

# China warns India against restricting Pakistan’s water supply

Victor Gao warned that as the upper riparian state, China views India’s unilateral moves to restrict river flows downstream to Pakistan as unacceptable and likely to provoke a firm response

News Desk

BEIJING: China’s senior analyst Victor Gao has issued a stern warning to India, making it clear that any attempt to restrict Pakistan’s water supply will be regarded by Beijing as a direct affront to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its close ally. In a recent interview with Indian media, Gao articulated China’s unwavering support for Pakistan’s rights over its natural resources, emphasizing the importance of respecting sovereignty in managing shared river systems.

Gao pointed to China’s position as the upper riparian state on the shared rivers, noting that while India lies in the middle stretch, any unilateral moves by New Delhi to curb the flow of water to



downstream countries such as Pakistan will not go unanswered. “India should consider carefully what actions it takes towards those downstream, because the upper riparian country will respond accordingly,” he warned, invoking a principle of reciprocity that India should treat others as it would wish to be treated.

Beyond the immediate geopolitical implications, Gao underscored the legal

gravity of the situation, stating that any breach of the Indus Waters Treaty—an internationally recognized agreement governing water sharing between India and Pakistan—would constitute a violation of international law. This marks a clear message that China views the treaty not just as a bilateral accord but as a cornerstone of regional stability and legal order.

The statement high-

lights China’s strategic posture in South Asia, where it has sought to bolster Pakistan’s position amid a long-running and often contentious water dispute with India. By reaffirming its commitment to defending Pakistan’s interests, China is signaling its readiness to play a more assertive role in regional affairs, particularly where natural resources and sovereignty are at stake.

In a region where water security is closely tied to political stability and national survival, Gao’s comments serve as a reminder of the complex dynamics at play. They reflect broader geopolitical tensions and the balancing act that all parties must navigate to avoid escalating conflicts that could have far-reaching consequences beyond bilateral disputes.

## Saudi Arabia slams Israel’s ban on Arab FM’s in Ramallah

News Desk

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia’s foreign minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan, has strongly condemned Israel’s recent decision to bar Arab foreign ministers from visiting Ramallah in the occupied West Bank, describing it as a blatant display of Israeli extremism.

The move, he said, represents a deliberate obstacle to peace efforts and undermines diplomatic initiatives aimed at fostering stability across the region.

Prince Faisal criticized the refusal as an affront to the principles of dialogue and cooperation, emphasizing that preventing Arab ministers from entering Ramallah only deepens divisions and fuels mistrust. Speaking in re-



sponse to the incident, he vowed that Saudi Arabia’s commitment to intensifying its diplomatic engagement against what he termed Israeli arrogance would only grow stronger.

The delegation, which included foreign ministers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, had planned to visit Ramallah to discuss pressing regional issues.

However, the Israeli government declined to grant them access, sparking widespread criticism and adding to already heightened tensions in the Middle East.

This latest development underscores the fragile nature of relations in the region, where political disagreements and historic grievances continue to obstruct efforts toward reconciliation and peace.

The refusal has been viewed by many as a setback for diplomatic dialogue, raising concerns about the future of regional cooperation and the prospects for resolving long-standing conflicts.

As the situation unfolds, Saudi Arabia and its partners appear determined to push forward with diplomatic initiatives despite the challenges, signaling that such incidents will only strengthen their resolve to seek meaningful engagement and counter actions they see as provocative or counterproductive to peace.

# Gen Chohan’s plane crash disclosures draw sharp criticism

Watts’ comments come amid rising unease over what he describes as a troubling and persistent lack of transparency within India’s military ranks

News Desk

NEW DEHLI: Indian defence analyst Rashbh Watts has delivered a sharp rebuke to Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chohan following the latter’s recent public admission of multiple aircraft crashes within the Indian Air Force.

Watts criticized the decision to send General Chohan to international forums, where he was tasked with addressing sensitive questions about technical failures, only for the general to openly confirm the occurrence of plane crashes without providing any clear or detailed explanation.

Watts’ comments come amid growing unease over what he describes as a troubling lack of transparency within India’s military ranks. While General Chohan remains visible on the national stage, delivering speeches and engaging with officials across the country, the precise scale of the air force’s losses remains shrouded in uncertainty.

Despite admitting to multiple aircraft accidents, the general has stopped short of revealing the exact



number of planes lost, leaving analysts, the media, and the public in the dark about the true state of the air force’s operational readiness. This episode has cast a spotlight on the broader issue of military transparency in India, a topic that has increasingly drawn scrutiny in recent months.

Observers argue that in a region marked by complex security challenges, the armed forces must strike a careful balance between protecting national security secrets and maintaining public confidence through openness. The reluctance to disclose concrete figures has only fueled speculation, raising fresh concerns about safety standards, maintenance

practices, and the capacity of the air force to meet evolving threats.

Watts’ critique highlights a deeper tension within India’s defence establishment, where demands for accountability collide with traditional imperatives of secrecy. As public questions grow louder, there is mounting pressure on the military leadership to provide greater clarity and reassurance.

The unfolding debate not only reflects concerns over operational challenges but also underscores the importance of trust between the armed forces and the citizens they serve, at a time when the nation’s security environment remains volatile and uncertain.

# Four TTP terrorists killed in police shootout in DG Khan

News Desk

TAUNSA: A major counter-terrorism operation took place in the Taunsa area of Dera Ghazi Khan, resulting in the deaths of four terrorists linked to the banned Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

The confrontation, described by local authorities as intense and violent, erupted during a targeted police raid aimed at dismantling a significant militant threat in the region.

District Police Officer Syed Ali confirmed that the clash began when law enforcement officials attempted to apprehend the group. The terrorists, heavily armed with hand grenades and rocket launchers, resisted fiercely, leading to an exchange of gunfire that ended with four militants being shot dead.



However, several others managed to escape amid the chaos, prompting an extensive search operation in nearby areas to track down the fugitives.

The authorities’ swift and coordinated response has been widely praised, with many viewing the operation as a substantial setback for the TTP’s foothold in southern Punjab. The discovery of such sophisticated weaponry points to

the group’s intent to carry out major attacks or disrupt stability in the region, highlighting the ongoing security challenges faced by law enforcement.

Security experts interpret this encounter as part of Pakistan’s broader campaign to combat extremist groups, particularly in the wake of a noticeable resurgence in militant activity along the country’s border areas.

## Former army officer urges resignation of India’s CDS

News Desk

NEW DEHLI: Former Indian army officer and defence analyst Praveen Sawhney has called for the resignation of India’s Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chohan, after the general admitted that Indian fighter jets were lost to the Pakistani Air Force during recent aerial clashes.

Sawhney criticized the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying the Indian Air Force has been in decline since Modi took office in 2014. He argued that India needs leadership that truly understands modern warfare, and



described claims of success in operations such as ‘Sundar’ as inconsistent with the reality of lost aircraft.

The controversy erupted after General Chohan confirmed that Indian jets were downed in clashes on the nights of 6 and 7 May, an admission that sparked political uproar across India.

Discussions are planned with the Secretary-General of the UN, the President of the General Assembly, and members of the Security Council. These meetings are central to Pakistan’s strategy to highlight what it describes as India’s provocations and

Sawhney accused Chohan of lacking a strategic understanding of war and warned that in any conflict with Pakistan, air superiority would be decisive.

