

Pakistan receives \$1.2bn tranche from IMF

The global lender endorsed that the implementation of the EFF has driven notable improvements in both domestic stability and external economic indicators

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has secured a \$1.203 billion disbursement from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), marking the second tranche under the country's \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF), the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) confirmed. The IMF Executive Board approved the release on 9 May, following a positive review of Pakistan's economic performance within the framework of the program.

The funds are expected to bolster the nation's foreign exchange reserves by 16 May 2025. This latest injection comes as a significant vote of confidence from the IMF, which has previously praised Pakistan's adherence to the program's conditionalities and reforms. In an earlier statement, the global lender acknowledged that



the implementation of the EFF had led to improvements in both domestic and external economic indicators.

Yet, the IMF has maintained that continued structural reforms remain essential, particularly in revamping state-owned enterprises and enhancing public service delivery. Energy sector reform has been identified as a key priority, alongside the urgent need to address climate resilience and disaster management. The IMF under-

scored the pressing need for Pakistan to strengthen institutional capacity to mitigate the growing risks posed by climate change, signaling the global lender's broader environmental concerns in the region.

To this end, Pakistan is eligible to receive an additional \$1.4 billion in climate resilience financing, aimed at supporting disaster preparedness and environmental governance. With this second tranche, Pakistan's

total receipts under the EFF program now stand at \$2.1 billion, following the initial \$1 billion disbursed after the staff-level agreement was concluded in late March. These funds are intended to provide a buffer against ongoing economic pressures that continue to challenge the country, including inflationary spikes, currency depreciation, and a precarious external balance.

While the immediate infusion is expected to shore up Pakistan's foreign currency reserves and restore some investor confidence, the road ahead remains fraught with challenges. Analysts caution that sustainable economic recovery will depend on Pakistan's ability to carry forward with difficult reforms and maintain macroeconomic stability amid a complex domestic and global environment.

Erdogan hails Pakistan-Türkiye brotherhood as rare "Global Bond"

News Desk

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has praised the deep-rooted friendship between Türkiye and Pakistan, describing it as one of the finest examples of sincere brotherhood in the modern world. Speaking to international media, President Erdoğan said such a bond is a rare privilege shared by very few nations.

He extended heartfelt greetings to what he called Türkiye's "friend and brother" Pakistan, reaffirming Ankara's unwavering support for Islamabad's peace,



stability, and prosperity.

"We attach great importance to the peace and calm of Pakistan," Erdoğan stated. "We admire the restraint and wisdom of the Pakistani state, especially in its diplomatic conduct and approach to regional challenges."

He went on to commend Pakistan's commitment to dialogue and reconciliation as means of resolving conflicts, stressing that Türkiye has always stood by Pakistan in both good times and bad — and will continue to do so in the future.

"This brotherhood is not just of words; it is a shared history of support, trust, and solidarity," the Turkish president concluded, underscoring that Ankara will remain steadfast in its commitment to Pakistan, just as it has in the past.

The reaffirmation of these fraternal ties comes at a time when regional dynamics are rapidly shifting, making the strategic partnership between the two nations even more vital.

Teen's sexually abused body found at madrassa

By our correspondent

KARACHI: A horrific case has emerged from Karachi where the body of a 14-year-old boy was recovered from a madrassa near Dumba Goth, located along the M-9 Motorway en route to Hyderabad. Police have registered a case of rape and murder against a religious teacher and his accomplices.

According to officials, the FIR was lodged at Gadap police station on the complaint of the victim's brother. The case includes serious charges of sexual assault and murder under Pakistan's penal code.

The complainant stated in the FIR that the madrassa teacher, along with others, allegedly sexually assaulted the boy and then strangled him to death.

The police confirmed that the initial investigation supports the claim of deliberate and violent harm inflicted on the child.

A police spokesperson said a manhunt has been launched to arrest the suspects named in the case.

Pakistan, India urged to trade "Beauty not Bombs"

US President Trump hailed his administration's diplomatic efforts as pivotal in defusing escalating tensions between the two South Asian neighbors, marking a rare breakthrough in regional peace

News Desk

RIYADH: In a light-hearted yet diplomatically charged statement, U.S. President Donald Trump reaffirmed America's role in mediating the recent ceasefire between Pakistan and India, urging both nations to abandon the path of hostility and instead focus on trading "beautifully made things" rather than nuclear missiles.

Speaking from Riyadh during the first leg of his Middle East tour — his first major international trip since resuming office — President Trump hailed the success of his administration's diplomatic intervention in defusing rising tensions between the two South Asian neighbors.

"A few days ago, my administration helped broker a historic ceasefire between India and Pakistan. It could have gone very wrong. We stepped in with a message of peace... I said, 'Friends, let's make a deal. Let's trade — not in nuclear missiles, but in the beautiful things you make.'" Trump told an audience that included Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Amid applause, Trump



quipped that perhaps now the two nations could even come together over a "pleasant dinner," adding that the world had narrowly avoided a potentially catastrophic conflict. "It started small, but it was escalating fast — it could have cost millions of lives. Now, the violence has stopped," he said, expressing hope that the ceasefire would endure.

The president took the opportunity to lavish praise on his diplomatic team, specifically singling out Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Senator J.D. Vance. "Marco did a tremendous job. J.D. — thank you. This was hard work, and your team made it happen. It was a fantastic effort," Trump said, calling the ceasefire a major achievement for U.S. diplomacy.

In characteristically grand

fashion, Trump framed himself as a global peacemaker. "Both countries have powerful and intelligent leaders. Now that the violence has stopped, we are optimistic that the peace will hold. We're proud of what we've accomplished, and we'll keep working to resolve conflicts around the world," he said.

While his rhetoric carried the typical Trump flair, analysts noted that the U.S. had indeed played a critical behind-the-scenes role in urging both Pakistan and India to de-escalate — a position Trump is now eager to own on the world stage. His comments also hinted at leveraging trade as a tool for peace, suggesting a pivot from confrontation to cooperation rooted in economic exchange and shared creativity.

