistics, customs

digitalization, transit trade cooperation, development of regional trade corridors, and enhanced business-to-business engagement, supported by improved visa facilitation for business communities.

Both sides further agreed to establish the inaugural Joint Working Group on labor relations, tasked with addressing labor mobility, skills development, workplace safety, and practical considerations linked to employment visas.

In transport and communications sector, the Commission welcomed interest in launching direct air services, reviewed progress on regional railway and connectivity projects, and agreed to advance alternative transport corridors to improve regional trade and transit connectivity.

Cooperation in agriculture and food security featured prominently, with both sides welcoming progress on phytosanitary protocols facilitating the export of fruits from Uzbekistan to Pakistan.

The Parties agreed to expand collaboration through additional protocols, joint working groups, and technical cooperation in plant protection, livestock development, and agricultural research, with a

shared focus on food security and sustainable agricultural growth.

In higher education, science, and technology, the Commission welcomed progress on academic and research partnerships between leading institutions of both the countries. Both sides agreed to promote joint research, faculty and student exchanges, vocational and technical training, innovation, and capacity building, supported by newly signed agreements in scientific, technical, and innovation fields. These initiatives aim to strengthen long-term knowledge cooperation and human capital development.

Environmental and climate cooperation was recognized as a shared priority, with both sides agreeing to collaborate on climate resilience, protection of glacial ecosystems, sustainable water management, environmental governance, gender-inclusive climate action, and community-based adaptation approaches. In the pharmaceutical sector, the Parties agreed to strengthen regulatory cooperation, promote joint ventures and investment, facilitate exchanges of pharmaceutical manufacturers, and enhance capacity building to ensure quality and safety of medical products.



**QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Muhammad Khan Lehari, Maulana Abdul Baqi, Sardar Javed Lehari and others inaugurating Al-Sakib Hyper Market.**

## Pakistan's olive oil industry eyes China for next phase of growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's fast-emerging olive oil industry is intensifying efforts to attract Chinese partners, with local entrepreneurs pitching large-scale joint ventures that could generate thousands of jobs and open a new export channel to one of the world's largest food markets.

Shaukat Rasool, founder of the internationally award-winning brand Loralai Olives, told Wealth Pakistan that his company is in advanced discussions to sign memoranda of understanding with Chinese firms, as Islamabad and Beijing deepen cooperation in high-value agribusiness.

"The recent Pak-China Agri Investment Conference was a great opportunity," he said. "We are proposing three corporate olive estates spread over 3,000 acres, with a total investment of about \$20 million."

He said the proposed projects would create more than 3,000 direct jobs and within six to seven years generate olive oil worth \$18-20 million annually, positioning Pakistan as a

competitive new supplier in the global market.

Rasool said Chinese companies are natural partners for Pakistan's olive ambitions, citing China's heavy reliance on imports and its growing health-conscious middle class. China imports more than \$300 million worth of olive oil each year, he noted.

"Olive oil is medicine for a healthy life," he said. "China is the most populous country in the world, people are increasingly conscious about health and weight, and Pakistan is well-suited to meet their demand for olive oil."

He said Pakistan offers Chinese investors clear commercial advantages, including lower land costs and logistics infrastructure developed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). "It is an ideal and win-win opportunity for Chinese companies to invest here," Rasool said.

Loralai Olives is already closely linked with China through its supply chain. Rasool said that all of the company's packaging and bottling materials are sourced from China.

## Gold price plunges further by Rs21,500 to Rs490,362 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of per tola 24-karat gold on Monday witnessed a sharp decline of Rs21,500 and was traded at Rs490,362 in the local market, the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association reported. The price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold also plunged by Rs18,433 to Rs420,406, while the rate of 10 grams of 22-karat gold decreased by Rs16,897 to Rs385,386. In the international market, gold prices fell by \$215 to \$4,676.

Meanwhile, per tola silver shed Rs601 to reach Rs8,405, while the price of 10 grams of silver declined by Rs516 to Rs7,205.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Two ships, Stena Continent and Chem Barcelona carrying Mogas and Chemicals, berthed at FOTCO oil Terminal and Engro Vopak Terminal respectively on Sunday. Meanwhile three more ships, Gina Tiger, Ejanan and Kapta Mathios with Chemicals, LPG and Coal also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

Six ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a chemicals carrier 'Chem Barcelona' expected to sail on Monday. Cargo volume of 49,120 tonnes, comprising 49,120 tonnes imports cargo and export cargo was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

## KP Governor urges incentives to retain investment in province

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday stressed the need for the provincial government to offer effective incentives to the business community so that traders from KP prefer investing within their own province rather than moving to Punjab.

He said a comprehensive review of industrial and commercial policies has become the need of the hour to promote economic activities in the province.