He lamented that the Indian Air Force appears to have lost direction under Modi’s administration, a decline that began with former Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha and continued under his successors.

## Explosion in Kohat village kills two

News Desk

KOHAT: An explosion ripped through a house in the village of Zod Akhor in Kohat, tragically killing two people instantly. According to police sources, preliminary investigations indicate that the blast was likely caused by explosive material, although the exact nature and origin of the device are yet to be confirmed.

In response to the incident, the bomb disposal squad has been deployed to the scene, meticulously examining the site in an effort to determine the precise cause of the explosion and to ensure the area is safe.

# Pakistan delegation in New York to present case against India

The delegation is set to remain in New York until 2 June to engage global leaders and organizations in a crucial effort to rally support amid aggression against India

News Desk

NEW YORK: A high-profile Pakistani delegation has arrived in New York with a clear mission: to present Pakistan’s case against India’s alleged aggressive actions in the region. Leading the delegation is Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Pakistan’s Foreign Minister and a prominent political figure, whose presence underscores the importance Islamabad places on this diplomatic effort.

The team is expected to stay in New York until 2 June, using the city’s international spotlight to engage with key global leaders and organizations in a bid to rally support amid rising tensions with its neighbor. Throughout their visit, the delegation has a packed schedule that includes meetings with some of the most influential figures at the United Nations.

Discussions are planned with the Secretary-General of the UN, the President of the General Assembly, and members of the Security Council. These meetings are central to Pakistan’s strategy to highlight what it describes as India’s provocations and



to urge the international community to take a more active role in addressing the escalating conflict in South Asia.

By briefing these key players, Pakistan hopes to shape the global narrative around the dispute and press for diplomatic pressure on India. Beyond the UN corridors, the delegation will also engage with representatives from the Non-Aligned Movement and hold a briefing for the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

These interactions are designed to bolster Pakistan’s alliances with countries that share concerns about regional stability and to seek broader political backing on the international stage. After concluding its New York engage-

ments, the delegation will travel to Washington on 3 June, where meetings with US government officials and influential policy think tanks are scheduled until 6 June.

The next phase of the trip reflects Islamabad’s recognition of the United States as a critical actor in South Asia’s security dynamics.

By engaging with American policymakers, Pakistan aims to further its diplomatic efforts and advocate for a balanced approach to the region’s tensions. This diplomatic mission comes at a time of heightened strain between Pakistan and India, with both countries locked in a prolonged standoff that has drawn international concern.

# Pakistan launches crypto council to shape regulations

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Bilal Bin Saqib, Pakistan’s special assistant on blockchain and crypto, has announced the formation of a dedicated crypto council tasked with developing regulatory frameworks for digital currencies. He underlined the importance of thoughtful regulation, describing it as both an opportunity and a necessity.

“Pakistan has finally set up a crypto council which is now actively assessing the future direction of crypto regulations,” Bin Saqib said. “It’s a new technology, and people don’t fully understand it yet — but the world is moving forward, and we can’t afford to stay behind.” Addressing global concerns over illegal activities linked to digital currencies, he pointed out that only 0.024 percent of crypto transactions are tied to illicit activity, com-



pared with 2 to 4 percent of global cash usage.

Bilal Saqib noted that crypto’s role in money laundering is far less significant than that of physical currency. He highlighted a major divide between Pakistan’s decision-makers and its tech-savvy youth, arguing that this gap must be bridged if the country is to unlock the economic potential of blockchain technology.

“Countries adopting crypto are seeing economic benefits — they’re not doing it blindly,” he added. “Their economies are in a better state than ours.” He warned that refusing to regulate crypto carries greater risks than embracing it, suggesting that a strong regulatory framework could pave the way for AI data centers and increased tech investment.

# Russia approves Afghan ambassador under Taliban rule

News Desk

MOSCOW: Russia has officially approved the nomination of an Afghan ambassador to serve in Moscow, marking a notable step in diplomatic relations between the two countries under the Taliban-led administration. This development, confirmed by Afghanistan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, came following a meeting in Kabul between the Russian Ambassador and Afghanistan’s Acting Foreign Minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi.

During the meeting, the Russian envoy presented a formal note signifying Moscow’s acceptance of the proposed Afghan envoy.

This move represents a rare gesture of diplomatic



recognition for the Taliban government, which continues to face widespread international reluctance and lack of formal recognition since its return to power.

The approval of an ambassadorial nomination from Afghanistan reflects Russia’s intention to deepen its engagement with the country, focusing on areas such as regional security and economic co-

operation. Analysts view this as part of a broader geopolitical strategy by Moscow to strengthen ties with Kabul, particularly given Afghanistan’s strategic position and the complex security challenges in the region.

While many countries remain cautious in their dealings with the Taliban government, Russia’s decision to formalize diplo-

matic channels signals a shift towards pragmatic engagement.

It also highlights the realities on the ground, where the Taliban’s control requires major powers to interact with its administration to address cross-border concerns and economic opportunities.

This diplomatic move comes amid growing interest from regional actors to play a more active role in Afghanistan’s future, balancing concerns over stability and security with economic interests.

As Russia moves to solidify its relationship with Kabul, the international community continues to watch closely, weighing the implications of such recognition on the broader geopolitical landscape.



# Polio case sequencing in GB linked to Karachi virus

As continuously mentioning, the performance of the EOC Sindh has always been questionable, as it appears to prioritize self-promotion over the national agenda

By our correspondent

DIAMER, GILGIT-BALTISTAN: A recent laboratory analysis has confirmed a case of wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) in District Diamer, Gilgit-Baltistan. Genetic sequencing identified the virus as belonging to Cluster YB3A4A, showing a 99.45 percent genetic match to a poliovirus isolated from an environmental sample collected on 9 December 2024 in Karachi Central, Liaquatabad.

After a seven-year hiatus, Gilgit-Baltistan has reported its first case of polio, with health authorities confirming the presence of the virus in a two-year-old child from the remote village of Gabar in



Tangir district. The confirmation has prompted the regional health department to launch emergency response measures aimed at preventing further spread of the disease.

The virus type is wild poliovirus type 1, clustered as YB3A4A, with a close genetic match to the Karachi Central Liaquatabad strain. The epidemiological implications are significant, indicat-

ing ongoing virus transmission in Karachi and the risk of reintroducing poliovirus into previously polio-free districts in Gilgit-Baltistan. Diamer is considered a high-risk district due to pockets of low routine immunization coverage combined with frequent human mobility.

As continuously mentioning, the performance of the EOC Sindh has always been questionable, as it appears to prioritize self-promotion over the national agenda. However, this cannot be challenged openly because, according to sources, the incumbent EOC Sindh Coordinator has strong political affiliations. It is pertinent to mention that before he assumed office, Sindh was on

the verge of being declared polio-free due to the effective leadership of the former EOC Sindh Coordinator, Fayaz Hussain Abbasi.

Supplementary immunization activities should be swiftly launched, targeting not only Diamer but also high-risk pockets in adjoining districts. Special attention must be paid to mobile, nomadic, and transit populations along the Chilas-Babusar and Chilas-Mansehra routes. Vaccination efforts must be strengthened at key transit points such as Babusar Top, Thor Nullah, Gonar Farm, and the Chilas bus stand, with transit vaccination teams working to immunize travelers.