Imran Khan's presence outside jail vital, says Latif Khosa

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Senior lawyer and PTI founder Imran Khan's counsel, Advocate Latif Khosa, has said that given the current political and national challenges, Khan's presence outside prison is essential to foster unity and address looming threats.

His remarks came during a hearing at the Islamabad High Court, where Acting Chief Justice Sardar Sarfraz Dogar reviewed a petition for Khan's release on parole in the £190 million corruption case. The petition, filed by Ali Amin Gandapur, faced objections from the registrar's office, but Khosa urged the court to fix the parole plea alongside Khan's pending appeal for suspension of sentence.

"There's a prevailing perception that justice is being denied to one man," said Khosa. "Even a sitting chief



minister is not being allowed to meet him. That must change." The acting chief justice, however, pointed out that Khan had already been convicted by a trial court and said the matter fell under the jurisdiction of the government. "Why bring this here? Go to them," he remarked.

A government representative told the court the parole request had already been submitted and was pending with the provincial authorities.

One-for-one prisoner swap marks rare India-Pakistan gesture

By our correspondent

WAGAH: Pakistan and India exchanged one prisoner each on Tuesday morning at the Wagah-Attari border post in a rare but symbolic gesture between the two neighbours.

According to security sources, Indian Border Security Force (BSF) personnel Pranam Kumar Singh was handed over to Indian authorities, while Pakistani national Mohammadullah was returned to Pakistan by Indian forces.

The exchange process was completed around 10am at the border crossing, sources said. BSF officer Pranam Kumar Singh had been detained by Pakistani forces on 23 April for allegedly crossing the international border near the Kasur sector.

UK Parliament urges Indian to honor 'Indus Water Treaty'

MP James Frith spoke openly about the growing unease among British communities with South Asian roots, especially those connected to Azad Kashmir, Mirpur, Kotli, and Gujrat, highlighting their deepening concern over regional unrest

News Desk

LONDON: The British Parliament has voiced serious concern over the rising tensions between India and Pakistan, urging both nations to uphold the Indus Water Treaty, a longstanding agreement crucial for regional stability. Lawmakers stressed that water resources must never be politicized or used as a tool for conflict, highlighting the vital importance of maintaining this historic pact.

During a parliamentary session, MP James Frith spoke candidly about the anxieties felt by British communities with roots in South Asia, particularly those from regions such as Azad Kashmir, Mirpur, Kotli, and Gujrat. Frith remarked on the growing unease within these communities, emphasizing that water should not become a weapon in political disputes. "Treaties like the Indus Water Treaty are fundamental to peace and must be preserved," he said, underscoring the delicate balance that has helped to prevent conflict for decades.



Frith also acknowledged the UK government's efforts to encourage de-escalation, calling for a more engaged and proactive diplomatic role given Britain's historical ties to the subcontinent. His comments reflected a wider sentiment within Parliament that the UK, with its unique position and connections, should play a constructive role in easing tensions.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy responded by recognizing the deep cultural links between the UK and South Asia, noting that more than three million British citizens have roots in India and Pakistan. He informed the House that the UK has actively engaged with both countries, holding four meetings with the In-

dian and Pakistani foreign ministers since the crisis began. Lammy reiterated the government's firm stance that all diplomatic agreements must be honored, with a particular emphasis on the Indus Water Treaty.

Lammy's statement underscored the UK's commitment to ensuring that water remains a shared resource rather than a source of conflict, stressing that "water must never be used as a weapon of war." The parliamentary discussion highlighted the growing international awareness of water disputes in South Asia and signaled the UK's readiness to support diplomatic efforts aimed at securing long-term peace in the region.

BJP minister's remark against Muslim officer triggers outcry

News Desk

NEW DEHLI: A senior minister from India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has ignited a fresh political storm after making a communal and derogatory remark against Colonel Sophia Qureshi, a decorated Muslim officer in the Indian Army.

Kunwar Vijay Shah, the Union Minister for Tribal Affairs, sparked the controversy during a public gathering in Indore district, Madhya Pradesh. Referring to the recent Pahalgam incident during his speech on Operation Sindoor, Shah said, "Those people — the ones who turned our daughters into widows — we sent their sister to teach them a lesson."

The veiled reference to Colonel Sophia Qureshi, an officer involved in Operation



Sindoor, was widely condemned as communal and misogynistic. His comment, implying that the Indian Army had deployed "a sister" of attackers — ostensibly because Qureshi is Muslim — outraged both political rivals and citizens across the country.

The Indian National Congress, in a strongly worded statement on social media, called Shah's remark "shameful" and "an insult not just to Colonel

Sophia Qureshi but to the entire Indian Army." The party demanded an immediate apology from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and called for the minister's removal.

Colonel Qureshi, who had earlier briefed the media on the strategic details of Operation Sindoor, including losses suffered during retaliatory actions by Pakistani forces, is widely respected for her professionalism and service.

Rafale failures forced Modi into ceasefire: Indian analyst

News Desk

NEW DEHLI: Indian analysts have pushed back against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's narrative that the recent ceasefire with Pakistan was a diplomatic victory for New Delhi, arguing instead that it was driven by political compulsion and military setbacks.

Senior analyst Manu Jain described the ceasefire as a clear win for Pakistan. He claimed that Modi had to "walk on his knees" to reach out to former US President Donald Trump, who, according to Jain, was en-



gaged via backdoor diplomacy to mediate the tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

"Modi placed national dignity at Trump's feet," Jain said bluntly, adding that the



decision to halt the escalation was taken to prevent the failure of the Rafale fighter jets from coming under public scrutiny. "The ceasefire was not a choice — it was a necessity."

Echoing similar sentiments, former Indian minister Arun Shourie sharply criticised India's mainstream media during a live television appearance. He lambasted the hyper-nationalistic tone and misinformation campaigns that dominated coverage of the recent India-Pakistan standoff.

"This is no longer just 'godi media' — it has become 'Modi media,'" said Shourie, using a term often employed to describe media outlets seen as uncritically supportive of the BJP government.

