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May 10 loss etched forever in India's memory: PM Shehbaz

On 10 May, our soldiers carved history with unmatched courage and strategy, a day etched in unity the enemy can never erase

By Asghar Ali Mubarak

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in a charged address to a public gathering on Murree Road, declared 10 May as a day India would never forget, hailing it as a defining symbol of Pakistan's military prowess and national unity. Speaking at the inauguration of the Jinnah Square Interchange, the prime minis- gift and blessing from God," etched in history — a mo- ing the significance of the try had stood shoulder to ment, he said, when the occasion as not merely shoulder with its defenders. armed forces, backed by the strategic, but spiritual and resolve of the Pakistani peo- patriotic. ple, delivered a blow so de-

Opposition

lawmakers demand resolution of

Karachi's

water woes

KARACHI: Calls for ur-

gent water supply to

Karachi dominated the

Sindh Assembly for the

second day in a row, as

ment-Pakistan (MQM-P) Jamaat-e-Islami

session

take

able water access.

cal flashpoint.

The exchange under-

scored how the city's water shortage has be-

come not only a logistical

challenge but also a politi-

tions, which enable some

to profit at the expense of

many, remain a major concern, with calls grow-

ing louder for swift gov-

ernment intervention to address corruption and mismanagement.

stituency, PS-91.

Karachi.

Illegal water connec-

action.

By Salman Shah



able to erase," he said, working with greater effitry had stood shoulder to

The remarks came in a The prime minister con-ric, underscoring the govern-noted, that such a largecisive that it would "be re- gratulated the nation, cele- ment's broader effort to reaf- scale underpass has been membered until the end of brating the soldiers who, in firm national pride and completed in such a short his words, turned the tide military strength. For She- time. Under Naqvi's direc-With visible conviction through sheer courage and hbaz Sharif, the moment tives, landscaping and hortiand emotion, Shehbaz precise strategy. "Our sol- was not just about recalling cultural enhancements are Sharif praised what he diers, through courage and a battle, but about invoking a ongoing. The project is excalled a "crushing defeat" in- flawless strategy, made his- powerful narrative of unity — pected to ease travel for flicted on India, framing the tory on 10 May. This day is one he believes resonates commuters heading to Mur-

and symbols of resilience.

Shehbaz Sharif lauded the efforts of the Capital Development Authority (CDA), the construction firm, and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, noting that the project was completed under a tight schedule without compromising quality. He urged the CDA and Islamabad's city administration to continue ter described the day as one he told the crowd, reinforc- adding that the entire coun- ciency and commitment to make the capital even more beautiful and accessible.

It is the first time in Pakclimate of heightened rheto- istan's history, officials date as more than a military a testament to our unity — deeply with a public that ree, saving time and fuel for success. "It was a special one the enemy will never be continues to see the armed thousands.

Rs161bn electricity dues may be slashed from NFC award

Officials maintained that the dues are drawn from distribution company records and are officially acknowledged at that operational level

lawmakers from the Muttahida Qaumi Move-By Asghar Ali Mubarak

ISLAMABAD: The Senintensified pressure on ate Standing Committee on Power, chaired by Senator the provincial government immediate | Mohsin Aziz, has deliberated on a significant proposal to recover Rs161 billion in elecmarked by pointed detricity dues from provincial mands to curb illegal governments by deducting water connections and the amount from their Naclamp down on profiteer- tional Finance Commission ing, which many blame for (NFC) shares. The proposal, worsening the city's grow- already approved by the Council of Common Inter-MQM-P representa- ests (CCI), is being opera-Aamir Siddiqui were vocal sion in coordination with the Finance Ministry.

in their criticism, openly accusing the Sindh government of neglecting one of Karachi's most pressing | formed the committee that provinces' NFC share, while described these savings as | outspoken views, said the issues. Siddiqui, in particular, expressed frustration with the lack of response outstanding electricity bills. billion. While Punjab has process. been cooperative and is close to settling its dues, from authorities. other provinces have report-"I have written letters edly stalled the reconciliation

to the local government process for over two years. minister about the water crisis," he told the assembly, "but he doesn't even bother to answer the idate the dues in the ab- to cutbacks in petroleum plex challenges in balancing phone." His words high- sence of reconciliation by levies, and Rs1.81 to other financial recovery from lighted the deep sense of provincial governments. Offi- cost reductions. frustration among lawcials responded that the makers and citizens alike, dues are based on records as Karachi's residents from the distribution compaface increasingly unrelithat level.



tives Sharaq Jamal and tionalized by the Power Divi- Laghari confirmed that under structural changes, including regions loyal to him as a An additional secretary 25 percent of the reconciled tiations with independent nalist Karan Thapar. from the Power Division in- amount directly from the power producers (IPPs). He provinces have been given a the rest will be recovered permanent improvements to deadline of 31 March to clear once full reconciliation is the system. However, when According to the data pre- deductions will only apply to durability of monthly fuel sented, Sindh owes Rs68 reconciled amounts, not dis- price adjustments, NEPRA billion, Punjab Rs42 billion, puted ones, and discussions warned of volatility in hy-Balochistan Rs41 billion, and are ongoing with the Finance dropower due to climate fac-Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rs10 Ministry to finalize the tors

Energy Minister Owais quarters are the result of ological influence and the the CCI's directive, the fed- the termination of expensive eral government will deduct power contracts and renego- critical interview with jourcompleted. He clarified that Senator Aziz questioned the

Mukhtar pointed to signif-The committee also re- icantly reduced snowfall and form the core of the Hindu viewed the reported Rs7.41 declining water levels in nationalist "hotline" and per unit reduction in electric- reservoirs this year, which where both the ruling ity tariffs. Power Division of- caused lower hydropower Bharatiya Janata Party ficials broke down the relief, output in April and led to a Senator Mohsin Aziz attributing Rs2.37 to quar- positive fuel adjustment of stream media dominate. raised the issue of account- terly adjustments, Rs1.13 to Rs1.23 per unit. The discusability, asking who would valfuel price reductions, Rs2.10 sion underscored the comprovinces, tariff relief for con-

Waseem Mukhtar, chair- sumers, and structural reman of the National Electric forms in Pakistan's energy Power Regulatory Authority sector, all while coping with nies and are recognized at (NEPRA), told the committee unpredictable environmental that the lower tariffs in recent conditions.

Protestors halt First Lady's convoy near Jamshoro, case registered

News Desk

JAMSHORO: have registered a case after the convoy of Aseefa Bhutto-Zardari — First Lady and Member of the National Assembly — was stopped by protestors near the Jamshoro Toll Plaza while en route from Karachi to Nawabshah.

number of individuals inbeen arrested for causing a public disturbance and threatening the peace. He said that while the situation was quickly brought under control, some protesters struck the vehicles in the convoy with their hands and

The convoy, which included a police escort, managed to escort Aseefa Bhutto-Zardari's vehicle safely through the protest site within a minute, preventing any direct harm or delay.

The protestors were controversial canal project and corporate farming, both of which have sparked discontent among local communities who fear displacement and loss of livelihood.

Police say the situation was contained without any vestigation is underway to identify more individuals involved in the protest that briefly disrupted the highprofile journey.

'Duffer zone' jibe sparks fresh criticism of Modi

News Desk

Renowned Indian author and blogger Avay Shakya By our correspondent has described Prime Minster Narendra Modi's ide-"duffer zone," in a sharply

Shakya, known for his "duffer zone" is not just a geographic term but a reflection of a particular mindset — one marked by low levels of education and high population density. According to him, this zone spans northern and northeastern India, areas that (BJP) and India's main-

He added that the zone is defined by a hardened "Hindutva' ideology that is inherently intolerant.

It dismisses other religions and languages and routinely vilifies Muslims by associating them with terrorism — even when they are decorated army officers or respected aca-

Shakya cited examples such as Colonel Sofia Qureshi and Professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad to illustrate how even highachieving Muslims are not spared from prejudice.

Thousands protest in Kolkata against 'Warmonger Modi'

A coalition of communist parties, human rights groups, and civil society organized the rally as a peaceful protest against rising militarization and divisive politics

News Desk

KOLKATA: Thousands gathered in Kolkata to voice their opposition to what they According to SSP their opposition to what they Jamshoro Zafar Siddiq, a described as the Modi government's aggressive war volved in the incident have policies, creating a charged atmosphere in the city streets. The protestors, united by a shared desire for peace, raised powerful slogans condemning extremism government to abandon confrontational politics. Instead, logue rather than hostility.