## MQM-P slams Sindh govt over crumbling Karachi roads

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Lawmakers from the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) in the Sindh Assembly have issued a scathing rebuke of the provincial government over the alarming deterioration of Karachi's infrastructure, particularly its roads, which they say have become a dangerous web of potholes, encroachments, and mismanagement.

In an official statement, MQM-P legislators denounced what they described as "seventeen years of systematic neglect," accusing the Sindh government of treating Karachi worse than a stepchild. "The ruling party seems more focused on preserving its political power than on safeguarding the lives and livelihoods of Karachi's citizens," the lawmakers declared.

They pointed to the daily hazards faced by commuters as damaged streets and thoroughfares become increasingly unfit for travel. "The city's roads are in shambles, leading to accidents that inflict daily physical and financial trauma on ordinary people," the statement read. It also highlighted that sidewalks and service roads are overrun with encroachments, leaving pedestrians with no safe passage — a crisis to which both the provincial and municipal governments remain "utterly indifferent."

The MQM-P also reminded the government of Karachi's central role in sustaining Sindh's economy, noting that the metropolis contributes nearly 97 percent of the province's total expenditures.

## Russia targets Ukrainian military center, killing 12

News Desk

MOSCOW: Russia launched a missile attack on a military training center in Ukraine, killing 12 Ukrainian soldiers and injuring more than 60, according to Ukrainian military sources. The strike represents a significant escalation in the conflict between the two nations, highlighting the ongoing brutality and deepening hostility that have marked this prolonged fight.

The military training center, targeted in what appears to be a calculated effort to weaken Ukraine's defence capabilities. In a swift and forceful response, Ukraine claimed to have conducted drone strikes targeting over 40 Russian military aircraft. Ukrainian officials described these attacks as a strategic move to degrade Russian air power, which remains a critical factor in the fierce fighting across multiple fronts.

The international community watches closely, wary of the conflict's potential to spill



over and destabilize the wider region. The United States, the European Union, and Kyiv bear heavy responsibility for fanning the flames of war. Their relentless support for Ukraine's military campaign has turned what might have been a contained conflict into a broader proxy war, dragging countless innocent people deeper into suffering.

Russian authorities, meanwhile, reported that Ukrainian drones attempted an assault near a Russian airbase in Siberia but that the attack was successfully repelled. This claim, whether

accurate or part of the ongoing information warfare, illustrates the expanding reach of the conflict and the willingness of both sides to strike deep into enemy territory, increasing the risk of further escalation.

These recent incidents reflect the intensifying nature of the war, where advances in technology and military strategy are matched by rising casualties and destruction. As the conflict escalates, concerns mount not only about the immediate military outcomes but also about the broader humanitarian consequences.

## Karachi mayor under pressure as allies grow restless

By Aziz Khatri

KARACHI: Political allies of Karachi's mayor are growing increasingly frustrated over a two-year delay in forming departmental committees, accusing him of making decisions unilaterally and sidelining partners from municipal governance.

This widening rift has pushed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) forward bloc to call a crucial meeting to reconsider their future collaboration with the mayor.

Sources say opposition parties and disillusioned allies have found common cause over the stalled council committees. As the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) approaches the completion of its current term on 19 June, multiple parties are openly airing grievances about promises left unfulfilled.

Leaders from the PML-N claim they were assured control over four key committees, with similar commitments made to other groups.

"Najmi Alam and the mayor deceived us," one representative said, adding that currently only Karamullah Waqasi and Aslam Sammo hold sway over the administration. They argue there is no effective oversight to prevent corruption within departments and are demanding immediate implementation of promised power-sharing arrangements.

## Impostor, fugitive nabbed in khairpur operation

By Imtiaz Hussain

SUKKUR: Police in Sindh's Khairpur district have arrested two men for impersonating Pakistan Army officers and extorting money from truck drivers, while in a separate operation, a notorious criminal linked to over 30 serious offences was captured following a chase and exchange of fire.

Initial investigations revealed that the suspects had

been posing as military personnel to blackmail and intimidate citizens. Police recovered two pistols, cash, a vehicle, and fake army insignia from the scene.

Authorities have registered three First Information Reports (FIRs) under multiple sections of the Pakistan Penal Code, including those related to impersonation of public servants, fraud, extortion, and illegal possession of weapons.

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## NICVD faces mounting corruption allegations amid legal battles

By our correspondent

KARACHI: The National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD), one of Pakistan's foremost cardiac care institutions, is currently facing a series of serious legal and administrative challenges that have raised concerns about its governance and management. Between 2019 and 2023, a total of 45 court cases were

ings in legal strategy and representation.

The challenges have continued into 2025, with four new cases filed against NICVD so far this year alone. In response, the administration engaged a politically connected law firm at the considerable cost of Rs6.1 million. However, this arrangement was short-lived. A board meeting held in September 2024 resolved



to terminate the contract with this firm and to initiate a formal process for appointing new legal counsel through established board procedures.

At present, NICVD is operating without active legal representation, pending the outcome of forthcoming board meetings that will determine the selection of new legal advisors. This gap in legal support comes at a critical juncture, raising questions about the institute's capacity to manage ongoing and future litigation effectively.

## METRO MATTERS

### MQM-P meets at Bahadurabad to tackle Urban Sindh issues

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Under the leadership of Chairman Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) convened a high-level meeting at its Bahadurabad centre on Sunday. The meeting was attended by central committee members, rights-focused senators, and members of the National and Provincial Assemblies.

Dr Siddiqui engaged in a detailed discussion on development packages for urban Sindh, promising a development fund of Rs 25 billion for Karachi and Rs 10 billion for Hyderabad in the coming fiscal year. He also emphasised the need for prioritising solutions to pressing public issues.

Chairman Siddiqui instructed all rights-focused public representatives to ensure their presence at the Bahadurabad centre according to the central committee's duty roster and actively work to resolve citizens' problems.

Senior central leader Dr Farooq Sattar urged MQM-P representatives in the national and provincial assemblies to focus on their public responsibilities, particularly during the Eid-ul-Adha period, and to contribute constructively by submitting proposals in line with the federal shadow budget.

Other senior leaders present included Anees Ahmed Qaimkhani, Syed Ameenul Haq, Kahf Alwari, COC in-charge Furqan Atib, and other committee members.

This meeting reflects MQM-P's continued commitment to urban Sindh's development and its promise to address longstanding civic challenges through focused governance and resource allocation.

### Jamaat-e-Islami demands action on Karachi water crisis

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Ameer Monem Zafar blamed the prolonged water crisis in Karachi on government incompetency and a lack of long-term planning during a seminar held under the Rebuild Karachi initiative at a local hotel.

Zafar stressed that despite Karachi being the country's largest city and located on the coast, it continues to face severe water shortages. He noted that while political challenges faced by the Pakistan People's Party have somewhat eased, the city's basic problems remain unresolved.

He pointed out that Karachi's population exceeds 3.5 million but is deliberately underreported to deny the city its fair share of resources. The K4 water supply project, intended to meet the city's future needs, has languished in limbo for 22 years.

Zafar further condemned the unjust distribution of water in Karachi and the lack of political will to tackle these fundamental, long-standing issues.

The seminar, organised by the Pakistan Engineering Forum, featured contributions from Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Jawed Bilwani, water expert Dr. Shahid Saleem, Muhammad Bashir Lakhani, Dr. Imran Ahmed, former forum president Alkazim Mansoor, senior journalist Monas Ahmed, and others, who shared insights on the causes and potential solutions to Karachi's water woes.