EDITOR: Ehtasham Anwar
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Economic calm, cautious hope

After years of economic turbulence, Pakistan is witnessing the first flickers of recovery. Inflation, once soaring at paralyzing levels, has finally begun to cool. The rupee, though still fragile, is holding its ground better than many expected. The Karachi Stock Exchange, too, is enjoying a rally that some commentators abroad have labelled “Miraculous”. But while the numbers may suggest a new dawn, the everyday reality for millions is far more complicated. They are still navigating hunger, unemployment, and exhaustion from austerity measures. In truth, recovery is only meaningful if it reaches the people who have waited the longest for relief. Over the past six months, the federal government has embraced a more restrained and focused economic agenda. The exuberance of hollow promises has been replaced, at least for now, by the more sober voice of technocrats.

Muhammad Aurangzeb, the finance minister, has emerged as a key figure in this recalibration. Unlike many of his predecessors, Aurangzeb speaks less of political triumph and more of structural repair. His banking pedigree, honed abroad and at home, has given international investors a degree of reassurance. He is not a populist, and perhaps that’s why some see him as the steady hand Pakistan desperately needs. International outlets, including Barron’s, have not shied away from praising what they see as an improbable turnaround. To call it a “miracle”, as the American publication recently did, may be premature, but it signals that the country is no longer being dismissed outright. Inflation, once hovering near 40 percent, has fallen sharply.

Equity markets have surged, and Eurobonds maturing in 2031 have nearly doubled in value. These are important markers. But they also raise a question: whose miracle is this? On the ground, the mood remains subdued. For shopkeepers in Lahore or factory workers in Karachi, the so-called rebound has yet to register. The price of essentials may have stabilized, but food insecurity is still widespread. Small businesses, drained by years of unpredictable policy and high utility costs, are only just managing to stay afloat. Any economic improvement that fails to uplift these communities is at risk of becoming little more than a statistical illusion.

There is, however, an undeniable shift in tone from the country’s leadership. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, long seen as an efficient administrator with a taste for infrastructure projects, appears to be leaning more heavily on institutional collaboration. His government, with the implicit support of the military, has shown a level of fiscal caution that Pakistan has rarely managed to sustain. For now, this fragile alliance between civilian and military interests has created space for economic recovery to begin. But that space will shrink fast if deeper reforms are dodged. Because make no mistake, what lies ahead is not an easy climb. The International Monetary Fund, whose assistance Pakistan still relies on, is not merely interested in balance sheets. It demands structural change.

It means confronting the entrenched privileges that have protected the wealthy and politically connected for far too long. Subsidies on electricity and fuel, though politically sensitive, must be rationalized. The tax base, notoriously narrow, needs urgent widening to include sectors that have evaded scrutiny for decades. None of these moves are politically attractive.

But Pakistan’s future hinges on leaders choosing necessity over convenience. There is a quiet irony in the current situation. Austerity, which often brings governments down, has for now steadied this one.

Yet the real test is still ahead. Can this government move from emergency triage to long-term vision? Can it shift from pleasing international lenders to earning the trust of its own people?

Reform, in this context, cannot just be a matter of technocratic efficiency. It must be seen and felt by the public. When electricity bills shrink not from cuts but from structural corrections, and when taxation is no longer a burden carried only by the salaried class, then perhaps this recovery will begin to look more genuine. There are also lessons to learn from the recent past. Alice Gorman of Walton Capital Management observed that while Pakistan’s central bank was forced to hike interest rates dramatically—from 10 percent to 22 percent—the price of controlling inflation was a deep recession. That recession hollowed out local industries and punished consumers. As inflation slows, and with it the pressure to keep interest rates high, there lies an opportunity to build carefully.

This moment must not be squandered by returning to the kind of reckless spending and short-term thinking that led to crisis in the first place. Global investors remain cautiously hopeful. Firms like Sandglass Capital Management, once wary of Pakistan’s economic volatility, are now warning to the idea that the country may have turned a corner. Their optimism is valuable, not because foreign capital is a silver bullet, but because it reflects a return of trust—something Pakistan has struggled to earn.

But as Jena Lososki of Sandglass has rightly said, investors like a good story. It is now up to Pakistan’s policymakers to write a compelling sequel—one that is honest, inclusive, and rooted in local realities.

For decades, Pakistan’s economic strategy has been reactive rather than visionary. Periods of boom have been quickly followed by busts, largely because the political will to fix the structural rot has been missing. Now, with the worst of the panic behind it, the country stands at a delicate threshold. There is a path forward.

But it requires discipline, transparency, and a deeper respect for public welfare. Not slogans. Not gimmicks.

Real, sustained progress. Pakistan’s recovery may no longer be an illusion. But whether it becomes a transformation depends not on what the markets say tomorrow, but on what the people feel in the months to come.

Metro Morning and its policy not necessarily consensus with any writer's thoughts

By Uzma Ehtasham



There is a fundamental misconception that must be addressed: if you are powerful and you bully someone weaker than you, it is not courage. In fact, striking someone smaller than you is not a display of bravery; it is, at best, an act of cruelty, and at worst, a display of cowardice disguised as strength. True courage comes when the weak stand their ground or strike back, often resulting in the disgrace of the bully. This very dynamic unfolded in the recent tensions between Pakistan and India. The contrast between the two nations on the battlefield has often been portrayed as an uneven contest—India, a regional giant, and Pakistan, a smaller power struggling to assert itself. Yet, in the recent escalation, Pakistan’s response to India’s provocations revealed a surprising twist, turning the tables in a way that was hard to ignore.

When India made provocative moves by discussing mortar strikes, Pakistan did not back down. Instead, the country responded strategically and decisively, making it clear that the Line of Control—long seen as an inviolable boundary—was no longer beyond reach. What ensued was not only a display of military might but also

a potent message to India’s leadership and media: a nation built on deceit cannot continue to ignore the truth. The forcefulness of Pakistan’s military response was both calculated and overwhelming, as it showcased the might of its armed forces in a way that left no room for doubt or misinterpretation.