The Governor expressed these views while addressing the inauguration ceremony of Peshawar-based HBK Hyper Market in Islamabad. On his arrival, he was warmly received by prominent business figures including Chairman HBK Group Imdad Khan Afridi, CEO Dr Mohibullah Afridi, Director Aamir Khan Afridi, Chairman Revive Pakistan Imran Ali, and others.

Governor Kundi said that investment by Peshawar's business community in Islamabad is a positive and welcome development, reflecting a bright and progressive image of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, he regretted that compared to Rashakai Industrial Zone, investors in Punjab are being offered more incentives, which is compelling KP investors to shift their businesses to other provinces.

He emphasized that the provincial government must seriously revisit its industrial and commercial policies so that institutions like HBK and other investors give priority to investing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Governor also urged the business community to formulate their strategies while keeping in view the purchasing power of the public and the prevailing challenging economic conditions.

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa appreciated HBK's assurance of cooperation in promoting sports and projecting a positive image of the province.



**MULTAN: A vendor displays subsidized wheat flour bags along with a price list at a roadside stall under the Punjab government's relief initiative.**

## Kazakh, Uzbek Presidents' visits to open new trade avenues: President ICCI

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Sardar Tahir Mehmood, has emphasized the need to further strengthen Pakistan's economic, trade and connectivity relations with regional countries, particularly Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, during the upcoming visits of their Presidents to Islamabad as highly significant and timely.

He said that the arrival of President of Kazakhstan on February 3 and President of Uzbekistan on February 5 reflects growing mutual trust and shared commitment to regional cooperation, economic integration and sustainable development. These high-level engagements, he added, open new avenues for expanding bilateral trade, investment, and people-to-people contacts, said release issued here on Monday.

Sardar Tahir Mehmood noted that Central Asian states hold immense potential for Pakistan in sectors such as trade, energy, agriculture, mining, logistics and tourism.

He stressed that improved connectivity projects, including railway and transit corridors, would play a pivotal role in linking Pakistan with Central Asia, enabling cost-effective trade routes and boosting regional commerce.

The ICCI President highlighted that Islamabad, as the federal capital and business hub, is well-positioned to serve as a bridge between Pakistan's private sector and regional markets.

He expressed optimism that business forums and B2B interactions planned during these visits would help Pakistani entrepreneurs explore joint ventures and long-term partnerships. On their part, Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub and Vice President Irfan Chaudhry reaffirmed ICCI's commitment to supporting government efforts aimed at enhancing regional cooperation and facilitating the business community.



**BAHAWALPUR: Farmers pack turnips into bags for transportation to the vegetable market.**

## Pak-Italy trade witnesses over 23% surplus in 6 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's goods and services trade with Italy witnessed a surplus of 23.54 percent during the first six months of the fiscal year (2025-26) as compared to the corresponding months of last year.

Trade surplus during the months under review was recorded at US\$284.497 million against US\$260.074 million last year, showing 23.54 percent growth.

The overall exports to Italy were recorded at US\$612.888 million during July-December (2025-26) year against exports of US\$570.082 million during the same months last year, showing an increase of 7.50 percent, SBP data revealed.

Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, exports to Italy during December 2025 increased by 12.36 percent from US\$88.621 million to US\$99.576 million.

Month-on-month exports to Italy also rose by 21.02 percent during November 2025 as compared

with exports of US\$82.274 million in November 2025, the SBP data said.

Overall Pakistan's exports to all countries witnessed a decrease of 4.97 percent in six months, from US\$16.319 billion to US\$15.507 billion, the SBP data said.

On the other hand, imports from Italy during the months under review were recorded at US\$260.074 million against US\$284.497 million of last year, showing a decrease of 8.58 percent in July-December (2025-26).

Meanwhile, year-on-year imports from Italy during December 2025 increased by 145.97 percent from US\$32.387 million last year to US\$79.664 million.

On a month-on-month basis, the imports from Italy also increased by 163.44 percent during December 2025 as compared to the import of US\$30.239 million in November 2025, SBP data said.



**ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi inaugurates HBK Hyper Market in Islamabad.**

## Junaid Anwar says: Blue economy resilience rooted in wetland ecosystems

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry reaffirmed the vital importance of wetlands in safeguarding the Arabian Sea, conserving marine life, and bolstering blue economy.

In his message marking World Wetlands Day, themed "Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge: Celebrating Cultural Heritage," the minister emphasized that wetlands including mangroves, estuaries, tidal flats, and coastal lagoons, serve as frontline defenses against climate change impacts like flooding, coastal erosion, and sea-level rise.

Pakistan has over 240 significant wetlands, with some studies identifying exactly 225. These ecosystems cover an estimated 10% of the country's total land area. "These ecosystems act as natural buffers that protect coastal communities, ports, and infrastructure while maintaining water quality and ecological balance in marine environments," Junaid Chaudhry stated.