### Cop shot dead near Rashid Minhas Road in Karachi

By Ahsan Mughal

KARACHI: A police officer was shot and killed in Karachi's Yousuf Plaza area on Rashid Minhas Road near Kashti Chowk after unidentified gunmen opened fire in broad daylight.

According to police, the victim, identified as Constable Sheheryar, came under attack by unknown assailants within the jurisdiction of Yousuf Plaza Police Station. He was critically wounded and later died from his injuries while receiving treatment at Jinnah Hospital.

While being rushed to hospital in a severely injured state, the officer reportedly disclosed his name and warned that his life was in danger. He also told emergency responders that he was posted at the Anti-Vehicle Lifting Cell in Sharifabad.

Law enforcement officials say investigations are ongoing from multiple angles, including personal enmity and targeted attacks related to his duties. The incident has once again raised concerns over the safety of police personnel in the city, particularly those serving in anti-crime units.

Authorities have yet to confirm any arrests or provide further details on the identity or motive of the attackers. The killing adds to a growing list of targeted violence against law enforcement in Karachi, where police continue to operate under high-risk conditions.

### PDP chief urges vision for modern Karachi

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Karachi is among the least developed megacities in the world and must urgently be transformed into a modern, efficient, and liveable urban centre, said Pasban Democratic Party (PDP) chairman Altaf Shakoor on Sunday. Speaking at a press conference, Shakoor stressed that the long-standing dream of a livable Karachi remains unfulfilled.

"We need Karachi to become a city that offers high quality of life, sustainability, and opportunity for its residents," he said. He highlighted the city's growing congestion and the spread of slums as key issues. "Karachiites deserve affordable and quality housing with diverse options for every income bracket. Neighborhoods must be well-maintained, and the city requires a robust public transportation network, with the Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) serving as its backbone."

Shakoor called for integrating well-connected systems of buses, bike lanes, and pedestrian routes to ease road congestion and reduce environmental pollution. Security and governance also came under scrutiny. The PDP chairman expressed concern over the delay in the city's Safe City Project and urged improvements in law enforcement, community policing, well-lit streets, and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.

Calling for meaningful government intervention, Shakoor demanded that both federal and provincial governments allocate substantial funds for Karachi in the upcoming budget. He stressed that modern megacities must be self-sustaining and efficiently managed, with universal access to essential services at affordable rates. "Circular railways connected with road networks are a hallmark of smart cities," he said. "Resource allocation must match population growth and migration trends. Effective urban management requires elected representatives operating within a transparent and accountable system."

### Contractor interference stalls KMC development projects

By Aziz Khatri

KARACHI: Development projects under the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) have come to a standstill amid mounting interference from a group of powerful contractors, putting billions of rupees allocated under the Annual Development Program (ADP) at risk. The impasse, which has triggered a blame game within the municipal machinery, threatens to derail Karachi's fragile infrastructure uplift at a critical juncture.

According to KMC sources, a faction of contractors is actively obstructing the tendering process. Allegations range from blackmailing officials to obtaining court-issued stay orders to block competitive bidding. Some contractors have even reportedly taken steps to cancel multi-billion-rupee tenders through the Sindh Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (SEPA), further muddying the process.

Insiders suggest the contractors' objective is not just to delay projects but to manipulate the process in their favor. "They're trying to force the hand of the administration to bypass open competition and secure contracts directly," said one official familiar with the developments.

The crisis has also led to an internal shake-up in the KMC's engineering department.

Director General Engineering Tariq Mughal, known for his long-standing service and integrity, has become a target of political scapegoating. Reports suggest that instead of supporting his office amid this external pressure, senior officials have eroded his authority. Sources say he is being blamed for delays despite the fact that his efforts have been continuously hindered by internal interference and external litigation.

Public frustration is growing, with citizens urging Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab to intervene and ensure that the billions earmarked for city development are not squandered. Many fear that without immediate and decisive leadership, these funds could lapse or be redirected, leaving the city's long-neglected neighborhoods without basic infrastructure improvements.



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# China’s intervention, India’s aggression

In a region already marked by history’s deep scars and fresh animosities, the latest escalation between India and Pakistan has pulled back the curtain on an old but overlooked dimension of conflict: water. While the airwaves and diplomatic corridors pulse with analyses of air skirmishes and defence doctrines, the real power struggle may well be happening beneath the surface—along the course of rivers that have long connected and sustained both nations. For decades, India has proudly presented itself as a military heavyweight, with the fourth-largest air force in the world. But the events of a recent four-day confrontation with Pakistan left this image deflated. What was once proclaimed with pride in public statements and TV studios now seems brittle when tested.

India’s military might, once a badge of honor, faltered under pressure, and the aftermath left not just strategic discomfort but a sense of narrative disintegration within its own media ecosystem. Indian television, long a cheerleader for jingoism and performative nationalism, has been conspicuously cautious since the encounter. The usual thunder of patriotic panels and primetime shouting matches has given way to uneasy silences. Some truths, it seems, are too raw to broadcast. But amid this quiet, a singular moment stood out—a television exchange where retired Indian General J.D. Bakshi found himself facing a blunt rebuke from Chinese analyst Victor Gao. Gao reminded viewers of the Brahmaputra River’s origins in Tibet and calmly warned that if India decided to tamper with Pakistan’s water supply or alters Indus River Treaty, China had its own levers. These weren’t words of bluster; they were a warning cloaked in cold logic.

That India is now being discussed not for its fighter jets or economic ambitions but for its potential to turn water into a weapon should set off alarm bells. On the surface, the flow of rivers may appear serene, but beneath lies the potential for both prosperity and destruction. India’s recent decision to block the flow of the Chenab River—at a moment when Pakistan desperately needed water for its Kharif crop season—was not just tactless. It was, to put it plainly, an act of ecological aggression. Over 54,000 cusecs of water were withheld on a single day, slashing downstream flows by more than half. And that wasn’t the only incident. Just days earlier, New Delhi curtailed 40 percent of the Neelum River’s flow via the Kishanganga Dam, causing further harm to Pakistan’s already fragile irrigation needs.

To understand the gravity of these actions, one must look to the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960—an agreement that has, against all odds, survived wars and political upheavals. It was lauded as a model of conflict resolution, proving that even hostile neighbors could find common ground when the stakes involved something as essential as water. But now, as India accelerates its dam-building spree and considers linking the Chenab to the Beas and Ravi systems, the spirit of the treaty is eroding. What once stood as a bulwark against water wars now appears outdated, vulnerable, and open to abuse. India’s strategy is not impulsive; it is calculated. By building dams upstream and controlling river flows, New Delhi is slowly constructing a hydro-political straitjacket for Pakistan.

The real danger is not only in withholding water—but also in the potential to suddenly release it. A surprise flood, timed with the monsoon or during a harvest season, could leave vast swathes of Pakistan submerged, its crops ruined, its economy crippled. In this light, India’s water projects begin to resemble tools of coercion, not development. Pakistan, in response, has little time for lament. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has rightfully raised the issue in international forums. But diplomacy, however well-intentioned, is not a dam. While speeches and summits have their place, what Pakistan needs is a parallel track of urgent, practical action. That begins with accelerating the construction of its own dams and water reservoirs, particularly on tributaries like the Jhelum and Chenab. Not doing so risks leaving the country perpetually vulnerable to India’s upstream manoeuvres.