On May 10, the world watched as Pakistan’s ballistic missiles struck targets in India. The Pakistani Air Force displayed impressive precision, ensuring that their message was impossible to overlook. However, the Indian media’s portrayal of events starkly contrasted the reality on the ground. Indian news outlets ran sensational stories claiming that Pakistani forces had destroyed a key airbase during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit. Yet, upon closer inspection, the airbase remained intact, leaving the question open: Was this a deliberate attempt to deceive the public, or were they simply under the illusion that Pakistan’s military was incapable?

Pakistan’s response to the Indian strikes was not merely a matter of retaliation. The Pakistani military chose its targets with care. While India had previously attacked a Pakistani airbase and hit the runway, Pakistan chose a different path. Rather than targeting the runway, which would have been a direct challenge to India’s military infrastructure, Pakistan’s strike focused on crucial military assets, ensuring that Modi’s visit would remain un-

affected. This strategic avoidance highlighted not only Pakistan’s precision in its military operations but also its understanding of the global stage and the importance of sending a message, rather than merely engaging in a tit-for-tat exchange of blows.

Prime Minister Modi, who has long painted Pakistan as the sole aggressor in ceasefire violations, was now faced with an inconvenient truth. His carefully constructed narrative, which placed the blame on Pakistan, was shattered by the real-time events unfolding on the ground. Indian analysts, for the first time, were forced to confront this new reality. Senior analyst Manoj Jain, appearing on Indian television, made a blunt observation: the true victor in this conflict was Pakistan, not India. Jain further noted that Modi had been forced to seek a backdoor resolution from President Donald Trump, something that exposed the Indian Prime Minister’s vulnerability on the global stage.

The implications of this diplomatic backpedaling were not lost on the public. Modi, who had once appeared confident in his military prowess, had to grovel before Trump, seeking a way out of the escalating situation. His actions, analysts argued, represented a loss of dignity on the international front. Jain’s assessment pointed to a deeper issue: Modi’s attempts to control the narrative around India’s military failures, particularly the highly publicized debacle of the Rafale deal, were now threat-

ened by this embarrassing turn of events.

Meanwhile, former Indian Minister Arun Shourie was quick to condemn the Indian media’s portrayal of the conflict. Describing the media as not just “lapdog media” but “Modi’s media,” Shourie slammed the exaggerated and false reports that painted a picture of Indian military dominance. Claims that India had taken control of Islamabad and Lahore or destroyed the Karachi port were nothing more than fabrications, he argued. These falsehoods, he warned, were not only damaging to India’s credibility but also undermined the country’s reputation in the global arena.

In an era where information flows freely and rapidly, the truth has a unique way of piercing through even the most meticulously crafted lies. The ongoing Pakistan-India conflict has shown us that, despite attempts to manipulate narratives, the real story can only be obscured for so long. In this instance, Pakistan’s military response and the subsequent unraveling of India’s fabricated media claims exposed the cracks in the narrative that India had so carefully built. The lesson is clear: in the end, truth always prevails, no matter how much effort is invested in its suppression.

The writer is a public health professional, journalist, and possesses expertise in health communication, having keen interest in national and international affairs, can be reached at uzma@metro-morning.com

By Atiq Raja



The famous saying, “You can’t control the wind, but you can adjust the sails,” perfectly captures the essence of life’s unpredictable nature. It’s a reminder that while we cannot dictate the circumstances that come our way, we do have control over how we respond to them. Life constantly presents us with twists of fate—some fortunate, others not so much—and in these moments, it’s easy to attribute our successes or failures to sheer luck. However, the real truth is far more nuanced. Life, as we navigate it, is less about what happens to us and more about how we manage what happens. The idea that life is 90 percent management and 10 percent luck underscores the importance of preparation and control in shaping our destinies. It’s easy to romanticize luck. We often imagine that success is tied to moments of serendipity—the sudden windfall of a lottery win, being born into privilege, or meeting the right person at just the right moment.

But this view neglects a fundamental truth: luck, as fleeting as it is, only works for

those who are ready to seize it. The spark of luck can light the way, but it’s the firewood of preparation and discipline that keeps the flame burning. Without careful management, that spark will fade away, leaving us with nothing to show for the opportunity. Managing our lives is not just about our careers or businesses. It extends far beyond those realms, influencing the very fabric of our existence. Time is perhaps the most precious resource we manage. How we allocate our hours, how we fill our days, defines not only our years but also the quality of our lives. Our emotional intelligence, too, is a critical tool for success. The ability to understand and regulate our emotions shapes our relationships, our mental health, and the choices we make.

Managing our resources—whether financial, mental, or physical—is another crucial aspect. It’s not about having more; it’s about making the most of what we already possess. The way we make decisions plays a pivotal role as well. Every choice we make, no matter how small, compounds over time, influencing our paths in ways we might not even realize. Success, as we often see it, is rarely a product of blind luck. It is often the result of consistent effort, discipline, and the ability to adapt and learn. Those who succeed are not necessarily the luckiest; they are the ones who manage

their expectations and efforts effectively.

They are the ones who know how to bounce back from setbacks—not because luck has intervened, but because their attitude and perseverance allow them to recover and try again. Luck, in its truest sense, is just a small part of the equation. It’s the 10% wildcard that occasionally tips the scale in our favor. A job interview might come your way by chance, but it’s the preparation and skill you bring to the table that ultimately determines whether you land the job. Meeting a mentor might feel like fate, but it’s your willingness to learn, grow, and implement their wisdom that makes the difference. Similarly, the circumstances of our upbringing or the serendipity of chance encounters may shape our lives, but it’s how we manage those opportunities that makes them meaningful. Take, for instance, a student.

They might not have had a choice in the school they were born into, but the way they manage their time, approach their studies, and seek out opportunities will determine their success. The same is true for an entrepreneur. While getting the attention of an investor may seem like luck, it’s the ability to plan, adapt, and remain persistent that transforms an idea into a thriving business. And in relationships, while chance might bring two people together, it is the ongoing

effort, communication, and mutual understanding that allow the bond to flourish. Relying on luck as a strategy for success is akin to waiting for rain during a drought: it’s possible, but fraught with uncertainty. Those who thrive in life are not those who gamble on fate; they are the ones who manage their reality.