He highlighted coastal wetlands, particularly the Indus Delta mangroves, as essential breeding and nursery grounds for fish and marine species, directly supporting fisheries and food

security. "Healthy wetlands are essential for sustaining marine biodiversity and ensuring the long-term viability of livelihoods dependent on fishing and aquaculture," the minister added.

Junaid Chaudhry also underscored the 2026 theme's focus on traditional and indigenous knowledge in conservation efforts.

"Coastal communities in Sindh and Balochistan have historically practiced sustainable fishing and mangrove protection, contributing to ecosystem resilience," he noted, calling for the integration of this wisdom into modern environmental policies.



**SIALKOT: A customer purchases a leather jacket from a roadside vendor.**

## D-8, ADFIMI agree to joint action on development finance, SME support

ISLAMABAD (APP): The D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation and the Association of National Development Finance Institutions in Member Countries of the Islamic Development Bank (ADFIMI) have agreed to work together on development finance, training, small business support, and Halal economy initiatives.

The understanding aims to link policy goals with on-ground projects across D-8 member states, said a press release issued here on Monday.

The agreement was reached during a meeting between D-8 Secretary Gen-

eral Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and an ADFIMI delegation led by its Secretary-General İlhami Öztürk.

Both sides discussed ways to build cooperation that supports economic activity, improves access to finance, and strengthens institutions in member countries.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood said development finance institutions play a key role in economic growth across D-8 states. He noted that cooperation should focus on results, with clear links between agreed frameworks and project delivery.

## PSX gains 883 points to close at 185,057 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Monday witnessed bullish trend, gaining 883.35 points, a positive change of 0.48 percent, to close at 185,057.83 points compared to 184,174.49 points on the previous trading day, according to PSX data.

During the session, the ready market recorded a trading volume of 740,092 million shares with a traded value of Rs 42,204 billion, against 805.139 million shares valuing Rs 50,834 billion in the previous session. Market capitalization increased to Rs 20,969 trillion from Rs 20,827 trillion a day earlier.

Out of 487 active companies in the ready market, 214 advanced, 222 declined, while 51 remained unchanged. First National Equities topped the volume chart with 191.182 million shares, followed by Hascol Petroleum with 51.506 million shares and K-Electric with 38.314 million shares. The top gainers included Sazgar Engineering Works Limited, which rose by Rs 196.45 to close at Rs 2,342.93.



**ISLAMABAD: Senator Anusha Rahman Ahmad Khan, Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Commerce, presides over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.**



## Trump says Putin agrees to pause Kyiv strikes amid harsh cold

WASHINGTON (AFP/APP): US President Donald Trump said Thursday that Russia's Vladimir Putin agreed to a personal request to halt attacks on Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities, after Moscow's strikes left millions without heating during an "extreme" cold snap. Trump's claim comes as Russian strikes on Ukraine's power infrastructure have disrupted light, heating and water supplies, with temperatures plummeting and leaving the war-battered country facing a fresh humanitarian crisis.

The Kremlin did not immediately confirm any truce, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky thanked Trump and said he was counting on Washington to secure the pause in attacks. "Because

of the cold, extreme cold... I personally asked President Putin not to fire on Kyiv and the cities and towns for a week during this," Trump told a cabinet meeting at the White House. "They've never experienced cold like that. And I personally asked President Putin not to fire into Kyiv and the various towns for a week. And he agreed to do that, and I have to tell you, it was very nice," he added.

Ukraine's state weather agency on Thursday forecast a drastic dip in temperatures to as low as minus 30C in coming days as authorities race to restore services.

Trump, who met Putin in Alaska last year amid great fanfare but without achieving any breakthrough, said he trusted the

Russian leader to honor the agreement.

"People said, 'don't waste the call. You're not going to get that.' And he did it," said Trump, without specifying when the conversation took place, or when the purported truce would start. Zelensky, who met Trump in Davos last week despite patchy relations since their Oval Office bust-up nearly a year ago, thanked the US president for his "important statement." "We hope the United States can make this happen," the Ukrainian leader said.

The pause had initially been discussed last weekend during three-way talks in Abu Dhabi between Russia, Ukraine and the United States, Zelensky said.



Russia has launched 841 strikes at 34 settlements in the Zaporizhzhia region. Above, a crater and damaged cars near an apartment building after a Russian attack in Zaporizhzhia.