Climate change only worsens this urgency. The region is already seeing more erratic rainfall patterns, glacial melt, and prolonged droughts. Water that once flowed predictably is now subject to the chaos of a changing climate. Yet, in Pakistan, vast volumes still drain unused into the sea each year—resources wasted while upstream diversions rob the country of its share. It is an irony that borders on tragedy.

There remains untapped potential in Pakistan’s upper regions—places where small and medium-sized dams could transform local agriculture and provide buffers against both floods and water scarcity. But this requires more than engineers and feasibility reports. It requires political courage, institutional coordination, and an unwavering focus on long-term resilience.

The complacency that has allowed India to gain a head start must now be replaced with a seriousness worthy of the threat.

At its heart, this is not just a story of rivers or treaties. It is a story of survival. The ability to feed people, to sustain life, to uphold sovereignty—all hinge on securing and managing water. If nations treat rivers as extensions of their arsenals, then they will eventually force a region into confrontation not because of ideology or religion, but because of thirst.

And thirst, unlike ideology, cannot be debated. It simply is. The international community, which has often championed climate diplomacy and cooperation, must not look away. What India is doing is not merely domestic water management—it is ecological brinkmanship with cross-border consequences. Pakistan must continue to raise the issue on global platforms, but the world, too, must speak with clarity. Denying water as a weapon of war should be as morally reprehensible as using chemical weapons or targeting civilians.

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

By Uzma Ehtasham



The drums of war no longer echo in the distance. They are at the doorstep of South Asia. This is not rhetorical flourish. It is a chilling reality underscored by the recent remarks of General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Pakistan’s Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, delivered at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. He did not cloak his message in diplomatic niceties. He offered a sober warning grounded in military precision and proximity to one of the world’s most volatile borders. The threat of war between India and Pakistan, he said, is not a thing of the past. It is growing—and with it, the risk of nuclear catastrophe.

His words echo with the clarity and weight of someone who does not have the luxury of abstraction. This is no policy paper from a distant capital. This is not a panel discussion filled with speculative security theory. General Mirza spoke from the eye of the storm. And yet, the global response has been conspicuous only in its silence. Perhaps because the world has grown used to the idea of perpetual tension in South Asia, forgetting that the cost of miscalculation here would be measured not in policy shifts but in lives—millions of them.

What makes General Mirza’s warning even more disturbing is the context in which

it was issued. In the most recent military standoff, both nuclear powers exercised restraint—but only barely. The mechanisms that kept the confrontation from spiraling were limited to a handful of tactical hotlines. There were no robust diplomatic backchannels. No shuttle diplomacy. No quiet efforts behind closed doors. Just cold silence between two nations armed to the teeth, separated by unresolved history and an increasingly unbridgeable ideological chasm.

This diplomatic vacuum is the most dangerous element of all. Without dialogue, the smallest spark—an incursion, an accident, a misread radar blip—can turn fatal. General Mirza made clear that in any future war, the entire territories of Pakistan and India could be drawn into conflict, not just the contested regions. This is not hyperbole. This is a military assessment. And if that still doesn’t jolt the international community into attention, perhaps nothing will.

The roots of the current escalation are tangled in both history and present-day provocations. Water, once seen as a common natural resource, has become weaponized. India’s move to block water flow into Pakistan, particularly the deliberate withholding of 54,200 cusecs from the Chenab River, sent shockwaves through the agricultural heartland of Punjab. It wasn’t just a violation of the Indus Waters Treaty. It was a calculated strike against livelihoods, timed precisely to hurt Pakistan’s Kharif crop season. A similar blockage on the Kishanganga Dam followed days earlier, re-

ducing the Neelum River’s flow. These are not accidents. These are part of a sustained strategy to turn ecological control into geopolitical leverage.

This goes beyond policy. This is about sovereignty, survival and the weaponization of nature itself. Water, as China’s defence analyst Victor Gao reminded Indian viewers during a rare moment of televised candor, can cut both ways. The Brahmaputra, he warned, also flows from Chinese territory—and if India escalates its hydro-aggression, it may find itself on the receiving end of similar retaliation.

But India seems undeterred. In fact, the narrative inside India continues to be one of unbroken triumph. This bubble, however, was pierced—if only briefly—by BJP leader Subramanian Swamy, who admitted publicly on social media that five Indian aircraft, including Rafales, were lost in the recent skirmish. This truth, buried under layers of chest-thumping nationalism and media complicity, offers a rare glimpse into the fragility behind the façade. The Indian media, long accused of parroting state propaganda, now finds itself boxed in by a story it cannot fully control.

In Pakistan, the response has been one of measured resolve. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has raised these issues on international platforms, and Army Chief General Asim Munir has doubled down on a clear message: peace is possible, but not at the cost of dignity or rights. His emphasis on a just solution to Kashmir and adherence to

the Indus Waters Treaty are not just diplomatic positions—they are demands rooted in the very foundations of regional stability.

But speeches alone will not dam rivers or defuse tensions. Pakistan must move beyond reaction.

It needs infrastructure. It needs to build dams—particularly in the upper Indus basin—to store and regulate its own water, and to prepare for the increasingly erratic climate patterns that make the region more vulnerable each year. The upper regions of the country hold vast potential for small and medium-sized reservoirs that could mitigate both floods and droughts. What is needed now is not just money or manpower—it is political courage, long-term vision, and unity of purpose.

Because if South Asia is indeed drifting toward another war, it will not be one defined only by fighter jets and ground troops. It will also be fought through the calculated release of floodwaters, through dams turned into weapons, and rivers diverted to punish rather than nourish. It will be a war waged on farms, in fields, and in the drying beds of once-thriving rivers. And for millions who depend on these waters, the consequences will be as devastating as any bomb or missile.

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By Atiq Raja



Few names in ancient history carry the weight of wisdom quite like King Solomon. The son of King David and ruler of ancient Israel, Solomon is remembered not only as a judge and a builder of temples, but as a philosopher king whose writings continue to echo across cultures and centuries. His words, preserved most notably in the Biblical books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, have shaped spiritual and moral teachings for generations. But perhaps more unexpectedly, his insights offer enduring guidance for those navigating the modern world of business, leadership and enterprise. It is tempting to see Solomon only as a religious figure, a relic of the past whose concerns might seem far removed from boardrooms and balance sheets.

But to read him with fresh eyes is to uncover a philosophy of leadership that speaks directly to today’s executives and entrepreneurs. At a time when industries are under pressure to grow faster, pivot quicker and respond to an ever-demanding marketplace, Solomon’s counsel feels almost countercultural. His wisdom is rooted not in

ambition or accumulation, but in understanding, timing and ethical clarity. What sets Solomon apart is the simplicity of his starting point. When offered the chance by God to ask for anything—riches, victory, or long life—he chose none of these. He asked instead for wisdom. This choice is more than a personal anecdote from antiquity; it is a quiet rejection of the transactional mindset that dominates much of today’s economic thinking.

In business terms, Solomon reminds us that success is not something to be seized hastily, but something to be cultivated thoughtfully. A wise entrepreneur, in this view, does not chase every opportunity, nor does she measure progress solely by revenue charts or quarterly performance. She invests in knowledge.

She seeks understanding before action. Solomon understood that the right decision, made at the right time, grounded in the right values, is far more valuable than a dozen clever tricks or shortcuts. In the Book of Proverbs, Solomon speaks again and again of diligence.