They are the ones who understand that while luck might give them a brief advantage, it’s their skill in management—how they handle their time, their relationships, their emotions, and their resources—that determines the long-term outcome. At the end of the day, life is not simply about what happens to us.

It’s about how we respond to what happens, how we manage our circumstances, and how we create opportunities out of the challenges we face. We cannot control the wind, but we can adjust the sails—and in doing so, we chart our own course toward success. So, while it’s always nice to have a bit of luck on our side, the real secret to thriving in life lies in our ability to manage, adapt, and make the most of every situation that comes our way.

The writer is a rights activist and CEO of AR Trainings and Consultancy, with degrees in Political Science and English Literature, can be reached at news@metro-morning.com

By Waseem Akram



The creation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in August 1947 was one of the most significant events in South Asian history. It was a moment of profound change, born out of the partition of India (subcontinent), a process that led to the birth of two nations and the mass displacement of millions. Pakistan emerged as a state founded on the principles of religious identity, specifically for Muslims, and its establishment came at a time of great upheaval and hope. It was a new chapter for the millions of Muslims who had struggled to forge a separate homeland, one that would allow them to live according to their own faith and traditions, free from what they saw as the dominance of the Hindu majority in India.

When Pakistan was admitted to the United Nations in September 1947, it marked the beginning of a journey that would define its identity and position on the global stage. From its humble beginnings, Pakistan grew to become the second-largest country in the Muslim world by population, and the only Muslim-majority nation to possess nuclear weapons. This distinction has significantly impacted Pakistan’s role in the global geopolitical arena, particu-

larly as the possession of nuclear weapons grants the country a level of security and influence that few other nations in the region can match.

Pakistan’s location on the map places it in a highly strategic position, bordered by India to the east, Iran to the west, Afghanistan to the northwest, and China to the north.

This proximity to some of the world’s most powerful and influential nations is part of what makes Pakistan’s geopolitical importance undeniable. Situated at the crossroads of South Asia and the Middle East, Pakistan controls key maritime and land trade routes, which have historically connected the Arabian Sea with the interior of Asia. In today’s globalized world, these routes are critical not only for trade but also for the energy flows that sustain economies. Pakistan is, therefore, a crucial link between energy-rich Central Asia and the rest of the world, serving as a bridge for energy resources to reach the global markets.

However, despite its strategic location and economic potential, Pakistan has been mired in long-standing conflicts, most notably with its neighbor, India. The two countries share a contentious history, with the Kashmir dispute remaining one of the central points of conflict. The dispute dates back to the partition itself when both India and Pakistan claimed sovereignty over the region of Kashmir. For decades, this territorial

disagreement has led to numerous wars and continuous military standoffs. The Line of Control (LoC), a ceasefire line drawn in 1949, has served as a de facto boundary, but both countries continue to claim the entirety of the region. Since 2019, relations between Pakistan and India have reached new lows, with India’s controversial decision to revoke Article 370 of its constitution, which granted autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir, further aggravating the situation. Since then, diplomatic ties have been frozen, and regional stability has been threatened by heightened tensions and the risk of further conflict.

On the global stage, Pakistan’s foreign relations reflect its complex position as a nation straddling multiple spheres of influence. Over the years, Pakistan has built strong bilateral ties with China, a relationship that has only grown stronger in recent decades. China and Pakistan share common strategic interests, and China’s Belt and Road Initiative has seen significant infrastructure investments in Pakistan, especially through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This partnership is not only economic but also military, with both countries closely cooperating on defense matters, including the development of nuclear technology and the strengthening of their respective military capabilities.

Additionally, Pakistan has maintained close ties with the broader Muslim world, in-

cluding countries like Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the Gulf Arab nations. These relationships are built on shared religious, cultural, and historical bonds, and they form a significant part of Pakistan’s foreign policy framework. During the Cold War, Pakistan was a vital ally of the United States, cooperating closely in the fight against Soviet expansion. However, relations between the two countries became strained after the events of 9/11 and Pakistan’s involvement in the War on Terror, particularly in Afghanistan. While the U.S. and Pakistan continue to engage diplomatically, their relationship has often been marked by mistrust, with Pakistan seeking greater autonomy in its foreign policy.

Pakistan is also an active member of various international organizations, including the Commonwealth of Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). These memberships underscore Pakistan’s efforts to balance its alliances and position itself as an important player in global diplomacy. Despite its internal challenges, including political instability, economic struggles, and security concerns, Pakistan continues to assert its relevance in international affairs.

The writer is a student of political science and keen observer of geopolitics, can be reached at news@metro-morning.com

By Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri

The May 10 ceasefire between India and Pakistan has brought considerable relief to millions across the border after days of unprecedented aerial strikes, drone warfare and cross-border shelling.

Brokered with reluctant but decisive US intervention (supported by key regional and EU players), the truce is a diplomatic win for Islamabad – achieved through a perfect mix of military deterrence, international diplomacy and domestic unity.

Facing a far larger neighbour with superior conventional military strength (ten times the higher defence budget) and economic power (10 times the higher GDP and nearly 42 times the higher foreign exchange reserves), Pakistan played its limited cards skillfully. India’s attempt to block Pakistan’s pending \$1.1 billion IMF tranche, on the pretext of ‘military misuse of funds’, was a clear economic squeeze tactic. Such a move, along with the Indian government’s decision to unilaterally hold the Indus Waters treaty in abeyance, threatened to derail macro-economic stability.

Thanks to Pakistan’s consistent implementation of the IMF programme, it escaped India’s direct attempt at economic strangulation. However, a steadier performance in the IMF programme was not suffi-

cient. Besides suspending critical external financing, a prolonged war imposed on Pakistan could have resulted in the destabilisation of the rupee, capital flight, shattered fragile investor confidence, and disrupted the continuity of remittance flows. That is where Pakistan had to demonstrate its conventional military might to act as a deterrent alongside the nuclear deterrents, where both sides are even.