> coalition of communist par- peaceful gathering. ties, human rights organizapeaceful



witnesses described scenes they urged the ruling party to porters pushing, beating, political atmosphere in India, resolve all outstanding dis- and targeting demonstrators, putes with neighboring Pak- escalating tensions and often met with hostility, and istan through diplomatic dia- leaving many shocked by divisions are exacerbated by the outbreak of aggression in aggressive political rhetoric.

when activists associated trations with what they see stand as a stark illustration of with the ruling Bharatiya as a political climate increas- the ongoing struggle over major escalation, and an in- Janata Party (BJP) con- ingly defined by intolerance the country's future direction.

where peaceful protests are The rally, organized by a what was meant to be a For the organizers, the alition of communist par- peaceful gathering. Those participating in the minder of the urgent need for tions, and civil society protest strongly condemned dialogue and reconciliation demonstrating against the groups, was intended as a the violent behavior, de- at a time when many fear demonstration manding that those respon- that the path towards conflict against growing militarization sible for the attacks be held threatens to overshadow the and the politics of division. accountable under the law. pursuit of peace. As voices However, what began as a Their grievances went be-calling for calm and diplodetermined call for peace yong the immediate vio-macy continue to be chalquickly spiraled into chaos lence, reflecting deeper frus-lenged, the events in Kolkata

CDWP approves Rs104bn in new development projects

These projects are set to significantly boost connectivity and stimulate economic growth across multiple regions of the country

ISLAMABAD: Under the leadership of Federal Plan ning Minister Ahsan Iqbal the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) met recently to assess and approve significant development initiatives that aim to advance Pakistan's infrastructure and industrial growth. According to a stateambitious

valued at Rs96 billion were enterprises. forwarded to the National crucial role in enhancing lunar rover project, which rethe country.

dustrial and commercial sec- technology. tors. Of particular note was



the green light to develop- provide employment oppor- cost Rs36.91 billion, and the ment projects amounting to tunities. Another important Rohri to Guddu Barrage Rs104 billion during the ses- allocation was Rs1.25 billion road, both intended to imsion, marking a decisive for land acquisition dedi- prove regional connectivity step forward in the country's cated to establishing SME and facilitate trade. The amdevelopment Facilitation Centres, reflect- bitious Mehran Highway ing the government's ongo- project, aiming to expand In addition to these ap- ing commitment to support- the Nawabshah to Rajanpur provals, three major projects ing small and medium stretch into a dual carriage-

final approval. These proj- ambitions by approving focus on upgrading vital ects are expected to play a funding for the country's first transport routes. connectivity and economic ceived Rs2.53 billion, and ister Ahsan Iqbal stressed activity in various regions of the human space mission the importance of ensuring project, allocated Rs2.24 bil- that project costs reflect cur-Among the projects aplion. These projects signify a rent market rates to avoid proved by the CDWP were forward-looking vision that unrealistic budgeting and four initiatives worth Rs8 bil- aims to position Pakistan ensure financial discipline. lion, alongside two schemes among the emerging players His remarks highlight the specifically targeting the in- in space exploration and balancing act between

the approval of Phase 2 of ment remains a priority, as fiscal prudence in a chalthe 1000 Sewing Units project, allocated Rs1.95 billion, sent to the NEC. These inment.

way, was also forwarded to The government also the NEC with an estimated Economic Council (NEC) for demonstrated its focus on cost of Rs41 billion, underfurther consideration and advancing Pakistan's space scoring the government's

> During the meeting, Minpushing forward develop-Infrastructure develop- ment goals and maintaining

Fifth round of Iran-US talks in Rome ends without breakthrough

Raising a call-attention notice, Jamaat-e-Islami

MPA Muhammad Farooq ROME: The fifth round of pointed to the acute water indirect talks between Iran shortage in his conand the United States, held in Rome under the mediation "There's never a water of Oman, ended without any shortage at the hydrants," definitive progress, according to an announcement he said. "The tankers keep running, but our taps remain dry. The water mafia is thriving in mediate breakthroughs, the ministry expressed cautious Later, addressing the optimism that the coming envoy Steve Witkoff. These chamber again, Farooq days could bring solutions also raised the issue of

ongoing power cuts in agreement, reflecting the resolving long-standing ten-Karachi, noting that a delicate and ongoing nature sions surrounding Iran's nu-cized the persistent denial of scheduled committee of these negotiations. meeting on load-shedding was cancelled because represented by Foreign Min- to the CEO of K-Electric failed to show up — for the US delegation was led the second time. by Middle East special



indirect talks, mediated by leading to a sustainable Oman, continue to focus on

ister Abbas Araghchi, while fraught with challenges. Adding to the uncer- ing what he described as Iran's Supreme "foolish statements.

Khamenei, has voiced his scepticism about the talks' potential outcomes. He criticlear program and broader Iran's right to enrich ura-The discussions saw Iran regional issues, but the path nium, calling it a fundamenconsensus remains tal error, and warned the United States against mak-

counter Indian propaganda By Asghar Ali Mubarak

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari recently called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to discuss strategies aimed at confronting India's aggressive posture and provocative agenda on the international stage.

The meeting, which brought together senior PPP Pakistan and India and the key international audiences. placed in the PPP's role in ing regional tensions.



Bilawal seeks guidance from PM to

diplomatic efforts needed to shape global perceptions, sought guidance from the gate the complex geopolitical During the discussion, the Prime Minister on how best to environment. This gathering leaders reviewed recent gov- articulate Pakistan's stance in reflects the government's refigures including Senator ernment delegation visits influential world capitals, em- solve to coordinate a robust Sherry Rehman and former abroad, designed to counter phasizing the importance of a response to India's actions federal minister Hina Rab- what they described as In- unified and strategic diplo- and reinforce Pakistan's bani Khar, focused on the es- dian propaganda while pro- matic front. Expressing ap- diplomatic engagement on calating tensions between moting Pakistan's narrative to preciation for the confidence the global stage amid ongo-

Bilawal underscored the party's commitment to actively championing Pakistan's interests abroad. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in turn,

these diplomatic initiatives,

voiced optimism that under Bilawal's leadership, the delegation would present Pakistan's position with strength Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and clarity, helping to navi-

Pakistan dismisses fears of Indian water cut, calls it foolish

The ISPR chief warned that no nation can deny water to 240 million Pakistanis, cautioning that such threats only fuel regional instability

By ISPR/ Asghar Ali Mubarak

RAWALPINDI: In a forceful rebuttal of recent Indian rhetoric, Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, Director General of Inter-Ser-Public Relations (ISPR), has categorically dismissed claims that India can cut off Pakistan's water supply, calling such notions "impossible" and "unfounded."

country can deprive 240 million Pakistanis of their water, ment and media industries. and warned that such threats gional instability. He framed post-Pahalgam posture, say- complete. the situation as part of a ing New Delhi has yet to proto what he called a growing attack despite repeated re- istan's stance is rooted in re- engaged in counterterrorism tivities.



The ISPR chief said no psychological warfare per- international actors. "They

trend of false narratives and quests from Islamabad and petuated by India's entertain- have no answers," he said, referring to the Indian foreign General Chaudhry was ministry's recent admission and Hatf-series missiles. rations of the Kashmiri peoonly serve to intensify re- particularly critical of India's that investigations remain in- However, he was quick to ple. He warned India against

military, political leadership, groups. and its people. He described this solidarity as an "iron wall"

digenous military capabilities, tripartite issue involving Pakciting advanced defence istan, India, and China, and technologies like the JF-17 must be settled according to Thunder, J-10C fighter jets, UN resolutions and the aspiadd that Pakistan has delib- treating the dispute as a do-Touching on the broader erately refrained from de-mestic affair, saying such a larger pattern of Indian misin- duce credible evidence link- geopolitical stakes, the gen- ploying its full military might, stance ignores both internaformation, drawing attention ing Pakistan to the 2019 eral emphasized that Pak- with significant forces already tional law and regional sensi-

silience, unity, and faith. "Vic-operations in Balochistan tory ultimately lies with God," and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he remarked, praising the co-hesion between Pakistan's cused of backing insurgent

On water security, he reminded viewers that the against what he termed In- Kashmir region — the source dian aggression, both on the of six key rivers flowing into ground and in the information Pakistan — cannot be overlooked in any discussion of General Chaudhry also regional stability. He reitershowcased Pakistan's in- ated that Kashmir remains a

Aseefa, WB team hand over home ownership to flood victims

By Sajjad Shah

SHAHEED BE-NAZIRABAD: First Lady Aseefa Bhutto Zardari has hailed the Sindh People's Housing for Flood Affectees (SPHF) project as a transformative step to-wards socio-economic jus-tice, highlighting that the initiative's focus on granting land and property ownership rights to women marks a historic shift in

Minister Dr. Azra Fazal constructed houses. Pechuho, and World Bank hassine visited the flood Aseefa Bhutto Zardari and \$450 million granted over ehabilitation housing project the World Bank MD, sym-the following two years to challenges and reform prior- for Investment Qaiser Laghari Goth, Shaheed ward Benazirabad district.