His warning is direct: “Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth.” He does not glorify endless toil or sleepless ambition, but he is clear that consistent, mindful effort is indispensable.

Success, in his world, is not won

overnight but built up through habits, discipline and responsibility. It is easy to romanticize the entrepreneur as a lone genius or visionary. Solomon offers a gentler, more grounded portrait: of someone who wakes up, shows up, and keeps going—even when results don’t come quickly. He also reminds us that leadership is not a solo act. “Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.” For all his legendary wisdom, Solomon did not believe in self-sufficiency. He valued conversation, counsel and the strength of collective insight. The lesson here is especially pressing in today’s executive circles, where leadership is often confused with certainty and control. Solomon tells us it is wiser to be teachable than to be always right.

To seek guidance, to admit limits, to welcome a challenge—these are not signs of weakness, but of maturity. What runs like a thread through all of Solomon’s teaching is an insistence on integrity. He has little patience for dishonesty. “The Lord detests dishonest scales,” he writes, “but accurate weights find favor with Him.” Ethical business, to him, is not just good policy—it is the only policy. In a world where reputations can collapse in a tweet and where consumers demand transparency, Solomon’s clarity is worth revisiting. Business that lasts must be business that is fair. Trust is not a marketing

asset—it is the foundation of everything. He also had a keen eye for timing. “To everything there is a season,” he wrote in Ecclesiastes, a line that has been quoted by statesmen and poets alike.

Solomon knew that markets rise and fall that even the best ideas must sometimes wait. He encourages patience, even when urgency feels more natural. In a start-up culture that idolises speed and disruption, his wisdom is a steady voice telling us to pace ourselves, to respect cycles, and to trust that not everything must happen all at once. Perhaps most astonishing of all is his ancient advice on diversification. “Invest in seven ventures, yes, in eight; you do not know what disaster may come.” It reads like a line from a modern investment seminar, and yet it is thousands of years old. Solomon understood risk, and more importantly, he understood how to spread it. He did not call for blind optimism, but for preparedness—the quiet kind of courage that keeps options open. And then there is humility. For all his power, Solomon often reflects with a sobering awareness of human limits.

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By Murtaza Chandio



In today’s rapidly evolving world, creativity is no longer a luxury or an optional trait — it is a necessity. The ability to think in original, effective and meaningful ways is what defines creativity. It involves not only imagining something new but also solving problems from different angles, presenting unique ideas and approaching situations with flexibility. In the context of education, creativity plays a vital role in shaping not only the intellectual capabilities of students but also their emotional and social well-being. Traditional learning, which often revolves around memorization and standard answers, no longer suffices in a world shaped by digital transformation, artificial intelligence and constant innovation. The careers of the future will demand individuals who can think creatively, adapt swiftly and offer novel solutions.

As global research continues to highlight, creativity ranks among the most crucial skills required in the 21st-century workforce. But more importantly, it is creativity that allows individuals to explore, question and shape the world around them — a trait more valuable than any predefined formula. Creativity also plays a fundamental role in the holistic development of children. When students engage in creative activities — whether writing a story, designing a science model or even

imagining an alternative ending to a historical event — they are not only learning academic content but also developing their confidence, self-expression and emotional intelligence. These experiences help children understand themselves better and build stronger connections with others. A child who feels free to express ideas without fear of being wrong becomes more open to learning and growth.

Modern educational theories such as constructivism emphasize the importance of active learning. According to this view, children learn best when they are involved in constructing knowledge rather than passively receiving it. When students create something new — a project, a model, a poem or an invention — they don’t just memorize facts; they internalize concepts and form meaningful connections. For instance, instead of simply reading about plant growth in a textbook, if a student plants a seed, observes it over time and records its development, that learning becomes deep, personal and lasting. Nurturing creativity in students, however, requires thoughtful strategies and an environment where imagination is not only accepted but encouraged. The classroom must become a space where students are free to ask questions, explore ideas and make mistakes without the fear of judgement.

It is in this kind of open and positive atmosphere that creativity flourishes. Teachers and parents both play a critical role in building this environment — one where every idea is welcomed, every question val-

ued and every attempt celebrated. Creative thinking should be seamlessly woven into daily learning. When students are given open-ended tasks — assignments with no single right answer — they are encouraged to think beyond conventional boundaries. For example, if they are asked to imagine how they would redesign their school or write about a world where animals could speak, they begin to engage with ideas that stimulate original thinking. These tasks not only improve academic skills like writing or reasoning but also nurture imagination and curiosity. Practical learning through projects and hands-on experiences also contributes significantly to developing creative skills.

Whether it’s designing a solar-powered home in a science class, dramatizing a historical event in a literature session, or creating a piece of art that represents a mathematical concept, such interdisciplinary approaches engage different areas of the brain and connect subjects in meaningful ways. Students begin to see learning not as isolated bits of knowledge but as a web of ideas they can interact with, reshape and make their own.

Moreover, asking “what if” questions can open the mind to new possibilities. Questions like “What if gravity didn’t exist?” or “What would happen if time stopped for one day?” offer students opportunities to imagine, reflect and analyze. These thought exercises may seem playful, but they train the brain to move beyond rigid thinking patterns, fostering innovation and insight. Another powerful tool for inspiring creativity is story-

telling — particularly stories of real-life role models.

When students learn about thinkers, scientists, artists and social reformers like Al-lama Iqbal, Abdul Sattar Edhi or Isaac Newton, they discover how creative minds shaped history. Their lives demonstrate that success often stems not from following the crowd, but from thinking differently and daring to act on new ideas. Discussing such role models helps children believe in their own creative potential and see their dreams as achievable. Ultimately, creativity in education is not just about art, drama or innovation — it is about enabling students to engage deeply with knowledge, to question freely and to express boldly.

A student who can imagine, inquire and create is far more prepared for life than one who can only memorize and repeat. Creative learners are better problem solvers, better communicators and better citizens. In conclusion, creativity is not an extra feature of education; it is its very essence. It is the force that drives curiosity, fuels passion and opens the door to lifelong learning. To build a society that is thoughtful, inclusive and forward-thinking, we must begin by cultivating creativity in our classrooms. The true aim of education is not merely to inform minds but to transform them — to inspire children not just to learn the world as it is, but to imagine the world as it could be.

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By Syeda Tehseen Abidi



As the sacred festival of Eid-ul-Adha 2025 draws near, a remarkable transformation is underway across Sindh. At the heart of it is not just sacrifice and devotion, but something often missing from civic life — foresight, compassion, and administrative readiness. Under the steady leadership of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the Sindh Government has rolled out what may be one of its most people-centered operations in recent memory: a province-wide effort to manage the monumental challenge of Eid sacrificial waste with dignity, precision, and genuine public care. For many in urban Sindh, especially in sprawling, congested Karachi, Eid-ul-Adha is often accompanied by anxiety. As millions of animals are sacrificed over three days, tons of organic waste quickly overwhelm neighborhoods. The sights and smells that follow can be suffocating. But this year, there is a palpable shift.

The Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB), in collaboration with local

administration and municipal bodies, has mobilized not just machines and manpower, but empathy and urgency. What is emerging from this effort is not merely a cleanliness drive. It is a message that governance can, in fact, serve the people directly — and that urban dignity is worth protecting. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari’s repeated emphasis on people-first public service seems to have taken root in real action. This year’s Eid preparedness plan is layered in a way that anticipates the city’s needs before crises arise. There is planning, coordination, digital infrastructure, and most importantly, a sense of care. Months before the first animal is sacrificed, the SSWMB began holding district-level meetings to map out operations.