## Egypt, EU hold talks on regional developments, De-escalation Efforts

CAIRO (QNA/APP): Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Badr Abdelatty discussed regional developments, efforts to de-escalate tensions, and ways to enhance bilateral cooperation during a phone call with Kaja Kallas, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

In a statement issued on Friday, the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that Abdelatty stressed the importance of coordinated regional and interna-

tional efforts to ensure the implementation of the requirements of the second phase of the plan put forward by US President Donald Trump, as well as continued support for the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza as a temporary transitional body tasked with managing the daily affairs of residents in the Gaza Strip. The Egyptian foreign minister underscored the need for the swift deployment of an international stabilization force to monitor the ceasefire, facilitate the flow of humanitar-

ian aid, and oversee the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. He noted that such measures would pave the way for early recovery and reconstruction based on the needs and priorities of the Palestinian people in Gaza. Regarding developments in Sudan, Abdelatty briefed the EU official on Egypt's ongoing efforts within the framework of the Quartet, emphasizing the urgency of reaching a humanitarian truce as a step toward a comprehensive ceasefire and the launch of an inclusive.

## French PM forces final budget through parliament

PARIS (AFP/APP): French Prime Minister Sebastian Lecornu forced his budget through parliament without a vote for the third and final time Friday, exposing him to yet another no-confidence motion.

The decision to use the constitutional tool known as article 49.3 has marked an about-face for Lecornu, who pledged last year to seek parliament's approval, in a bid to avoid the fate of his two predecessors who were ousted over budget negotiations.

But after months of negotiations reached an impasse, Lecornu announced he would use the power to force the budget, after making concessions to gain the backing of the Socialists.

"France must have a budget. And so, before this chamber, I am committing the government's responsibility for the entire Finance Bill for 2026," he told the National Assembly on Friday while invoking the power to push it through.

His opponents, including the hard left and far-right parties, have vowed to file no-confidence motions against him in response.

The motions are expected to be debated and voted upon Monday, according to lawmaker Eric Coquerel who chairs the finance committee.

## Trump says 'decertifying' Canadian aircraft over Gulfstream row

WASHINGTON (AFP/APP): President Donald Trump on Thursday said Bombardier jets and other Canadian aircraft would lose their US certification until Canada approves American-made Gulfstream planes, in his latest dustup with Ottawa. Writing on his Truth Social network, Trump charged that "Canada has wrongfully, illegally, and steadfastly refused" to grant certification to American Gulfstream 500, 600, 700, and 800 aircraft and jets. "We are hereby decertifying their Bombardier Global Expresses, and all Aircraft made in Canada."



Denmark will expel non-Danish citizens who have served prison terms of a year or more for serious crimes, part of new measures to tighten immigration policy.

## Gov't to start mediation process for conflict in Daewoo E&C's Philippine dam project

SEOUL (YONHAP/APP): The South Korean government will begin a mediation process to resolve conflict between Daewoo Engineering & Construction (E&C) and Filipino indigenous and rights groups over the Korean company's dam construction project in the Southeast Asian nation, the industry ministry said Friday.

The decision to initiate the process was made by the National Contact Point (NCP) for Responsible Business Conduct, a government organization under the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Resources designed to implement OECD guide-

lines for multinational enterprises, according to ministry officials.

In September, the Tumandok Indigenous People of Panay and other activist groups filed a complaint with the NCP that the Filipino military and police forces violated the rights of Tumandok indigenous people living in Western Visayas, the central Philippines area where the dam is being constructed. The groups also claimed that Daewoo E&C, the construction contractor of the dam project, did not make efforts to identify and prevent such human rights violations.

## 13-year-old boy dies after shark attack in northeastern Brazil

SAO PAULO (Xinhua/APP): A 13-year-old boy died Thursday after being attacked by a shark while swimming at a beach in Olinda, in Brazil's northeastern state of Pernambuco, medical officials said.

The attack occurred at the beach Praia Del Chifre, where the victim was swimming with friends despite warning signs of frequent shark activity.

Witnesses said the boy was attacked from behind, causing severe

injuries. He was taken to a hospital in Olinda and died from blood loss.

According to the State Committee for Monitoring Shark Incidents, Pernambuco has registered 82 shark attacks since 1992, including 27 fatal cases. Authorities said beaches in Recife and Olinda have warning signs discouraging swimming due to the high risk of shark encounters. The areas are popular tourist destinations, especially during the carnival season.

## IAEA board meets over Ukraine nuclear safety concerns

VIENNA (AFP/APP): The UN nuclear watchdog's board of governors on Friday discussed nuclear safety in Ukraine with several countries expressing "growing concern" following Russian attacks on the power grid. Energy supplies to Ukraine's nuclear plants have been affected as Russia has pounded its neighbour's power sector since the start of its 2022 invasion, prompting fears of a nuclear disaster.

The closed-door meeting started at 10:00 am (0900 GMT) at the Vienna headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), AFP journalists said. "We expect strong signals of support (and an) evaluation of the situation," Ukrainian ambassador Yuri

Vitrenko told reporters before the meeting started.

He added it was "high time" for the IAEA board meeting "to take up this situation." A weeks-long IAEA expert mission to Ukrainian substations and power plants is underway and expected to wrap up next month, Vitrenko said.