In this regard, deploying newly inducted J-10C fighter jets proved to be a game-changer. With advanced AESA radars and PL-15 long-range missiles, these jets neutralised India’s assumed air superiority post the Rafale fighter jets. The Pakistani Air Force’s combat air patrols with J-10Cs and shooting down India’s fighter jets sent a clear signal: Islamabad was prepared for escalation and possessed credible deterrence capabilities.

Pakistan’s robust counter-operation (Bunyanum-Marsoos or Iron Wall) in response to India’s attempted missile strikes on its airbases demonstrated its capability and resolve to retaliate effectively. This military response showed India that Pakistan was prepared for sustained conflict, raising the stakes.

These technological leaps forced Indian strategic planners to reassess the costs of further confrontation. The J-10C presence

not only balanced the tactical equation but also altered the psychological calculus in Delhi, making the prospect of a prolonged air war far less appealing.

The standoff also exposed the strategic limitations of India’s multilateral bets. The QUAD – intended as India’s Indo-Pacific security cushion – proved diplomatically absent, with the US belatedly opting for bilateral crisis management and Australia and Japan maintaining a conspicuous silence. Similarly, the SCO, where both India and Pakistan sit, remained sidelined, its institutional irrelevance laid bare as the conflict escalated.

For India, this isolation revealed an uncomfortable reality: when bilateral tensions with Pakistan flare, geopolitical alliances offer symbolic weight but limited practical leverage.

Washington’s initial reluctance to mediate stemmed from a desire to avoid entanglement. However, the rapid escalation compelled the White House to act. Ultimately, US diplomatic intervention, via Secretary of State Marco Rubio and facilitated by Gulf interlocutors, culminated in an instant ceasefire.

While Prime Minister Modi is under severe pressure from India’s major opposition parties, especially regarding the visible retreat from India’s position of not ‘international-

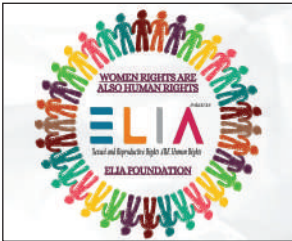
alising’ the Kashmir issue, the conflict produced an unexpected internal dividend for Pakistan: national unity. In a politically polarised landscape, the crisis acted as a unifying force. Opposition parties, including the PTI, momentarily set aside their differences to present a bipartisan front. This rare cohesion strengthened Pakistan’s internal resilience while also amplifying its credibility on the international stage.

The information war during the standoff was no less intense than the kinetic conflict. Both sides engaged in aggressive narrative battles, but what marked a dangerous new frontier was the disruptive use of misinformation, deepfakes, and AI-generated images even by many of the mainstream Indian media outlets.

Viral videos of fabricated clips showing destroyed Pakistani airbases and destruction in Karachi as a result of Indian missiles flooded social media. For Pakistan, countering this onslaught became a critical front. Official channels and Pakistani media successfully debunked fake news and restored factual clarity.

China’s role, though understated publicly, was instrumental. Beyond supplying J-10Cs, Beijing’s quiet diplomatic engagements with Washington, emphasising the risks of unchecked escalation, added weight to Islamabad’s position.

Ceasefire redraws strategic lines?



PM lauds military for decisive action under “Marqa-e-Haq” in Sialkot

The Prime Minister was given a detailed operational briefing and the current readiness of the Corps deployed in the region, underscoring the government’s active wartime oversight

By Asghar Ali Mubarak

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, flanked by top members of his cabinet and military leadership, visited Pasrur Cantonment in Sialkot to commend the Armed Forces for their decisive role in Operation Bunyanum Marsoos, a major engagement under what has now been framed by the state as Marqa-e-Haq.

Accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, and Information Minister Attaullah Tarar, the premier’s presence was described as a gesture of solidarity and gratitude to troops on the frontline. Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir and Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Zaher Ahmed Baber Sidhu were also present during the high-level visit, which was marked by solemn tributes and firm reaffirmations of Pakistan’s military preparedness.

The Prime Minister re-



ceived a detailed operational briefing on the battle’s conduct and the present state of readiness of the Corps stationed in the region. Lauding the professionalism and quick response by Pakistan’s Armed Forces, he stated, “The valiant Armed Forces of Pakistan, fortified by the unwavering resolve of the nation, defended the motherland in a heroic manner and dealt a decisive blow

to the adversary’s dastardly aggression.” He went on to assert that history would record this moment as one where Pakistan’s defenders extinguished India’s “unprovoked aggression” within hours, with “unmatched precision and resolve.”

The Prime Minister did not mince words when addressing the civilian toll of recent hostilities, condemning what he termed the “blatant

aggression” that resulted in the martyrdom of children, women, and the elderly. Labeling the Indian claims of targeting militants as “utterly shameful,” he accused New Delhi of violating international norms and refusing independent investigations. “They had nothing to prove. Fueled by arrogance and false pretext, they launched an offensive for which they have now received a befitting response — Alhamdulillah,” he added.

Shehbaz Sharif also paid tribute to the martyrs of the operation, saying they remain the eternal pride of the nation and that Pakistan would never forget their sacrifice.

The visit concluded with a ceremonial reception, where the Prime Minister was warmly received by the Chief of Army Staff and Corps Commander Gujranwala, reflecting the close coordination between civilian and military leadership during one of the most tense episodes in recent regional history.

Part of MNA's house damaged in Bajaur’s explosion

By our correspondent

BAJAUR: An explosion near the home of Member of National Assembly Mubarak Zeb in Bajaur has caused significant damage, authorities confirmed, though fortunately no one was injured. According to District Police Officer Waqas Rafiq, the blast was triggered by a remote-controlled bomb planted near the boundary wall of the lawmaker’s residence. Mubarak Zeb was not present at the time of the attack.

The explosion shattered the gate of the property, raising concerns about security in the region. Police have launched an investigation to identify those responsible, as the incident underscores ongoing challenges of violence and intimidation faced by public figures in the area.

In a statement following the attack, Mubarak Zeb expressed relief that no lives were lost but condemned the act as cowardly. He vowed that such violence would not deter him from his political mission or weaken his resolve. Highlighting a personal connection, he reaffirmed his commitment to carrying forward the vision of his martyred brother, signaling that despite threats, his dedication to public service remains unshaken.