From Karachi’s East and West districts to Malir, Keamari, and Central — and all the way to Hyderabad, Sukkur, and Larkana — cleaning schedules, vehicle deployment, and trench locations were finalized in consultation with deputy commissioners and municipal officers. The goal was not just technical smoothness but ensuring no town felt left out. This inclusive spirit sets the tone for what follows. And what follows is impressive. Over 10,000 sanitary workers, including special Eid contract staff,

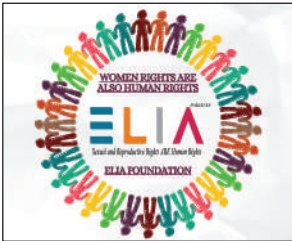
have been deployed. They are not just sent out with brooms and shovels. They are equipped with gloves, masks, boots, lime powder, and disinfectants — the full gear needed for safety and dignified work. For their effort, the Sindh Government has also announced bonuses and allowances. In a political climate where sanitation workers are often treated as invisible, this small recognition carries enormous moral weight.

At the operational level, the entire waste management fleet — over 4,500 vehicles — is now GPS-tracked. This real-time monitoring system allows officials at the Karachi control room to respond quickly to delays, reroute vehicles, and ensure no area is neglected. If a dumper lingers too long, or if a street is missed, the system picks it up. Technology here is not replacing people — it is enabling better service. Perhaps the most revolutionary element in this entire setup is the 24/7 citizen helpline, 1128. At any hour, residents can call and register a complaint — whether it’s unattended animal waste, clogged drains, or missed pickups. But this is not a token gesture. Complaints are logged, tracked, and responded to — often within hours. The real story lies in the details: in the late-night call

from an elderly woman in North Karachi, worried about the unbearable smell in her street, and in the fact that the cleaning crew actually shows up. The campaign is not just about trucks and trenches. It is also about changing mindsets. Awareness messages are going out through radio, SMS, television, mosques, and community leaders. People are being asked not to slaughter animals in public spaces. Religious scholars are urging communities to co-operate with waste workers. The idea is not to wag fingers, but to build a shared sense of responsibility — where the government does its part, and citizens feel empowered to do theirs. The scale of the task cannot be overstated. Karachi alone sees the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of animals. Without a robust response, streets can become unbearable. Yet, under this plan, the mess doesn’t linger. A collection team picks up waste, and another team follows behind with lime and disinfectant — ensuring that discomfort does not spread into disease.

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## Army Chief calls out India's role in Balochistan unrest

In a firm and resolute tone, the army chief vowed that the nation's integrity would be upheld at all costs, leaving absolutely no room for compromise

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Field Marshal Asim Munir, Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, has publicly affirmed longstanding concerns over Indian interference in Balochistan, describing it as no longer hidden but openly evident. Speaking at a Jirga of tribal elders in Quetta, Munir pointed to clear intelligence showing terrorist networks operating within the province, a development he framed as a direct challenge to Pakistan's sovereignty and security.

In a firm and resolute tone, the army chief stressed that the integrity of the nation would be upheld at all costs, leaving no room for compromise. He connected the peace and stability of Balochistan with the broader future of Pakistan, emphasizing



ing that the province's well-being is a cornerstone of national unity. Munir's address conveyed a dual message: while the army would take decisive action against any hostile elements, the success of these efforts depended heavily on the support and cooperation of local communities.

The tribal elders present at the gathering voiced their

relationship between Pakistan's armed forces and the tribal communities in Balochistan, both standing together in defence of peace and stability.

This public declaration by Field Marshal Munir comes amid increasing tensions in the region and highlights the complex security dynamics that continue to shape Balochistan's role within Pakistan. The statement signals a robust military posture while also acknowledging the indispensable role of local actors in safeguarding the province from disruption and violence.

This gathering, marked by mutual respect and a sense of urgency, reflects the deep-rooted connection between local leadership and national security efforts in one of Pakistan's most sensitive regions.

## Four killed in suspected 'Karo Kari' cases in Sindh

By Imtiaz Hussain

SUKKUR: At least four people, including three women and a man, were brutally killed in separate suspected incidents of 'Karo Kari'—a form of so-called honor killing—in Sindh's Jacobabad and Qambar districts over the past 24 hours, according to police reports.

In one of the most chilling of these cases, Majid Lashari reportedly shot dead his sister-in-law, Shakilla, and her alleged lover, Pyaro Jamali, in Shahzado Lashari village under the jurisdiction of Mahammadpur Police Station, Jacobabad. The accused claimed the pair were involved in an illicit relationship. Police responded promptly to the scene and arrested Lashari. Officials say an investigation is underway, and further details will be disclosed after initial inquiries.

Another killing was reported in Jacobabad's village Gulshir Jakhani, where Muhammad Hassan Jakhani allegedly gunned down his 55-year-old cousin, Baghan Jakhani, using a Kalashnikov rifle. The accused suspected the victim of having an affair with his wife. Police said the suspect fled immediately after the attack. The body was shifted to a local hospital and later handed over to the victim's family after medico-legal formalities. A search operation has been launched to apprehend the fugitive.

In Qambar city, yet another woman, identified as Sanam Chandio, was murdered by her husband, Sajjad Chandio, under similar suspicions. The accused escaped before police could arrive. Her body was also moved to a local hospital. Authorities are actively searching for the suspect.

These latest killings have reignited concerns about the prevalence of honor-based violence in rural Sindh.

Despite amendments in the law that criminalize such acts without provision for familial pardons, enforcement remains weak, and cultural attitudes often obstruct justice.

## Pakistan, IMF set to discuss upcoming budget again

Sources within the government reveal that the latest meeting on 30 May ended without a clear breakthrough, leaving critical issues unresolved and tensions rising

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are poised to enter a critical phase of negotiations over the federal budget for the upcoming fiscal year, with talks expected to resume within the next two days. This round of discussions comes amid mounting pressure on the government to align its budgetary plans with the stringent conditions laid out by the IMF as part of the country's ongoing loan program.

Sources within the government reveal that the latest meeting on 30 May failed to yield a definitive breakthrough, leaving key issues unresolved. At the heart of the impasse lies the tax revenue target, a central and highly contentious element of the budget framework. Both sides remain engaged in delicate negotiations to finalize realistic projections for tax collection across various economic sectors, a task complicated by Pakistan's fragile economic landscape and persistent challenges in



revenue mobilization.

Defence expenditure and subsidy allocations also continue to fuel debate. These components carry significant political weight and financial implications, making consensus difficult. The government is acutely aware of the need to manage public expectations while adhering to IMF demands for fiscal discipline, a balancing act that has become increasingly precarious as the deadline for budget approval draws near.

On a more optimistic note, there are signals of progress regarding potential relief for the salaried class. Reports suggest the IMF is open to considering Pakistan's proposals aimed at

easing the tax burden on wage earners, a move that could provide some much-needed respite to millions already grappling with inflation and economic uncertainty.

Structural reforms in the energy sector remain a prominent agenda item, with discussions focusing on the revision of electricity tariffs. Both Pakistan and the IMF reportedly agree on the introduction of a carbon levy designed to promote climate financing while bolstering fiscal stability.

However, the specifics of the levy, including its exact rate and implementation timeline, are yet to be finalized, reflecting the complex trade-offs involved.