Following a series of attacks, 13 countries led by the Netherlands in a letter asked the IAEA board to "meet with regard to the latest developments in Ukraine and their nuclear safety implications." "Our delegations share a growing concern about the severity and urgency of nuclear safety risks posed by this situation," the IAEA members said in the letter dated January 21 seen by AFP.

## Trump brands Minneapolis nurse shot dead by federal agents an 'agitator'

MINNEAPOLIS (AFP/APP): US President Donald Trump walked back his conciliatory tone on Friday after outrage over the killing of two American citizens in Minneapolis by federal agents, branding one of them, Alex Pretti, an "agitator."

Footage shared online this week reportedly showed intensive care nurse Pretti in a scuffle with federal agents 11 days before he was shot dead on Saturday by officers enforcing an immigration crackdown.

The White House has scrambled to stem widespread outrage over Pretti's killing, which came weeks after Renee Good, another US citizen and mother of three, was fatally shot by agents in the same city.

Trump said he wanted to "de-escalate a little bit," and appointed a new point man in Minneapolis, border chief Tom Homan, who said on Thursday that some federal agents could be

withdrawn from the city after weeks of protests against immigration raids.

However, Trump said on his Truth Social platform on Friday that 37-year-old Pretti was an "agitator" and, perhaps, insurrectionist.

"Alex Pretti's stock has gone way down with the just released video of him screaming and spitting in the face of a very calm and under control ICE Officer," Trump wrote, referring to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency.

The video reportedly shows Pretti kicking the tail light of federal agents' car, before they emerge and tackle him to the ground.

AFP could not immediately verify the footage.

Backlash over the deaths of Pretti and Good, and the mass deployment of ICE agents in Minneapolis, has landed in Congress, with the Senate edging closer to a vote on Friday on a funding deal to avert a

## US eases Venezuela sanctions after oil sector reforms

CARACAS (AFP/APP): The United States on Thursday eased sanctions on Venezuela's oil industry, expanding the ability of US companies to operate in the country after the lifting of state controls on the sector. Within an hour of Venezuelan MPs voting to open the oil industry to private investment, the US Treasury Department greenlit a range of activities by US energy companies.

The department issued a general license allowing transactions relating to "the lifting, exportation, reexportation, sale, resale, supply, storage, marketing, purchase, delivery, or transportation of Venezuelan-origin oil." The activities authorized include the refining of oil, the license said. Venezuela's acting president Delcy Rodriguez hailed the reform as a "historical leap."

"We are taking important steps," Rodriguez said after a call with US President Donald Trump.

Trump pressured Caracas to open up its oil fields to US investors after overthrowing his socialist arch-foe Nicolas Maduro in a deadly US bombing raid on Caracas on January 3.

The US president backed Maduro's deputy Rodriguez to take over, on the proviso that she give Washington access to the world's largest proven oil reserves. Rodriguez has appeared eager to comply with his demands, arguing that an influx of foreign capital is needed to revive the battered Venezuelan economy. The reform adopted Thursday paves the way for the return of US energy majors, two decades after socialist firebrand Hugo Chavez seized foreign oil fields.

## Presidents of Uzbekistan, Türkiye outline priorities for deepening comprehensive strategic partnership

TASHKENT (Uza/APP): The fourth meeting of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council was held under the co-chairmanship of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and the President of the Republic of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The parties emphasized the symbolic significance of the current meeting, which is taking place on the eve of the holy month of Ramadan and the 30th anniversary of the Treaty on Eternal Friendship and Cooperation between the two countries.

The dynamic development of political dialogue and the closeness of positions on international issues were noted with satisfaction.

An agreement was reached to continue mutual support within the framework of the United Nations, the Organization of Turkic States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Economic Cooperation Organization, and other structures. Inter-parliamentary ties have intensified, including through friendship groups. Mutual trade volumes, as well as the number of joint ventures and projects with leading Turk-

ish companies, continue to grow steadily.

A goal was set to increase the trade turnover to \$5 billion in the coming years, including through expanding the list of goods covered by the Preferential Trade Agreement.

As part of preparations for the visit, new priority areas for industrial cooperation were identified for implementation under a separate program.

The significant potential for interregional cooperation was also noted. By the end of the year, delegations from all regions of Uzbekistan are expected to visit Türkiye to develop a portfolio of projects with partner regions.

The demand for implementing advanced Turkish experience in agriculture, horticulture, healthcare, and medical tourism was emphasized.

Particular attention was paid to fostering cooperation in tourism, organizing theater festivals and cultural weeks, producing historical films jointly, and restoring cultural heritage sites.

To deepen cooperation in education, it was agreed to hold the fourth Rectors' Forum in Bukhara this spring.



Supporters of Uganda's incumbent president and National Resistance Movement presidential candidate Yoweri Museveni chant and hold electoral posters as they head to the rally grounds ahead of the party's closing campaign rally ahead of the 2026 Ugandan general elections, in Kampala.