(SPHF) program, which formal banking. aims to restore homes and livelihoods for communi- Murad Ali Shah detailed villages.



ect in Nazr Muhammad bolizing a major step for- sustain and expand the rewomen's land rights and fi-

rural empowerment.

Aseefa Bhutto Zardari

Chief Minister Syed Murad

Ali Sheh Appe Biorde

Tural empowerment.

ties devastated by the the scale of destruction destruction to the caused by the 2022 floods, accompanied by Sindh visit, the delegation met which obliterated over 2.4 million homes across the caused by the 2022 floods, accompanied by Sindh visit, the delegation met which obliterated over 2.4 million homes across the caused by the caused by the 2022 floods, accompanied by Sindh visit, the delegation met which obliterated over 2.4 million homes across the caused by the the scale of destruction met which obliterated over 2.4 million homes across the caused by the 2022 floods, accompanied by Sindh visit, the delegation met which obliterated over 2.4 million homes across the caused by the 2022 floods. Ali Shah, Anna Bjerde, ularly women beneficiar- province. He credited the Managing Director of the ies, who received owner- World Bank's initial \$500 World Bank, Sindh Health ship documents for newly million emergency response as critical to These documents were launching the recovery Country Director Najy Ben- formally handed over by process, with an additional

promoting construction. The high-level delega- nancial empowerment in port has enabled the contion inspected the ongoing rural Sindh. She empha-struction of 778,000 construction and rehabili-sized that for thousands of homes and investment of tation efforts under the rural women—many of nearly \$55 million in water, Sindh People's Housing whom have never owned sanitation, and hygiene Flood Affectees property or had access to (WASH) infrastructure, di-

This international suprectly benefiting nearly Sindh Chief Minister 67,000 families in 1,000



KARACHI: Information Secretary Sindh Nadeem Ahmed and Deputy Director Advertisements Sarang Latif Chandio present the annual grant of the Pakistan Association of Press Photographers —Photo by Sultan Chaki

Bahria University hosts pre-budget discussion

Press Release

ture" at Bahria University foster innovation. Karachi Campus, focusing

economy development.

posed broadening the tax

ernance efficiency, allocating more resources to education KARACHI: Bahria Hu- and health, building a vibrant manities and Social Sci- IT ecosystem, and encourences School held a pre- aging private sector-led budget session titled growth through venture cap-"Shaping a Prosperous Fu- ital and startup support to The session was at-

ities. The discussion under- Ahmed Sheikh as Chief scored the urgent need for Guest. Other notable pansustainable and inclusive elists included Zubair Tufail, growth, driven by fiscal disci- industrialist and former

Association; financial con-

Rear Admiral Muham-

aimed at informing policy de-

policies The event provided a signifi-



pline, governance improve- FPCCI president; Abdul

ments, and investment in Qadir Memon, former presi-

human capital and digital dent of the Pakistan Tax Bar

Panelists identified key sultant Asad Ali Shah; and

hurdles such as Pakistan's Ali Kabir Shah, former inter-

limited tax base, governance national vice president of the

weaknesses, and labor mar- Asian Patent Attorneys As-

net to ensure all segments of mad Zubair Shafique HI (M),

society contribute fairly, im- Director General of Bahria

proving public sector ac- University Karachi Campus,

countability, and prioritizing delivered the vote of thanks.

ket constraints. They pro- sociation.

GDA's leader denounces FIRs as political vendetta

By Imtiaz Hussain

Ghulam Murtaza Jatoi, along and Ghazi Leghari. with his brother, ex-MPA cent registration of First In- were part of a broader cam-

formation Reports (FIRs) paign to exact personal and

against them and several of political revenge. Calling for SUKKUR: Former federal their associates, including a transparent judicial inquiry, minister and Grand Demo- Baz Muhammad Sial, Ijaz the brothers urged the judicicratic Alliance (GDA) leader Leghari, Bahawal Leghari, ary to expose what they called the deliberate misuse The Jatoi brothers con- of law enforcement to settle Masroor Jatoi, has vehe- demned the FIRs as politi- political scores. "This is not mently denounced the re- cally driven, alleging they justice, it is victimization,' they said.

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Qalandars dominate Islamabad United, seal spot in PSL final

Strategic recommenda- cisions and contributing to a

By our correspondent

Lahore's Quaid-e-Azam Match award. Stadium, Lahore Qalandars outclassed

authority. ing Sahibzada Farhan (3), to chase. Mohammad Shehzad and

Shah Afridi, and Azam Stadium.

Rashid Hussein—each claiming three wickets. LAHORE: In a com- Salman Mirza's fiery spell manding performance at earned him the Player of the

Earlier, Lahore Qalan-Islamabad dars set the tone with the United by a staggering 95 bat, posting a formidable runs in the second qualifier 203 for 8. Opener Koshal of Pakistan Super League Perera smashed 61 off 35 (PSL) Season 10, earning balls, while Mohammad their place in the final with Naeem anchored the innings with a composed 50. Islamabad, tasked with Support came from Abdulchasing a daunting target of lah Shafiq (25), Raja Pasek 203, buckled under pres- (22), Asif Ali (15), and sure and were bowled out Fakhar Zaman (12), giving for a paltry 107 in just 15.1 Lahore a strong platform. overs. Only Salman Agha Despite Tymal Mills' three (33) and skipper Shadab wickets and Salman Ar-Khan (26) offered any re-shad's two, Islamabad's sistance, while the rest of bowlers could not contain the batting line-up folded the flow of runs, leaving cheaply. Key players includ- their batters with too much

This defeat marked Is-Naseem Shah (both dis- lamabad United's second missed for ducks), Rassie unsuccessful qualifier in the van der Dussen, Imad tournament, having earlier Wasim, James Neesham, fallen to Quetta Gladiators and Haider Ali failed to by 30 runs. Lahore's commake any notable contribu- prehensive win now sets up a tantalising final clash Lahore's bowlers deliv- against the Quetta side, ered a clinical performance, scheduled for Sunday, 25 led by Salman Mirza, Sha- May, again at Quaid-e-

METRO MATTERS

Sindh govt to hold lottery for women's e-vehicle scheme

By Salman Shah

KARACHI: The Sindh government has decided to hold a lottery next month to distribute electric scooters to women as part of its efforts to promote women's employment, convenience, and environmental sustainability.

In a meeting chaired by Senior Minister Sharjeel Memon, the Transport Department reviewed progress on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Project Director of Yellow Line briefed the committee, highlighting key developments including the timely completion of the Jam Sadiq Bridge, which was originally scheduled for September 2025 but is expected to finish earlier. Construction of two depots is also underway, with efforts to complete them ahead of schedule.

CEO of Trans Karachi, Fawad Ghafar Soomro, updated the committee on the Red Line BRT progress, reporting rapid advancement in building depots, stations, and a biogas plant. Sharjeel Memon emphasized that electric taxis and scooters are important for creating job opportunities for women and improving public convenience while benefiting the environment. He expressed hope that work on electric taxis would start alongside the electric scooter rollout by June

Regarding the BRT project, Memon urged all involved agencies to complete depots and the biogas plant promptly, underscoring the public's demand for modern, safe, and reliable transport. He stressed the importance of completing projects transparently and on time. The minister also welcomed the early completion of Jam Sadiq Bridge, calling for sustained momentum on infrastructure projects. He highlighted the urgent need for at least 500 new buses across Sindh's districts to provide dignified and accessible travel options to the public.

Karachi LG officials march for restored powers, funds

By Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Hundreds of local government representatives, including chairmen, vice-chairmen, and councillors, marched from Khizra Mosque to the Sindh Assembly on May 23, demanding the restoration of rightful administrative and financial powers for Karachi's elected officials. The demonstration reflected mounting frustration over the Sindh government's failure to devolve authority and release funds as guaranteed by the constitution.

Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Ameer Monem Zafar called for the immediate disbursement of Rs500 billion dedicated to Karachi's development. He demanded an allocation of Rs2 billion for each town and Rs2.5 million monthly for every union council, emphasizing these provisions as constitutional entitlements. Zafar sharply criticized the PPP-led Sindh government for neglecting Karachi, accusing it of nepotism, corruption, and deliberately withholding funds. He underscored Karachi's critical accompanie rale, noting the city contributes 60% of fodoral taxon Karachi's critical economic role, noting the city contributes 60% of federal taxes and accounts for 96% of Sindh's provincial budget, yet remains "ruined" under the current administration

Opposition city council leader Saifuddin Advocate labeled the PPP a "parasite" exploiting Karachi's resources and warned that if local government rights continued to be denied, a campaign to change the provincial regime would be launched. MPA Muhammad Farooq reinforced that constitutional provisions empower local representatives, but Sindh's government continues to obstruct these

JI also condemned recent legislative moves to appoint bureaucrats as educational board chairmen, standing alone against such measures. The marchers pledged to escalate their Karachi Rights Movement after Eidul Adha amid growing public discontent over electricity outages, law and order challenges, and worsening civic conditions in the city.

KU hosts seminar on student role in polio fight

By Musarrat Arif

KARACHI: The Department of International Relations at the University of Karachi, in collaboration with UNICEF, hosted a seminar titled "Healthy Futures: The Role of Students in Polio Eradication in Pakistan" to galvanize student engagement in the country's long-standing battle against polio.

Held at the university's audiovisual center, the event brought together students and a panel of public health experts to confront rising polio cases, particularly in Sindh. Students from the departments of International Relations, Political Science, and Mass Communication participated in the dialogue, aimed at demystifying the science behind polio transmission, tackling misinformation, and

mobilizing youth for routine immunization drives.

Among the key speakers were Professor Dr. Samina Saeed, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences; Dr. Naeem Ahmed, Chairman of International Relations; Dr. Salah Selem Haithami, Senior Technical Advisor at WHO; Abida Umar, UNICEF's Social and Behaviour Change Specialist; and Dr. Khalid Shafi, Senior Paediatrician and Associate Professor at Dow Medical College.

Dr. Samina Saeed lauded the collaboration between academia and health institutions, describing the resurgence of polio cases in Sindh as "deeply concerning." She called for an intensified response from students, urging them to actively support vaccination campaigns and challenge societal resistance to immunization. "Your role as informed, engaged citizens is crucial in protecting the health of the nation," she said.

UNICEF's Abida Umar emphasized the need for young people to become change agents in their communities, countering myths and fostering trust. "Youth voices are powerful. If you advocate for immunization, others will listen," she said. Dr. Khalid Shafi and Dr. Haithami provided insight into the technical challenges of eradicating the virus, reiterating that Pakistan and Afghanistan remain the last two countries where the wild poliovirus is endemic.

An interactive session allowed students to reflect on their role in shaping public opinion and organizing grassroots efforts. Many expressed eagerness to participate in awareness campaigns, distribute accurate health information online, and help bridge the gap between communities and health authorities.

Malaysian consulate engages stakeholders on timber imports

By our correspondent

KARACHI: A meeting took place at the Malaysian Consulate in Karachi, where Malaysian Consul General Herman Hardynata Ahmad engaged in discussions with key stakeholders about the ongoing challenges related to timber imports.

During the talks, the Consul General assured the attendees that he would take up concerns linked to the Department of Plant Protection with Pakistani authorities, aiming to resolve issues that have been affecting the timber trade between the two countries. Significantly, Ahmad also pledged to advocate for special considerations concerning timber imports in the forthcoming Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between Pakistan and Malaysia.

The commitment signals a hopeful step towards easing trade barriers and fostering closer economic ties between the two nations. The meeting included prominent figures such as Sabir Ali Bangash, Vice Chairman of the All Pakistan Timber Traders Association (APTTA), alongside Mukhtar Hussain, Muhammad Asif, Zahid Kharbey, and Mazhar Anjarwala.

Their presence underscored the importance of this dialogue in addressing the concerns of Pakistan's timber industry, which has faced challenges related to import regulations and trade facilitation. As discussions continue, both sides appear keen to find common ground that will benefit trade flows, strengthen bilateral relations, and support the livelihoods of those dependent on the timber sector in Pakistan.

Free aesthetic dermatology workshop held in Karachi

By Zahid Karani

KARACHI: The Pakistan Association of Dermatology (PAD), in collaboration with pharmaceutical company The Pakistan Association of Dermatology (PAD), in collaboration with pharmaceutical company Nabi Qasim, hosted a one-day free workshop focused on aesthetic dermatology at a local hotel in Karachi. The event aimed to foster professional development and promote the exchange of knowledge among dermatologists from across the region.

A panel of expert speakers and master trainers led the workshop, offering hands-on training and engaging discussions on the latest techniques and developments in aesthetic dermatology. In recognition of dermatologist Dr. Najia Ashraf significant contributions to the field, she was honored with a commemorative plaque presented by Major General (R) Dr. Zafar.

The President of PAD also attended the event, underscoring the association's ongoing efforts to support continuous learning and elevate standards of dermatological care in Pakistan. The workshop highlighted the importance of collaboration between medical professionals and the pharmaceutical industry in advancing healthcare practices.

EDITOR: Ehtasham Anwar

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When violence becomes theatre

n the India of today, the screen has become a mirror - not of truth, but of a dark and orchestrated performance, where national tragedy and state propaganda coalesce. What once masqueraded as escapist cinema now carries the unmistakable stench of strategic farce. The killing of innocent tourists in Pahalgam, a region painted as secure and stable, should have shaken the conscience of the entire India. But in Narendra Modi's government, it has instead only exposed the terrifying ease with which fiction is manipulated to veil uncomfortable truths. The incident — brutal, horrifying, and tragically human — unfolded not in the pages of a script, but in the rugged beauty of Kashmir, a place that has long borne the scars of occupation and suspicion.

The very idea that armed assailants could move freely and kill civilians in an area heavily blanketed by Indian occupied forces defies logic. Pahalgam is no wilderness of lawlessness; it is a fortress of fences and fatigue, a terrain policed so intensely that ordinary Kashmiris are forced to prove their identity at every turn. How then, one must ask, did terror slip through the iron gates without resistance? This is not a question driven by cynicism. It is rooted in the basic expectations of accountability and responsibility in a democracy. But India no longer trades in transparency. transparency. Instead, the narrative is stage-managed — often borrowed, sometimes stolen — from the shadowy tactics of foreign intelligence scripts. The absurdity is not just that the Indian state failed to prevent the Pahalgam attack.

The real farce lies in the eerie silence that followed. No resignations, no high-level dismissals, no credible investigations — only more slogans, more scapegoats, more jingoistic noise. To question the efficiency of Indian intelligence or the role of its military in the valley is to invite accusations of disloyalty. Yet the public must be permitted to ask: where was the Rapid Response Force? Why did locals arrive before soldiers? Why are there always cameras ready when a terrorist is gunned down, but none when tourists bleed to death? What we're witnessing isn't simply state negligence. It is, increasingly, a chilling pattern of deliberate inaction cloaked in patriotic defiance. The parallels with other historical manipulations are difficult to ignore. Conspiracy theories are often the refuge of the desperate, but history has shown that governments are not above exploiting chaos.

The world still remembers how certain intelligence services across the globe used planted threats and choreographed violence to justify oppressive policies or foreign invasions. From the absence of Jewish employees on the day of the 9/11 attacks to the suspicion around the Israeli embassy bombing in London in 1996 — events later linked to Mosad's machinations — the line between terrorism and statecraft has long been blurred. In Modi's India, that line is not blurred — it is erased. What is perhaps most disturbing is the way this machinery extends into Indian popular culture. Bollywood, once a chaotic mosaic of romance and song, now dutifully serves as the cultural arm of the regime. Films are no longer created they are commissioned. A storyline appears, conveniently echoing the latest national tragedy, and in steps a star draped in the flag.

Akshay Kumar or another equally stooge plays the soldier-savior, defeating caricatured terrorists, often with Pakistani accents, before the credits roll to an anthem. And just like that, the state's failure is rebranded as strength. This is not cinema. This is narrative laundering. In the aftermath, Modi steps onto the stage — not to unite a grieving nation but to escalate the rhetoric. His declaration that India would choke Pakistan of water is not just reckless bravado: it is a glimpse into the authoritarian fantasies that now dominate Indian policymaking. Threats to violate international water treaties are not signs of strength. They are signs of a leadership that confuses vengeance with vision. And even more damning is that these declarations often ring hollow. Indian academics and hydrology experts have questioned the feasibility of such measures.