Pakistan eyes \$100bn from “Blue Economy”

Federal Minister Junaid Anwar stressed that fishing, tourism, and shipping could become major pillars of national income if nurtured through strategic planning and modern technological investment

By our correspondent

KARACHI: The Ministry of Maritime Affairs has launched a concerted effort to develop a comprehensive Blue Economy Policy, following directives from Federal Minister Junaid Anwar. The minister underscored the urgent need for reforms within Pakistan’s maritime sector, highlighting its vast untapped potential to generate up to \$100 billion annually. Speaking about the initiative, Junaid Anwar stressed that the policy would be shaped through extensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders. He emphasized that sectors such as fishing, tourism, and shipping hold significant promise for boosting national income, provided they are developed with strategic planning and modern technology.

Anwar drew attention to the global blue economy’s expansive reach, now valued at around \$1.5 trillion, a figure that reflects the increasing importance of sustainable maritime industries



worldwide. He acknowledged that Pakistan currently faces major challenges, particularly the lack of modern infrastructure and technology within its maritime activities, which hinders the sector’s growth potential.

The minister also highlighted emerging opportunities in the shipping recycling industry and the establishment of green ports—initiatives that could not only enhance economic returns but also promote environmental sustainability. These areas, he noted, offer promising avenues for job creation, investment, and technological advancement.

This move signals Pak-

istan’s intent to align its maritime policies with global trends, leveraging the blue economy to support broader economic development goals. As the government works towards finalizing the policy, stakeholders across public and private sectors will be closely involved to ensure a balanced approach that maximizes economic benefits while safeguarding marine ecosystems.

The Blue Economy Policy, once implemented, is expected to position Pakistan as a competitive player in regional and global maritime markets, opening doors to new revenue streams and sustainable growth for coastal communities.

Kamal directs immediate increase in local vaccine production

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Mustafa Kamal, federal minister for health, has called for immediate measures to boost local vaccine production. He stressed the importance of national self-reliance in this critical sector, aiming not only to meet domestic needs but also to enable exports. Kamal further emphasized that water and sanitation must be integral to the national strategy for disease prevention and control.

During his visit to the National Institute of Health (NIH) in Islamabad, Mustafa Kamal highlighted the strong connection between polluted water and the high incidence of diseases in Pakistan. He remarked, “Most diseases in Pakistan are caused by contaminated water. Until we solve the issue of



water pollution, the dream of a healthy Pakistan cannot be realized.” He pointed out that the shortage of clean drinking water remains a serious challenge, forcing many to rely on unsafe and contaminated sources that contribute to widespread illnesses.

Kamal urged that efforts must focus on protecting the public from diseases and increasing awareness among the population. He called for the development of a comprehensive national policy involving all relevant stakeholders to tackle these pressing issues.

During his visit, he inspected various vaccine production facilities at NIH, including advanced laboratories such as the Public Health Lab, the Polio Regional Reference Laboratory, and the Water and Food Testing Lab. He also toured the Sera Action Vaccine Production Center, where he received detailed briefings on the vaccine production process, current capacity, and possibilities for expansion. Additionally, at the National Health Data Center, CEO Dr Muhammad Salman provided him with an extensive overview of ongoing initiatives.

China lifts Boeing import ban after thaw in US trade ties

Beijing ordered state-owned airlines to suspend Boeing imports and steer clear of American aviation equipment and parts, deepening a rift in the intensifying US-China trade standoff

News Desk

BEIJING: In a significant development reflecting an easing of tensions between two of the world’s largest economies, China has lifted its ban on the import of Boeing aircraft from the United States, following a trade agreement recently concluded between Beijing and Washington.

According to Bloomberg, Chinese regulators have informed domestic airlines that they are now permitted to resume purchases of Boeing jets manufactured in the US. The decision marks a reversal of a years-long freeze on Boeing orders, which began during the height of the US-China trade war.

The trade war, initiated under the administration of former US President Donald Trump, saw the imposition of sweeping tariffs — including a 145% duty on Chinese goods entering American markets. In retaliation, Beijing ordered its state-owned carriers to halt the import of Boeing aircraft and avoid procurement of American-made aviation equipment and spare parts.



The move significantly curtailed Boeing’s access to one of its largest markets, at a time when the company was also grappling with safety concerns and the global fallout from the grounding of its 737 MAX aircraft.

Last month, Boeing’s delivery center in China reportedly returned at least three aircraft to the United States, signaling continuing complications in the trade relationship. But today’s news suggests that relations between the two economic giants may be entering a more cooperative phase — at least in the aerospace sector.

The lifting of the ban is expected to bring much-needed relief to Boeing, which has faced mounting financial pressures and in-

creasing competition from its European rival, Airbus. For China, resuming aircraft imports may help meet its growing demand for new planes amid the post-pandemic travel rebound and expansion of its domestic aviation network.

Though neither country has publicly confirmed the precise terms of the agreement, industry insiders see this shift as a strategic gesture of goodwill and a potential harbinger of further collaboration in other high-stakes sectors. Still, analysts warn that while this move is a positive sign, broader tensions between the US and China — including disputes over technology, national security, and geopolitical influence — remain far from resolved.

Measles cases surge in Khairpur

By Imtiaz Hussain

SUKKUR: Khairpur is witnessing a concerning surge in measles cases, with 97 children hospitalized in just four months at the Paediatrics Unit of the Khairpur Medical College City Hospital. Tragically, two deaths have been reported among the affected children, prompting growing alarm among health professionals and the local community.

The increase in measles cases has put a severe strain on the Paediatrics Unit of the Tertiary Care Hospital. Due to a lack of available beds, heated exchanges between doctors and parents have become a routine occurrence. These tensions sometimes disrupt emergency services and outpatient departments (OPDs), further complicating the situation.

“The situation is dire. We are facing overcrowding, and the parents’ frustration is understandable, but it is affecting the smooth functioning of emergency services,” said a doctor from the Paediatrics Unit. Health professionals are increasingly concerned that the rising number of measles cases is indicative of a failure in vaccination efforts.