## Kevin Warsh, a former Fed 'hawk' now in tune with Trump

WASHINGTON (AFP/APP): Kevin Warsh, a former US Federal Reserve official named by President Donald Trump on Friday as the next chief, was long an inflation foe but has aligned his views with those of Trump officials seeking aggressive interest rate cuts. Trump made the announcement after the Fed held its benchmark rate steady this week under Chairman Jerome Powell, whom the president again slammed as a "moron". The months of personal attacks have fuelled widespread fears among investors that the Fed's policy independence is under threat, potentially posing an inflation risk to the world's biggest economy.

Warsh has edged out three other contenders for the Fed job: Fed Governor Christopher Waller, Rick Rieder of the investment

behemoth BlackRock, and Trump's top economic adviser Kevin Hassett.

A Fed governor between 2006 and 2011, Warsh was previously a mergers and acquisitions banker at Morgan Stanley. He later joined former president George W. Bush's administration, serving as a White House economic policy adviser from 2002 to 2006 before being nominated to the Fed's Board of Governors. During his first term, Trump had considered Warsh for the Fed chair position, but eventually chose Powell instead.

But Powell's fall from grace was capped this month when US prosecutors issued subpoenas against him threatening a criminal indictment, an unprecedented move widely seen as an escalation of Trump's campaign against the central bank.

## Uganda army chief apologises over previous X post accusing US of helping opposition

NAIROBI (AFP/APP): Uganda's army chief broke ties with the United States on Friday, accusing its embassy of helping missing opposition leader Bobi Wine, then reversed his stance an hour later.

"I want to apologise to our great friends the United States for my earlier tweets that I have now deleted," army chief Muhoozi Kainerugaba, who is also the son of the president, wrote on X.

"I was being fed with wrong information. I have spoken with the US Ambassador to our country and everything is okay," he added.

He had previously posted on X that he was cutting ties with the embassy, accusing it of helping to hide Wine, who has been on the run since elections this month.

## Panama court annuls Hong Kong firm's canal port concession

PANAMA CITY (AFP/APP): Panama's Supreme Court annulled on Thursday the concession allowing Hong Kong-based CK Hutchison to operate ports at the Panama Canal, a ruling that undermines Chinese sway over the waterway.

As Beijing and Washington vie for global influence, container ports have become a prized currency—especially those situated in geopolitically strategic locations such as the Panama Canal.

Just days into US President Donald Trump's second term, he threatened to take back the canal—built by the United States and handed to Panama in 1999—claiming Beijing was effectively "operating" it.



Rohingya refugee children surround a street vendor at the Kutupalong refugee camp in Ukhiya.



## Pakistan, Kazakhstan deepen educational ties with signing of eight MoUs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Kazakhstan on Monday reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation in education, research and human resource development during a high-level engagement held in Islamabad.

The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoFE&PT) hosted a 25-member high-level delegation from the Republic of Kazakhstan, led by Minister of Science and Higher Education Mr. Sayasat Nurbek.

The delegation comprised senior officials from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, leadership of prominent Kazakh universities, and representatives of academic and research institutions. Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui

welcomed the delegation and underscored Pakistan's commitment to deepening educational collaboration with Kazakhstan.

A bilateral meeting, chaired by Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, was attended by officials from MoFE&PT, the Higher Education Commission (HEC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), representatives of Pakistani higher education institutions (HEIs), and other relevant stakeholders. The meeting reviewed the existing framework of cooperation and explored new avenues for collaboration in higher education, science and technology, medical education, research, innovation and academic exchange.

The two countries emphasized strengthening institution-to-institution linkages and enhancing people-to-people connection through education.

As a key outcome of the visit, eight Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed between Pakistani and Kazakh higher education institutions.

The agreements involve Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKI), National University of Modern Languages (NUML), King Edward Medical University (KEMU) and the University of Health Sciences (UHS).

The MoUs aim to promote joint research collaboration, faculty and student exchanges, collaborative academic programmes and capacity-building initiatives.



ISLAMABAD: The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Yahya Afridi, presenting a souvenir to Ms. Syeda Tanzeela Sabahat, Secretary, Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, on the completion of her one-year deputation as Secretary, Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

### APP's digital outreach key to counter misinformation, promote country's soft image: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday emphasized the role of Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) in strategic narrative-building during the expansion of state news agency's digital outreach would prove helpful in countering misinformation and promote country's soft image.

Chairing a meeting here during his visit to the APP's headquarter, the Information Minister

stressed utilizing multiple social media platforms, particularly for dissemination of news content in regional languages, to ensure close engagement with local communities at grassroots level.

The Information Minister directed extensive digital promotion of the content produced by APP's Balochi/Brahvi, Sindhi, Pashto, Sindhi and Saraiki services and said it would increase public trust by making narratives more relatable and inclusive.