The silence that follows these questions is not ignorance — it is strategy. Keep the people angry keep them distracted, and never let facts interfere with fury. India today stands at a crossroads. It can choose the path of justice, transparency, and genuine national security — or it can continue down this dark road of performance and pretence, where human lives are merely props in a carefully directed spectacle. The blood in Pahalgam is real. The grief is real. But until India confronts the disturbing ease with which its tragedies are turned into cinematic propaganda, the healing cannot begin. And for every moment it delays, the cost is borne not by the leaders who write the script, but by the innocent who fall between the lines. Pakistan Army rightfully identified the issue and asked India to investigate through international investigators to find out the truth.

Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, the Director General of Pakistan's Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), rightly called this bluff in a recent interview with international media. "Only a madman could believe that India can stop Pakistan's water, he stated plainly. Blocking water for 240 million people is neither practical nor legally tenable under international treaties.

He reinforced that Pakistan's battle is against deceit and aggression, and that the ultimate victory lies with truth and resilience — values that cannot be scripted or staged. Following the Pahalgam attack, India produced yet another fiction, another blame game, another baseless narrative. Pakistan's response was calm, clear, and responsible: present evidence to a credible third party.

But India has none. Even its own foreign ministry admits investigations are ongoing. In the meantime, Indian media and state officials continue to wage a war of words, distorting facts in a self-made echo chamber. India boasts one of the world's most advanced film and media industries. But when that apparatus is co-opted to produce war propaganda instead of cinema, the world must worry. It's not just about Kashmir. It's about a disturbing new normal where blood is spilled to feed the camera lens, and dissent is crushed beneath the weight of manufactured consent. In this theatre of deception, the victims are not just the dead, but the truth itself.

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

A new script for South Asia

By Uzma Ehtasham



antees influence. The in- more than an engineering blueprint. telligence agencies that

the audience has changed, and most importantly, the actors have changed. And yet, nels has all but collapsed.

ingly, Kabul. The recent trilateral meeting in proach. Beijing between the foreign ministers of

n a world where global It represented a turning point — a firm and power has grown dif-fused and increasingly its own course without relying on old power complicated, clinging to structures or distant patrons. The committhe covert scripts of a by- ment to extend the China-Pakistan Ecogone era no longer guar- nomic Corridor (CPEC) into Afghanistan is

It is a political declaration that developonce thrived in the shad- ment, not division, will shape South Asia's ows — the CIA, Mossad, RAW — built their future. The three foreign ministers — Ishaq reputations on secrecy, interference, and Dar of Pakistan, Wang Yi of China, and manipulation. But that old geopolitical the- Amir Khan Muttaqi of Afghanistan — came atre is falling apart. The stage has changed, together not to issue threats or draw red lines but to offer a vision grounded in stability, connectivity, and pragmatism. In particu-India appears to have missed this cue. New lar, the agreement between Pakistan and realities are unfolding across South Asia, Afghanistan to restore full diplomatic relaand they do not favor the old ways. tions after a prolonged period of estrange-Nowhere is this more evident than in ment is a breakthrough that would have Afghanistan, where India's quiet but persist- seemed impossible only a year ago. For two ent ambition to shape outcomes through neighbors burdened by history and suspibackdoor diplomacy and intelligence chan- cion, the appointment of full-time ambassadors signals a willingness to move beyond While Delhi continues to speak the lan- grievance and towards governance. China, guage of strategic influence, the region with its measured tone and carefully chosen around it is writing a new narrative—one words, played the role of facilitator rather shaped by cooperation, infrastructure, and than hegemon. Its decision to formally recshared regional security. This new consenous conjugate the Taliban-appointed ambassador sus is being crafted not in Washington or Tel in Kabul and to post a full envoy long before Aviv, but in Beijing, Islamabad, and increas- others did speaks volumes about its ap-

It is not driven by ideology or global mis-China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan marked sionary ambitions, but by interests rooted in

macy. It was not merely a photo opportunity Unlike the West, which too often ties recog-routes, investment, and energy corridors designed for headlines or high-level optics. nition to impossible political conditions, could mean more than economic recovery. may offend purists, but one that earns credens to unravel progress. Yet this meeting exist and must be managed through dialogue. They pledged to increase coopera- struggles, has been more than rhetorical. tion and share intelligence - not with outthe sixth round of talks will be held in Kabul

is significant. It suggests not only a rotation of host nashift away from dependency and toward of South Asia. India, Israel and the United This emerging trilateralism offers a new model for regional diplomacy. It is one that tant capitals. India, still trapped in the reflexes of Cold War realpolitik, has struggled to understand. The frustration is evident. India's exclusion design. Its longstanding resistance to encoupled with its history of aligning with Western narratives in the region, has left it isolated at a moment when inclusivity has become a geopolitical asset. CPEC's proa game changer for the region's economy.

more than another round of formal diplo- regional stability and economic opportunity. of conflict and sanctions, the arrival of trade uzma@metro-morning.com

China has chosen realism — a path that It could represent political stabilization, social development, and, perhaps, a future deibility in the region. Security remains a fined more by bridges than by bunkers. But shared concern. Terrorism, which knows no this future is not guaranteed. It depends on borders and respects no treaties, still threat- continuity, infrastructure, and above all, trust a resource often more scarce than capidid not turn into a blame game. Instead, the tal. China's presence in this evolving story three sides acknowledged that differences remains critical. Its consistent support of Pakistan, especially during its economic

China has stood by its commitments, side powers, but among themselves. That from infrastructure to energy, and is now inviting other nations to participate in CPEC's second phase.

This openness is not just about inclusion tions but a rotation of power — symbolic of a but about reshaping the political geography local stewardship of peace and security. States must now confront a region that is no longer willing to be choreographed by dis-

New alliances are forming, new dialogues are taking root, and new aspirations are driving policy. For India, the challenge is from this forum is not due to oversight but clear: adapt or be left behind. This is not a region waiting to be saved or shaped from gaging with the Taliban-led government, the outside. It is one beginning to write its own story — with its own voice, its own priorities, and its own future.

The writer is a public health professional, journalist, and possesses expertposed expansion into Afghanistan could be ise in health communication, having keen interest in national and interna-For a country that has suffered decades tional affairs, can be reached at

Radicalization is not destiny

By Atiq Raja



through the quieter corriabandonment, and anger.

It is not a monster lurking in foreign lands or hidden corners—it is, increasingly, a human experience unfolding in plain sight. And yet, we keep looking away. For decades now, societies have wrestled with the question: why do ordinary people, many of them young, turn to extreme ideologies? From

political slogans, in brotherhood chants or elders can.

feeling invisible, or in societies where cervoices step in with seductive answers.

harden these sentiments. Whether it's polit- classroom should be a space where history ical oppression, economic inequality, or a is examined critically, where ethics are dethe crowded lanes of Karachi to the sub- wounds fester in silence. These grievances not feared. Instead, too many are taught urbs of Europe, from digital spaces to are not created by extremists, but they are only to follow, not to think. prison cells, radicalization has become one expertly exploited by them. Radical moveof the most profound threats to peace—not ments are built not just on doctrine but on not inevitable. It is a process—and that but justice. Not walls, but bridges. In the just because of its violence, but because of human pain. Technology has accelerated means it can be interrupted. But this re-end, we must build a world where the only the silence and neglect that often precede this process. In the digital world, a young quires more than just counter-terrorism thing radical is our commitment to each man struggling with loneliness or confusion To understand radicalization is not may fall down a rabbit hole of rage and con- ing of society. We must begin by asking: against extremism is to believe in the humerely to define it. It is to step inside the spiracy within hours. The algorithms don't who are we leaving behind? Governments manity of those who have lost their wayfragile mind of someone who feels dis- ask questions—they amplify what's already must do more than chase threats; they and to help them find it again. carded by society, told that they don't be- lurking in the corners of our minds. Extrem- must remove the conditions that allow exlong, and then offered a story that finally ists have learnt to speak the language of tremism to grow. This means fairness in of AR Trainings and Consultancy, with makes them feel significant. That story may youth: memes, music, emotion. And often, law, justice in policing, and equality in op- degrees in Political Science and English come wrapped in religious vocabulary or they get there before parents, teachers, or

revolutionary promises. The ideology may differ, but the pattern remains tragically fa
Religion, too, is weaponized—not in its of destruction. Communities must become essence, but in its distortion. Holy books places of care and accountability. Families, modern fractured communities or marginalized cries. In communities where religious edu- signs long before the security agencies do. world, not with the noise groups, the answer is not clear. Identity can cation is reduced to memorization rather

portunity. A young person who feels seen *Literature*, can be reached and heard is far less likely to follow a path news@metro-morning.com

adicalization has miliar. It begins, often, with a question: who are cherry-picked, stripped of context and teachers, imams, social workers—they are crept into the heart am I? For many, especially young people in compassion, and reassembled as battle our first responders, often spotting the early