Global finance magazine dubs Pakistan’s economy a ‘miracle’

News Desk

WASHINGTON: A leading global financial magazine has described Pakistan’s recent economic turnaround as nothing short of a ‘miracle,’ urging investors not to overlook the country’s potential. Barron, a respected publication affiliated with the Wall Street Journal, highlighted Pakistan’s dramatic recovery despite ongoing challenges, warning that ignoring the nation now could be a costly mistake.

The report pointed to the remarkable rise in the Karachi Stock Exchange index, which has tripled in value, reflecting renewed confidence in Pakistan’s markets.

This surge comes at a time when Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and his military allies are presented with both strong economic incentives and political momentum to continue stabilising the country. Inflation, which had soared to nearly 40 percent annually, has been brought down to nearly zero, signalling a significant achievement in macroeconomic management.

One striking indicator of



this improved outlook is the price of Pakistan’s Euro bonds maturing in 2031, which has doubled, rising from 40 cents to 80 cents on the dollar. This shift reflects a reassessment of Pakistan’s credit risk by international investors, with firms like Sandglass Capital Management, known for buying bonds in emerging markets with fragile debt profiles, now viewing the country as a less risky proposition.

Economist Salimi credited Shahbaz Sharif and his administration for laying the groundwork for this stabilisation, which followed a near-bankruptcy crisis in 2022-2023. The country’s balance of payments has shifted to positive territory, marking a critical turnaround in Pakistan’s external economic

position. Jina Lozowski, head of investments at Sandglass Capital Management, called Pakistan a “good story,” underlining the renewed investor interest. Alison Graham, Chief Investment Officer at Walton Capital Management, noted how the central bank’s aggressive interest rate hikes—from 10 percent to 22 percent—had induced a recession but ultimately succeeded in taming runaway inflation.

As Pakistan moves forward, the nation stands at a crossroads, balancing newfound economic gains with the difficult path of reform. The global spotlight remains keenly focused, waiting to see whether this ‘miracle’ can be transformed into enduring prosperity.

SHC disposes of petitions regarding missing persons

News Desk

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court has disposed of multiple petitions concerning the return and recovery of missing persons, following developments in the respective cases.

According to a report submitted by the investigating officer, Mohammad

Naveed, who had gone missing from the Saudabad area, and Ahmed Shameem, missing from the Awami Colony area of Karachi, have both safely returned to their homes.

With their return confirmed, the court formally closed the cases.

During the proceedings, the court also re-

ferred other ongoing cases involving alleged forced disappearances to the Missing Persons Commission for further inquiry. The Commission, established to deal with such sensitive cases, continues to oversee the broader issue of enforced disappearances across the country.

However, in a separate

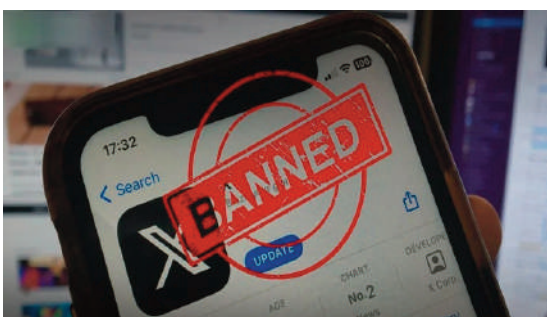
matter involving a 23-year-old woman who had reportedly gone missing from North Nazimabad, the court rejected the petition for her recovery. The court clarified that the case did not meet the legal criteria of a “missing persons” case, as there were no claims of abduction or forced disappearance.

India blocks Turkish, Chinese state media accounts on ‘X’

News Desk

NEW DEHLI: In a continued display of headline censorship and retaliatory diplomacy, India’s Modi-led government has escalated its suppression of foreign media voices by blocking the social media accounts of prominent Turkish and Chinese state-run outlets. The crackdown, carried out on X (formerly Twitter), has targeted the Turkish Broadcasting Corporation TRT World, China’s Global Times, and Xinhua News Agency — accusing them of spreading misinformation that allegedly threatens India’s national integrity.

The Indian Ministries of Information and External Affairs issued a joint statement justifying the move. They claimed that these media



platforms were engaged in what they described as “propaganda dissemination,” particularly on sensitive topics involving India’s security, military affairs, and territorial matters. The statement further alleged that the foreign outlets were attempting to manipulate Indian public opinion through “unverified and deceptive content.”

According to reports in In-

dian media, the clampdown coincides with a growing wave of public sentiment against Turkey, which includes boycotts of Turkish goods and a visible decline in its popularity as a travel destination.

These developments are widely interpreted as a direct consequence of Turkey’s vocal support for Pakistan in recent regional matters.

By Ahsan Mughal

KARACHI: The Sindh Environment Department has launched an intensified crackdown on smoke-emitting vehicles across the province, with a particular focus on Karachi, as part of a new zero-tolerance policy aimed at curbing air pollution. The campaign, initiated on 5 May under the direct orders of Agha Shah Nawaz, Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Coastal Devel-

opment, has already inspected 133 vehicles in just a few weeks.

Of those inspected, 94 vehicles were found compliant with environmental regulations and were awarded green stickers, signalling their adherence to pollution control standards. Meanwhile, 39 vehicles emitting excessive smoke were immediately fined and issued red stickers, serving as a clear warning to their owners. Those drivers have been given a 15-day dead-

line to address the pollution issues, after which their vehicles face being barred from the roads.

Agha Shah Nawaz was clear about the intent behind the campaign, stressing that the drive goes beyond merely issuing fines. “This is not just a challan drive — it’s a step towards protecting the lungs of our children and the elderly,” he said, underscoring the health stakes involved. “Any vehicle failing to meet the environmental standards

won’t be on the road, it’ll be in the workshop.”

The visible stickers serve both as a mark of compliance and a reminder of the consequences of pollution, making it easier for authorities and the public to identify vehicles contributing to Karachi’s air quality challenges. The initiative will continue throughout Karachi until 29 May, with officials instructed to maintain rigorous checks and apply the regulations without exception.