### Pakistan launches first anti polio campaign of 2026

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has officially launched its first National Polio Eradication Campaign of 2026, marking a renewed nationwide effort to eliminate the virus. The campaign was inaugurated in Islamabad with strong backing from both local leadership and international partners.

The inauguration ceremony was held at the Rawal Town Dispensary in Islamabad, where Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication, Ayesha Raza Farooq, formally

launched the campaign. She, along with the Canadian high commissioner, administered polio drops to children, symbolizing the start of the nationwide drive.

Addressing the ceremony, Ayesha Raza Farooq said Pakistan is fighting the "last battle" against polio and emphasized that just two drops of vaccine can save a child's life. She stressed that boosting the morale of frontline polio teams is essential to achieving complete eradication.



KARACHI: Commander Coast, Vice Admiral Faisal Amin in a group photo during opening brief of Exercise SEA GUARD 2026.

### Maritime Security exercise Sea Guard 2026 commences

KARACHI (APP): Maritime Security exercise Sea Guard-2026 aimed at synergizing the efforts of all stakeholders to ensure safety and security within the maritime zones of Pakistan and beyond commenced here Monday.

Commander Coast, Vice Admiral Faisal Amin graced the occasion as Chief Guest, said a news release issued by Directorate General Public Relations (Pak Navy).

The third of its series, Exercise SEA GUARD 2026 is scheduled from 2-9 Feb 26.

The exercise is a national level effort by Pakistan Navy to bring together representatives of diverse maritime sector ranging from shipping, fishing, law enforcement and private

sector entities to collectively counter multifaceted challenges in maritime arena, it further said.

The activity includes conduct of various scenario based exercises alongwith table top discussions for rehearsing and improving mechanism of maritime protection along Pakistan's coastline.

During the opening brief, participants were also apprised about working methodology and efficacy of Joint Maritime Information Coordination Centre (JMICC). Vice Admiral Faisal Amin applauded the efforts of all stakeholders for participating in this national level exercise and acknowledged the proactive role of media in promoting maritime awareness at national level.

### Gilani arrives in Cambodia on official visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani arrived in Phnom Penh on Monday on an official visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Upon arrival, he was received at the airport by senior Cambodian parliamentary and government dignitaries, including Dr Thun Vathana, Second Vice President of the Senate; Ngy Chanphal, Chairman of the 1<sup>st</sup> Commission of the Senate and Chairman of the Cambodia-Pakistan Senate Friendship Group; Dr Chhiv Yiseang, Chairman of the 5<sup>th</sup> Commission of the Senate; Nguon Sokeng, Director General of Protocol and International Relations; and Zabeeruddin Babar Thaheem, Ambassador of Pakistan to Cambodia.



CAMBODIA: Flowers are being presented to Honorable Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, arrived in Phnom Penh official visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

### 'Pakistan vigorously working on economic reform agenda'

*Acknowledges WB's valuable support in advancing Pakistan's economic development*

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said Pakistan is vigorously working on economic reform agenda with multi-pronged comprehensive structural home grown program aimed at sustainable economic stability.

He was talking to World Bank Group President Ajay Banga who called on him in Islamabad on Monday.

The Prime Minister appreciated the support of the World Bank Group in resilient infrastructure, agribusiness, digital development, energy, human capital, fiscal reforms, and increasing productive private investment for job creation and growth.

The Prime Minister and the World Bank Group President reiterated the need to fast-track implementation and ensure strong oversight to deliver impact at speed and scale on CPF-aligned priorities.

These measures would duly assist Prime Minister's initiative to address and resolve Implementation Bottlenecks in development projects.

The Prime Minister expressed the government's commitment to structural reforms that would unlock job-rich growth and further strengthen investors' confidence.

Ajay Banga commended Government of Pakistan's ongoing reform efforts and reaffirmed his commitment to deepening cooperation through a One World Bank Group approach.

The premier also appreciated Mr. Banga's leadership in transforming the World Bank Group into more impactful development partner.

He stated that the government was vigorously working on economic reform agenda with multi-pronged comprehensive

structural home grown program aimed at sustainable economic stability.

The prime minister appreciated the support of the World Bank Group in resilient infrastructure, agribusiness, digital development, energy, human capital, fiscal reforms, and increasing productive private investment for job creation and growth.

PM Shehbaz and Mr. Banga reiterated the need to fast-track implementation and ensure strong oversight to deliver impact at speed and scale on CPF-aligned priorities.

These measures would duly assist the prime minister's initiative to address and resolve Implementation Bottlenecks in development projects. The prime minister expressed the government's commitment to structural reforms that would unlock job-rich growth and further strengthen investors' confidence.