There are stories from around the world of warplanes or the sound feel like a maze, and radical ideologies offer than understanding, where nuance is re- of individuals who left violent groups beof marching boots, but a map. In homes where children grow up placed by dogma, the doors to interpreta- cause someone, somewhere, showed them tion remain shut. It is not faith that radical- kindness. Because someone took the time dors of disillusionment, tain groups are treated as lesser, radical izes, but the vacuum left when genuine to listen. Because someone believed they spiritual guidance is absent. Education, or were more than the worst thing they had They provide meaning, urgency, and the lack of it, is another critical fault line. done. These are not just stories of deradipurpose. They offer the illusion of power to When schools punish curiosity and reward calization—they are stories of redemption. those who feel powerless. Then there are obedience, they fail to equip young minds And they remind us of a crucial truth: nothe injustices—real or perceived—that with the tools to question propaganda. A body is born an extremist. Let us stop treating radicalization as if it were some distant virus, to be eradicated with force. Let us foreign drone strike that kills civilians, such bated, and where diversity is understood, treat it as a message from the margins—a signal that our societies have failed to include, to protect, to love. The antidote is not Yet, even with all this, radicalization is surveillance—it is solidarity. Not judgement, strategies. It calls for a collective reimagin- other. Because the greatest act of defiance

The writer is a rights activist and CEO

Turning sun into sustenance

By Ghulam Hussain Baloch



are unaffordable. Enter the state's gleamthe proposition makes sense.

amenities. Its average cost of a functional solar-powered were supposed to harness lifeblood—agriculture—depends not on in- irrigation setup runs well above Rs4 mil-

ity and diesel—both as unreliable as they larization is not a solution—it's a mirage.

promises go to die. the tyranny of the power switch. But this deserts in more ways than one. Technical gotiable. Despite being Pakistan's too, like so many other interventions in support is scarce to nonexistent. When a stubbornly excluded from devil—as always—was in the detail. The dormant, mocked by the very sun they

modern, green, and sustainable, aiming to skewed in favor of the well-connected, with after a year, batteries that die without shadows over its own promises. replace power-hungry tube wells with solar ordinary farmers shut out by opaque proenergy, liberating farmers from blackouts cedures and rampant corruption. What vendor—there is no quality control, no enwith different tasks currently stationed and soaring diesel costs. At first glance, should have been a lifeline is instead a forcement, and no accountability. To sal- in Balochistan, can be reached at symbol of exclusion. The problems don't vage the program from becoming another news@metro-morning.com

No monthly bills, no environmental stop there. Once installed, the systems de-footnote in the long history of failed provindamage, no dependence on erratic grid mand maintenance—solar panels, batter- cial promises, the government needs more or years, Balochis- supply. For the desperate farmer, it held lies, inverters all prone to faults. But than press releases. Transparent and intan has been where the glimmer of self-reliance and an end to Balochistan's rural districts are solar clusive subsidy mechanisms are non-ne-

Technical training centers must be eslargest province by land- Balochistan, is a tale of half-truths and un- system breaks, there's no one to fix it—un- tablished to empower local communities to mass and a trove of natu- realized potential. While the state an- less one can afford to import help from the maintain their systems. Only certified, ral wealth, it remains nounced the scheme with a flourish, the cities. For many, their expensive setups lie high-quality equipment should be allowed into the supply chain, and predatory vendors must be held accountable. And per-Then there is the most basic of chal- haps most critically, low-interest credit fanovation or state support, but on a daily lion, yet the government's contribution is lenges: geology. In swathes of Balochis- cilities must be made available so that struggle for water in a region where rain is capped at Rs2 million. The burden of the tan, groundwater lies hundreds of feet smallholders can afford the up-front inrare and canals are a myth. With the land remaining cost falls squarely on farmers, below. Many of the subsidized solar sys- vestment. Beyond technology, this is a parched and underground aquifers shrink- many of whom operate on subsistence tems simply aren't built to draw water from question of planning, of governance, of pong, tube wells remain the only means of ir- margins and cannot dream of affording the such depths. Farmers, forced to return to litical will. Solar energy is not just a marigation, and they rely heavily on electric- rest. For the small and medium farmer, so- diesel pumps, are left worse off than be- chine—it is a lifeline that, if mishandled, fore—disillusioned and in debt. Adding in- becomes a weight too heavy to bear. The Even the subsidy itself has become a sult to injury is the market's flood of cheap, sun can still power Balochistan's agriculing promise: solarization. A plan hailed as tool of political patronage. Access remains substandard equipment. Panels that fade ture, but only if the state stops casting

Crisis communication in defense strategy

By Abdullah Haroon



n the modern era, fending its sovereignty. warfare is no longer narratives, perceptions cally

in its own right.

in a hybrid warfare environment, where lenging. controlling the narrative is as crucial as escalation, Pakistan's ability to manage global perception through strategic mes-

the world understood Pakistan's stance— Statements from Lieutenant General national security is not just about military

confined to battle- ent and strategic approach to crisis com- war but was ready to defend itself. fields—it extends into munication, Indian media took a drastidifferent route. and strategic messag- misinformation and nationalist hysteria. ing. Pakistan's Inter-Ser- Several prominent Indian news networks (ISPR) has emerged as a critical force in ranging from fabricated reports of Pakensuring that military actions are not just aggerated victories that never occurred. ISPR's role has evolved beyond tradi- dian public but also escalated tensions, tional military briefings—it now operates making diplomatic resolution more chal-

controlling territory. During the May 2025 such critical moments highlights the danger of unchecked media narratives, rein-India's Operation Sindoor, targeting Pak- messaging—it is also about internal sta- tive messaging can enhance Pakistan's defence. istan. Pakistan's response, Operation bility. In times of conflict, public morale credibility in the global arena. In an age yond the battlefield, ISPR ensured that reinforcing national unity and confidence. istan's defence diplomacy, ensuring that news@metro-morning.com

not as an aggressor, but as a nation de- Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry emphasized strength but also about how effectively Pakistan's preparedness, reassuring the the country conveys its position to the While Pakistan maintained a transpar- public that the country was not seeking world. The ability to control narratives,

fuelling forms ensured that misinformation did not ture engagements, proving that in modspread unchecked. In an era where so- ern warfare, words can be just as cial media can amplify false narratives, powerful as weapons. vices Public Relations unleashed a barrage of false claims, ISPR's ability to control the flow of inforthan reactive statements.

counter propaganda and maintain diplo-Moreover, ISPR's use of digital plat- matic integrity will shape Pakistan's fu-

In today's volatile geopolitical climate, mation was instrumental in maintaining narrative control is no longer a luxury—it shaping the country's defence diplomacy, istani fighter jets being shot down to ex- domestic stability. The May 2025 crisis is a necessity for survival. The effectivedemonstrated that communication is as ness of Pakistan's ISPR lies in its ability executed but understood in the right con- Sensationalist coverage falsely sug- powerful as military strength. Pakistan's to counter disinformation with clarity, distext. The May 2025 crisis between Pak- gested that Pakistan had requested a ability to shape narratives, counter misin- cipline and strategic foresight. Unlike traistan and India was a defining moment, ceasefire, a claim categorically denied by formation and maintain diplomatic credi- ditional warfare, hybrid conflict thrives on where communication became as vital as ISPR. Some outlets even aired doctored bility was a testament to ISPR's strategic confusion, manipulation and psychologimilitary strategy itself. Gone are the days visuals, falsely presenting footage from role. Moving forward, Pakistan must en- cal disruption. During the May 2025 criwhen wars were fought solely with other conflicts as evidence of Indian hance digital diplomacy to engage with sis, ISPR's real-time updates, public weapons; today, information is a weapon strikes on Pakistani cities. This reckless global audiences more effectively, ensur-briefings and responsible use of digital media propaganda not only misled the In- ing that the country's narrative is shaped platforms not only informed global audithrough authentic engagement rather ences but also neutralized attempts to delegitimize Pakistan's position. This Strengthening real-time crisis re- clarity helped avoid diplomatic isolation The spread of misinformation during sponse mechanisms will be crucial in and galvanized domestic support at a preventing misinformation, ensuring that time when morale could have faltered. In Pakistan's stance remains clear and rein- an era where social media platforms can forcing the need for responsible journal- forcing the country's sovereignty. Invest- turn falsehoods viral within seconds, Paksaging played a decisive role in prevent- ism in conflict reporting. Crisis ing in media training for defence officials istan's communications model must be ing further conflict. The crisis began with communication is not just about external is also imperative, as clear and authorita-studied as a vital component of national