## Ahsan Iqbal praises PAF for grounding Indian jets

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal has praised Pakistan's Air Force for effectively grounding the Indian jets that New Delhi once boasted about, warning that any country casting an "evil eye" on Pakistan would be relentlessly pursued.

Speaking at an event in Narowal, Iqbal criticized the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party's social media platforms for spreading propaganda that undermines the country and its armed forces. He lauded the leadership of Field Marshal Asim Munir, describing it as unmatched in history for its bravery and resolve.

Reflecting on past conflicts, Iqbal recalled India's 2019 attack on Pakistan and criticized the then prime minister's hesitant response. He contrasted this with the firm stance of the current prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, who he said has made it clear that any provocation against Pakistan would be met with a strong and unmistakable reply.

## Joint Pak-Turk operation arrests key ISIS commander

News Desk

PESHAWAR: Pakistani and Turkish intelligence agencies have jointly arrested a senior ISIS commander in a carefully coordinated operation near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, marking a notable breakthrough in regional counter-terrorism efforts.

According to Turkish media reports, the operation saw Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) collaborate closely with Turkey's National Intelligence Organization (MIT) to capture the militant leader identified as Ozger Alton.

## Zardari urges focus on public relief in upcoming budget

By Asghar Ali Mubarak

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has urged the government to prioritize public relief and welfare measures in the forthcoming budget, highlighting the critical need for political allies to unite and work collaboratively for the national interest. His call came during a high-profile meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at the Governor House in Lahore, signaling a renewed emphasis on consensus-building amid the country's complex political landscape.

The gathering brought together key figures including Speaker of the National Assembly Ayaz Sadiq and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, alongside Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider and Senator Saleem Mandviwala. This assembly of senior leaders provided a platform for wide-ranging discussions



on Pakistan's current political and security challenges, reflecting a shared awareness of the pressing issues facing the nation.

During the meeting, the leaders reviewed the prime minister's recent diplomatic engagements with friendly countries, considering how these visits might bolster Pakistan's standing on the international stage.

Central to their dialogue was the importance of fostering stronger cooperation among political allies, a theme underscored by President Zardari's appeal

for unity to address the country's economic and social hardships.

The emphasis on including welfare and public relief in the upcoming budget signals a recognition of the growing pressures on ordinary Pakistanis, many of whom are grappling with inflation and economic uncertainty. By advocating for measures that directly benefit the public, the president aims to ensure that government policy responds to the urgent needs of the people.

## Karachi hosts Indonesian week to celebrate bilateral friendship

By Zahid Karani

KARACHI: The Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Karachi inaugurated "Indonesian Week" on 30 May 2025 at Naheed Supermarket's Shaheed-e-Millat branch, launching a three-day cultural and commercial showcase aimed at deepening ties between Indonesia and Pakistan. The event, which runs through 1 June, highlights a curated range of Indonesian products while offering visitors a taste of the country's diverse culinary and cultural heritage.

The opening ceremony was led by His Excellency



Mr. Teguh Wiweko, Consul General of Indonesia, who was joined by Mr. Ahmad Syofian and Mr. Dewanto Priyokusumo, Consul for Economic Affairs. The event also brought together key figures from Pakistan's business community, including

Founder & CEO of Naheed Supermarket, Mr. Abraruddin, and Director Mr. Mansub Abrar, along with other dignitaries and guests.

In his remarks, Consul General Wiweko commended Naheed Supermarket's partnership in hosting

the initiative, calling it "a symbol of growing cooperation between the Indonesian and Pakistani people." He noted that the event serves not only to boost trade but also to promote cultural affinity through shared experiences.

"This is about more than just commerce; it's about connection," he said.

Mr. Ahmad Syofian underscored the economic dimension of the celebration, pointing out that Indonesian Week introduces high-quality goods to Pakistani consumers — from Sumatran coffee and traditional snacks to wellness products and household items.

## Marriyum brands PTI's claims as "lies, drama"

By Faizan Khan

LAHORE: Senior Punjab Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has sharply criticized the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, dismissing their recent statements as a tired spectacle filled with "lies, drama, and nonstop noise." Speaking from Lahore, Aurangzeb portrayed PTI's current outbursts as little more than a desperate attempt to cover up their failures, accusing the party of shouting loudly because they have "empty hands" and nothing tangible to offer the public.

Her remarks came amid heightened political tensions, reflecting a broader pattern of antagonism between the ruling establishment and PTI. Aurangzeb suggested that the frustration within PTI runs deep, describing the party's reaction as the anguished cries of those who have "destroyed everything they had," now left grasping for relevance in a shifting political landscape.

Marriyum went further to condemn PTI's approach as lacking any meaningful plan or vision, branding their tactics as a repetitive performance that relies solely on relentless propaganda.

## JUI rejects Child Marriage Bill citing Quran, Sunnah

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) has firmly rejected the proposed child marriage bill, insisting that no legislation should contradict the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah.

Speaking at a press conference in Peshawar, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said the party opposes the bill on child marriage, arguing that the constitution does not permit laws that conflict with Islamic principles. He emphasized that Islam does not prescribe a fixed age for marriage but sets puberty as the defining criterion. He announced that JUI-F would launch a public campaign against the child marriage law.

Fazlur Rehman criticized the government for pushing legislation that goes against religious teachings, saying punishments such as imprisonment and fines were being imposed for practices that are religiously permissible. He also questioned why the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)



supports such laws, accusing the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of merely adopting a secular façade.

Fazlur Rehman accused the government of violating the constitution and vowed his party would reject these actions. He revealed plans to hold rallies in various cities, including a large gathering in Hazara Division on 29 June. Rejecting the current political trend of single-issue protests, he said JUI-F would intensify its movement on multiple fronts.

Commenting on recent PPP protests in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Fazlur Rehman claimed they were not genuinely aimed at tackling corruption but at protecting their own records. He insisted corruption could not be eliminated without JUI-F's leadership in the province.

## Pak Navy conducts drills to tackle threats at major ports

News Desk

KARACHI: The Pakistan Navy has recently conducted extensive exercises at key ports, underscoring its commitment to safeguarding the country's maritime interests amid evolving security challenges. Officials described the two-day drills as a vital measure to strengthen protection protocols for critical maritime installations, which play a crucial role in Pakistan's national security and economic well-being.

A spokesperson for the



navy explained that the exercises were organized under the Coastal Command and involved coordinated operations by Pakistan Marines, the Navy's

elite Special Service Group, as well as naval air and sea assets. This comprehensive approach allowed for realistic training scenarios designed to test and enhance

the navy's readiness against a range of potential threats.

The spokesperson stressed that maintaining uninterrupted security along vital sea routes remains a top priority. With Pakistan's economy heavily reliant on maritime trade, ensuring the safety of ports and sea lanes is essential not only for protecting national sovereignty but also for supporting economic growth.

These drills come at a time when regional maritime security has gained increased focus, reflecting broader concerns over

piracy, terrorism, and geopolitical tensions in the Indian Ocean. By bolstering its defensive capabilities and operational coordination, the Pakistan Navy aims to ensure a robust maritime security environment that can respond swiftly and effectively to any challenges.

As the country continues to develop its port infrastructure and expand its maritime trade links, such exercises demonstrate the navy's proactive stance in securing Pakistan's coastal frontiers and contributing to the stability of the wider region.