### Executive Committee ECNEC approves development projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Monday chaired a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), which approved four major development projects worth over Rs. 240 billion.

The approved projects include expansion of AFIC-NIHD Rawalpindi, Prime Minister's Youth Skill Development Programme, Karachi Yellow Line BRT Corridor, and the Harpo Hydropower Project (34.5 MW) in Gilgit-Baltistan.

### DPM expresses support for UNESCO's initiatives

ISLAMABAD (INP): Director-General UNESCO Dr Khalid El-Enany, called on Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar in Islamabad on Monday.

Ishaq Dar congratulated Dr El-Enany on his election as DG of UNESCO and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to working closely with him to advance UNESCO's goals.

He expressed Pakistan's support for UNESCO's initiatives and emphasized continued cooperation in the fields of education, culture, and multilateral engagement.

### First Lady urges parents to vaccinate children against polio

ISLAMABAD (INP): First Lady Aseefa Bhutto Zardari has said the anti-polio campaign is a vital step towards protecting children and eliminating polio once and for all. In a post on X handle, she urged parents to ensure their children aged five and under receive the vaccine every time it is offered, emphasizing this is the only way to eliminate polio for good.

## NA Speaker, UK MP reaffirm parliamentary cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Monday met UK MP Imran Hussain at Parliament House where they reaffirmed Pakistan-UK parliamentary cooperation and stressed resolving the Kashmir issue in line with UN resolutions.

During the meeting, Member of the UK House of Commons, Imran Hussain appreciated the Speaker for effectively raising the Kashmir issue at all international forums.

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq stated that Pakistan has consistently raised the issue of atrocities being committed in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) at all relevant international platforms.

He also informed that

during his recent visit to China, the Kashmir issue was raised in his meeting with the Chairman of the National People's Congress.

Both sides agreed to further strengthen Pakistan-UK parliamentary cooperation and enhance institutional linkages between the two parliaments.

Speaker National Assembly emphasized that the Kashmir issue must be resolved in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations. He urged the international community to take serious notice of the ongoing human rights violations in IIOJK.

Imran Hussain reaffirmed that he would continue to raise the Kashmir issue effectively in the British Parliament.



ISLAMABAD: Ajay Banga, President, World Bank Group (WBG) calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

### Raisani urges unity to defeat terrorism

ISLAMABAD (APP): MNA Nawabzada Mir Jamal Khan Raisani on Monday strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Balochistan, saying it had nothing to do with the rights of the people of the province.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he stressed that national unity was essential to eliminate terrorism. He called for a national narrative that strengthens state institutions rather than weakening them.

Raisani also paid tribute to the security forces, including the Balochistan Police and Pakistan's armed forces, for taking firm action against terrorists. He said the rights of Balochistan could never be achieved through violence. He recalled that major decisions in favour of the province were made through parliament, citing the Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan package and the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment as examples of successful political struggle

that ensured provincial rights over resources.

Questioning militant leaders who claim to "liberate" Balochistan, Raisani said the province is home to brave and loyal people who have always rejected terrorism. He added that no one could separate Balochistan from Pakistan.

He urged the House to go beyond symbolic statements. He called for unity, honesty and a collective national response to what he described as a serious war imposed on Pakistan by terrorists.

Meanwhile, Shahida Begum said that people of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were suffering due to terrorism and called for action against elements working against the country's interests. She said her party was ready to extend full support in the fight against terrorism.

Mian Khan Bugti also strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Balochistan and alleged that India was involved in the unrest in the province.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Khalid Hussain Magsi, and Mr. Sayasat Nurbek, Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, jointly inaugurated the Satbayev Cultural Center at NUST.

### Bakht Kakar says: GoB will ensure uninterrupted, high-quality medical care without any concessions to injured victims

**Independent Report**

QUETTA: Balochistan Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar has firmly assured victims of a recent incident and their families that the provincial government stands fully behind them and will ensure uninterrupted, high-quality medical care without any concessions.

The Health Minister visited the Quetta Trauma Center to personally assess the condition of the injured patients and review the medical arrangements in place. During the visit, Managing Director Trauma Center Dr. Kamran Kasi briefed him on the treatment process, existing facilities, deployment of resources, and the performance of the medical teams attending the patients.

Minister Kakar

toured different wards of the hospital, interacted individually with patients, and sought direct feedback on their health and treatment. He praised the doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff for demonstrating professionalism and commitment while working under demanding conditions, terming their efforts exemplary.

Expressing satisfaction over the hospital's security measures, the Minister stressed that safeguarding both patients and healthcare workers remains a top priority.

He issued clear instructions that all injured individuals must receive the best possible medical attention, with complete availability of medicines, diagnostic services, and treatment facilities, ensuring no shortcomings at any level.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary Communication and Works Babar Khan presides over the meeting regarding Red Zone Security Bunkers and Concrete Wall.