The writer is a student in the De-Bunyan-un-Marsoos, was swift and cal- can determine national resilience. ISPR's where wars are fought on multiple fronts, partment of International Relations at culated, focusing on military installations approach was not limited to military up- ISPR's role in crisis communication will the National Defence University, Israther than civilian areas. However, be- dates; it actively engaged with citizens, continue to be a defining factor in Pak- lamabad, can be reached at



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Pakistan brands India's proxy war 'Fitna-e-Hindustan'

Pakistan's interior secretary condemned the school bus attack in Khuzdar as a 'Fitna-e-Hindustan' act under RAW's supervision, vowing justice will be served

By Asghar Ali Mubarak

ISLAMABAD: The recent brutal attack on a school bus in Khuzdar has been strongly condemned by Interior Secretary Capt. (Retd.) Muhammad Khurram Agha, who labelled it an act of terrorism orchestrated by the group 'Fitna-e-Hindustan' under the direct supervision of India's intelligence agency, RAW. Speaking sive tactics. alongside DG ISPR Lieu- Khurram conference, the Interior Sec- on retary pledged to bring the Hindustan, a group impli- including women and chil-

perpetrators to justice. Khuzdar attack was carefully India's group, with backing from campaign, citing evidence terror groups India's RAW agency. Lieu- presented at the United Na- Khawarij and tenant General Chaudhry reiterated Pakistan's readiness Prime Minister. to face any further provoca-



Khurram Agha disclosed cated in orchestrating years dren, as one of the major at-Preliminary investiga- of violence in Pakistan. He tacks. He questioned the ra-

Since April 2024, Fitna-e- 10. tions, warning India of the Hindustan has been targetconsequences of its aggres- ing innocent civilians in Chaudhry

Balochistan, resulting in claimed ten lives. Other atdozens of deaths. The DG tacks, such as those on the longer to sources, tenant General Ahmed that captured terrorists ad- ISPR referenced the March Jafer Express and in Las- Sharif Chaudhry at a press mitted to conducting attacks 11 Jafer Express bombing, bela, targeted civilians and on PTI Vice Chairman Shah behalf of Fitna-e- which killed over 30 people, security personnel alike.

Lieutenant

India's ongoing support for from any legitimate local political or ethnic struggle. He detailed recent brutal at-

two-decade-long ligence reports showing inside Pakistan, including the

on laborers in Tump Kech on ing leadership, many of April 28, and an IED blast in whom have been facing pro-Emphasizing India's role advanced weapons, the DG tions, the Interior Secretary pointed to Pakistan's sustionale behind the May 6 and ISPR condemned Indian Qureshi's daughter, Mehr

planned by this proxy terror state-sponsored terrorism India's activation of proxy October 6 assault on Chi-Fitna-ulnese nationals in Karachi tions and earlier to India's Hindustan to carry out 33 at- groups. He criticized India's celebrations following the tacks between May 6 and Khuzdar attack, describing General them as unprecedentedly

Gohar visits SMQ, Pervaiz Elahi, Ejaz Ch

News Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar met senior party leaders Shah terrorism, branding the vio- Mahmood Qureshi, Pervaiz lent incidents on May 21 as Elahi and Senator Ejaz the "terrorist and oppressive | Chaudhry during a brief visit face of India," disconnected to Lahore, the party con-

tacks, including killings in sonal visits to inquire about Noshki on April 12, assaults the health of the party's ail-

According to sources, Mahmood Qureshi, who is currently under treatment at in arming these groups with a hospital in Lahore due to health complications. revealed, indicate that the tained efforts to expose 7 assaults, highlighting intel- media for glorifying attacks Bano Qureshi, was also present during the meeting. The two leaders were said to have exchanged views on Fitna-e- linked to RAW-backed political matters during the

> Later in the day, Barrister Gohar also met Senator Ejaz Chaudhry and former Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi. Both meetings were held at separate locations and focused primarily on extending good wishes and expressing solidarity. When asked about the nature of his engagements in Lahore, the PTI chairman clarified that the visits were not political in

118 officers graduate at Navy War College

By Faizan Khan

LAHORE: The 54th conocation of Pakistan Navv War College was held in Lahore, with Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf as the guest of honor. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), degrees were awarded to 118 officers, including 44 from allied countries.

Admiral Ashraf underlined

PM calls on industries to embrace modern technology The prime minister emphasized that a stronger

government-private sector partnership is essential to securing Pakistan's place on the global economic stage

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called for the rapid introduction of modern technology across Pakistan's industries, emphasizing innovation as the cornerstone for transforming the country into a formidable economic power. Speaking at a meeting with presidents of chambers of critical moment for Pak- steps include simplifying prosperity.

the government and the pri- moves designed to ease fi- tion. vate sector, stressing that nancial burdens on manuglobal economic map. "Ecoit," he said, signaling a com- tial to keep Pakistan's indus- engagement. mitment to empowering businesses of all sizes.

enterprises (SMEs), which meet global standards," he and growth



istan's economic revival, fol- business regulations and re- firm message that tax evalowing what he termed a ducing operational costs — sion would not be tolerated, "battle for truth" that has key factors he believes will promising robust enforce-united the government and stimulate production and ment measures. He framed people in pursuit of shared create employment opportu- a fair and efficient tax system nities. Efforts are also under- as crucial for strengthening The prime minister high- way to make commercial Pakistan's economic foundalighted the importance of loans more accessible and tion and ensuring that growth closer cooperation between to lower electricity tariffs, benefits the wider popula-

This meeting comes at a this partnership is vital to facturers and entrepreneurs. time when Pakistan faces placing Pakistan on the Reiterating the urgent significant fiscal and indusneed for industrial modern- trial challenges, with the govnomic self-reliance is the ization, the prime minister ernment seeking to signal a goal, and we must energize stressed that embracing shift towards economic pragthe private sector to achieve modern technology is essen- matism and private sector tries competitive and aligned Sharif's remarks reflect a with international standards. clear intention to harness in-Sharif outlined several "We must bring modern novation and collaboration measures aimed at support- technology into our indus- as pillars of Pakistan's path ing small and medium-sized tries to stay competitive and towards economic resilience

KWSC gets overdue Rs12.59bn from federal, Sindh

By our correspondent

KARACHI: In a longoverdue move that signals renewed attention to Karachi's chronic water and sanitation challenges, both the federal and Sindh governments have jointly cleared more than Rs12.59 billion in outstanding dues owed to the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC), according to a statement issued by the Sindh Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

formal intervention by the scheduled date of 2 June. PAC, which took notice of The Ministry of Finance anthe persistent arrears that nounced alongside this that had piled up across multiple the Economic Survey, extent of non-payment by June. both federal and provincial the committee to push for

a staggering Rs31.77 billion was originally owed to the water utility, with federal departments responbillion. In response to mounting pressure from the committee, federal institutions other senior officials. have since cleared Rs10.37 have settled Rs2.21 billion of their dues.

While this marks a significant step forward, the PAC has made it clear that the matter is far from closed. The committee has pledged to maintain pressure on all | By Aziz Khatri relevant departments to ensure the remaining dues are fully recovered. Officials underscored that the financial Ghulam Nabi Memon countries. sustainability of the KWSC is chaired a meeting to not just a bureaucratic concern, but a critical public interest issue in a city where structure, and mounting realities for millions.

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Deputy

Prime Minister Ishaq Dar

has underlined the pivotal

role of the Public Sector De-

velopment Program (PSDP)

in shaping a more equitable

and economically resilient Pakistan, stating that the

upcoming PSDP for 2024-

25 will serve as a catalyst

for employment generation,

gional balance.

Federal budget for 2025–26 delayed amid ongoing IMF negotiations

Finance ministry insiders reveal the postponement reflects deepening rifts with the IMF over key budget proposals yet to be resolved

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has consented on 10 June, marking The payments follow a a delay from the initially

> Insiders within the fi-Fund (IMF) over critical man of the Federal Board sparked debate. of Revenue (FBR) and



nomic pressures.

ity's operations, prompting the International Monetary penditures, signaling a bid reflect the Fund's condi- demonstrate the evolving to tighten fiscal discipline. tions immediate financial rectifica- | budgetary proposals. After The country also shared two rounds of intensive ne- projections for increasing tion date approaches, all According to the PAC's gotiations held earlier tax and non-tax revenues eyes are on policymakers today—one in the morning and introduced plans to im- in Islamabad, who must given the increasing role of and another in the after- prove revenue collection at balance the demands of innoon—Pakistan and the the provincial level. This in-ternational lenders with do-IMF failed to reach a con-cludes introducing a mech-mestic political realities. sible for Rs20.69 billion and sensus. The talks were led anism for agricultural in- The government faces the Sindh's provincial depart- by the finance secretary, come tax, a particularly difficult challenge of meetments accounting for Rs9.82 | accompanied by the chair- sensitive topic that has long ing IMF conditions without | tional warfare tactics. The

indicated that discussions a tightrope walk that will Pakistan reportedly put with the IMF will continue shape Pakistan's economic attended by senior military ofbillion, while Sindh's own government departments aimed at easing the tax ing the ongoing uncertainty ahead.

forward several proposals into next week, underscortrajectory for the year ficials, civilian dignitaries, and families of course members.

tiers of government. The which offers an annual re-burden on salaried workers as Islamabad strives to KWSC had submitted a view of the country's eco- and reducing taxes on in- align its budget with the Naveed Ashraf highlighted is entirely baseless and runs comprehensive report to the nomic performance, will be dustry, seeking to lessen Fund's requirements. the changing nature of warcommittee, laying bare the released a day earlier on 9 business costs amid eco- Under the current loan pro- fare and emphasized the ur-In addition, the govern- committed to preparing its emerging threats to maritime departments. The document | nance ministry suggest the ment proposed significant budget in consultation with | security. He pointed out that outlined how these unpaid postponement stems from cuts in both development the IMF, meaning the final recent tensions between bills had hamstrung the util- unresolved differences with and non-development ex- fiscal targets are likely to Pakistan and India clearly

> As the budget presentadeepening public hardship The finance ministry has or sparking political unrest,

gram, Pakistan remains gent need to understand character of conflict. In this context, he stressed that conventional military strategies must be adapted, especially non-state actors.

that traditional military approaches need to evolve to effectively counter unconvenceremony concluded with the distribution of degrees to successful graduates and was

Pakistan rejects baseless allegations by Indian PM

By Asghar Ali Mubarak

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office Office spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan has condemned recent statements by India's leadership as deliberate attempts to escalate tensions between the two countries. He stressed that In his address, Admiral linking Pakistan to terrorism contrary to established facts

ter and international law. He acceptable. reiterated Pakistan's role as be mistaken for weakness.

capability to safeguard its peace. sovereignty and will respond



REIGN ALFA

sized that such false accusa- forts, dismissing attempts to resolutions. tions and aggressive military associate Pakistan with terclaims violate the UN Char- rorism as misleading and un- cused India of targeting Pak-

a vital partner in the global warned that provocative atrocities in occupied Kashfight against terrorism, warn- statements by India threaten mir. He urged condemned ing that its steadfast commit-regional peace and stability, New Delhi's recent suspenment to peace should never but stressed Pakistan's un- sion of pilgrim access via the wavering dedication to con- Kartarpur Corridor starting "Pakistan possesses full structive dialogue and lasting from 7 May. Khan stressed

firmly to any aggression," he dispute, he described it as Sikh pilgrims, underscoring declared, reaffirming Islam- the root cause of tension in Islamabad's respect for Sikh abad's readiness to defend South Asia. He stated that religious freedom.

and irresponsible rhetoric cooperation with interna- people and existing United and behavior," Khan emphational counterterrorism ef- Nations Security Council The spokesperson ac-

istan to divert global attenspokesperson tion from the documented that Pakistan's side remains Addressing the Kashmir fully open and welcoming to

Russia-Ukraine prisoners' swap completed: Trump

News Desk

WASHINGTON: US News Desk President Donald Trump has announced the completion of a significant prisoner exchange between Russia and Ukraine, a development that has drawn attention amid the prolonged conflict between the two nations. In a statement shared on social media, Trump congratulated both sides for reaching this milestone, though he refrained from offering specific details about the nature or scale of the swap.

Reports from news agencies indicate that this announcement follows recent talks held last week between Russian and Ukrainian officials. During trade," the president re- also point out that such a these discussions, the two exchange approximately 1,000 prisoners, a considerable number that highlights the scale of the

This prisoner swap is rare instances of cooperation between the two countries amid ongoing hostili-

Trump imposes 50pc tariff on EU goods starting 1 June

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has announced that the United States will impose a sweeping 50 percent tariff on goods imported from the European Union starting 1 June, escalating trade tensions with the bloc. In a statement reported by news agencies in Washington, Trump said he has formally recommended the new tariff. claiming the EU was created "with the sole purpose of tak- could provoke a sharp reing advantage of the United sponse from Brussels, po-

States on trade. tremely difficult dealing with straining already fragile USthe European Union on EU relations. Trade experts marked, suggesting that the blanket tariff could raise benefited its members at the sumers and disrupt supply expense of American indus- chains across multiple indus-

and cheese, though details chief executive.



have yet to be made public. Analysts warn the tariff

tentially leading to a retalia-"It has always been ex- tory tariff regime and tries. In a statement posted The move marks one of to social media, Trump said the most aggressive trade that Apple "will have to pay a measures taken by the 25 percent tax" on all administration iPhones made outside the against a key US ally. It's ex- US and sold within the counpected to affect a wide range try. "I've already informed of European exports, from Tim Cook," the president cars and machinery to wine added, referring to Apple's

Pakistan, UK to boost criminal data sharing International aimed at im- in the UK, particularly cities. proving the exchange of in- those involved in sexual of-

Presiding over a high- development schemes and shadow Pakistan's develop-

level meeting on the pro- frame the agenda for the ment ambitions.

formulation, Dar next financial year. The ses-

These are shared with KARACHI: Inspector formation on criminal of- fences, and on collabora- national and provincial au-General of Sindh Police fenders between the two tive monitoring systems thorities as well as law enwith partner countries. The forcement agencies. Each Officials were briefed on representative from Adam province in Pakistan, along strengthen criminal intelli- how to enhance the effec- Smith International noted with federal agencies, has gence sharing between tiveness of data sharing that the UK actively tracks established Interpol desks Pakistan and the United through Interpol. Discus- individuals involved in seri- and designated focal per-

water shortages, aging infra- Kingdom through Interpol. sions centered on develop- ous crimes and issues sur- sons to manage such ex-The meeting focused on ing mechanisms to ex- veillance requests through changes. However, delays sewage problems are daily the UPSCALE program— change data on convicted Interpol when they travel to caused by lengthy procean initiative by Adam Smith and suspected individuals their native countries or dures remain a challenge. Dar backs PSDP for economic uplift through employment

> This approach, Dar noted, top priorities. was no longer optional but Participan Participants in the meetessential to sustaining mo- ing reached consensus on sides reportedly agreed to bloc's policies have unfairly prices for American conmentum amid shrinking fis- prioritizing underserved regions, reiterating that na-The Deputy Prime Minis- tional development could

ter directed that the PSDP not be meaningful without poverty alleviation, and re- other senior bureaucrats to flagging growing financial must reflect Prime Minister bridging regional disparities. assess the state of ongoing limitations that continue to Shehbaz Sharif's 'Udaan The conversation also print rooted in accelerated improving productivity, es-In response, a clear em- growth, inclusive develop- pecially in rural and indusbrought together ministers sion laid bare the complex phasis was placed on the ment, and national cohe-trial sectors, to unlock the from planning, economic af- economic landscape facing need for robust public-pri- sion. Projects tied to key country's economic poten- ties fairs, food security, and the country, with officials vate partnerships. A sub- sectors such as energy, tial.

committee has been consti- transport, water infrastructuted to facilitate these col- ture, agriculture, technollaborations, with the aim of ogy, and particularly the leveraging private capital second phase of the Chinaand expertise to comple- Pakistan Economic Corridor ment state-led initiatives. (CPEC) were identified as

arrangement. Pakistan' vision — a blue- shifted to the importance of being seen as one of the

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