

PM hails deep emotional bonds with Azerbaijan

It went beyond mere symbolism—a powerful reaffirmation of a lasting friendship grounded in shared values, mutual respect, and strategic common ground

News Desk

BAKU: In the serene surroundings of Lachin, a district emblematic of resilience and renewal in Azerbaijan, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif offered warm words that echoed with sincerity and diplomatic clarity. Following a high-level meeting with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, the Prime Minister described the relationship between Pakistan and Azerbaijan as one marked by emotional intimacy, declaring that “our hearts beat together.”

It was more than a symbolic gesture—it was a reaffirmation of an enduring friendship shaped by shared values, mutual respect, and strategic alignment. The gathering in Lachin was not merely a political formality but a significant milestone in deepening bilateral ties. Accompanied by Pakistan’s Chief of Army Staff, Field



Marshal Syed Asim Munir, and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Prime Minister Sharif conveyed Pakistan’s gratitude for Azerbaijan’s steadfast support during critical moments, particularly during Islamabad’s standoff with New Delhi.

The choice of Lachin, a site once marred by conflict and now a beacon of Azerbaijan’s post-war recovery, added a layer of emotional gravitas to the visit—one that did not go unnoticed by either side. In an official communiqué, Prime Minister

Sharif extended congratulations to the people of Azerbaijan on their national independence day.

He described the bond between the two countries as “eternal and unshakable,” noting that it is rooted in brotherhood rather than transactional politics.

The Prime Minister highlighted that both governments had agreed to broaden cooperation across all sectors—economic, defence, cultural, and energy—while underlining a shared commitment to regional

peace and prosperity. The discussions bore concrete outcomes, including the agreement to facilitate the exchange of high-level delegations aimed at expediting investment and economic collaboration. Official-level meetings are expected to follow soon, further institutionalizing the dialogue between Baku and Islamabad.

Sharif’s remarks captured the broader sentiment of the visit. He reminded those present that Pakistan and Azerbaijan have consistently supported one another in times of need. Standing side-by-side in Lachin, the two leaders envisioned a future built not only on shared memories but on mutual progress and people-centric diplomacy. This visit, marked by symbolism and strategy, underlined a quiet but firm shift in regional diplomacy—where historical camaraderie is being actively translated into concrete partnerships.

Railways minister vows to sink ‘Akhand Bharat’ plan

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Federal Railways Minister Hanif Abbasi has strongly criticised the Indian government’s expansionist ideology, declaring that Pakistan will “sink the Akhand Bharat plan into the Indian Ocean.”

Abbasi condemned the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and its ideological affiliate, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, accusing them of seeking to eliminate Muslims from India. He said the Indian leadership harbours ambitions to expand its influence by taking control of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and several other neighbouring countries under the banner of creating a so-called unified Akhand Bharat — a vision rooted in Hindu nationalist ideology.

“This is not just a political fantasy, it’s a dangerous geopolitical agenda,” Abbasi said. “But let me make it clear — I will take a resolution against this plan to Parliament, and with the will of God, we will pass it. We will drown this Akhand Bharat plan in the depths of the Indian Ocean.”

Islamic council rejects bill to ban child marriages

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamic Ideological Council has rejected a bill aimed at prohibiting child marriages. According to the council’s statement, provisions that classify marriage under the age of 18 as rape and prescribe punishments were declared un-Islamic and dismissed outright.

The council, chaired by Allama Raghīb Naeemi, also turned down a proposal to make thalassemia testing mandatory before marriage. Instead, they recommended keeping such tests optional and focusing on raising public awareness. The meeting criticized media coverage of a Lahore High Court ruling on Khula (divorce initiated by the wife), calling it irresponsible and urged careful reporting of judicial decisions.

Regarding dowry, the council condemned undue pressure and demands placed on the bride’s family, labelling these practices un-Islamic. It also stated that after marriage, women should have the right to hold domicile in either their husband’s or their parents’ area. The council proposed amendments to inheritance laws (sections 15 and 16) and expressed concerns that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government’s “Child Marriage Restraint Bill 2025” conflicts with Islamic law.

Pakistan, Iran deepen military relations with high-profile visit

Both leaders discussion largely centered on actionable steps to strengthen security protocols along the long and sensitive Pakistan-Iran border

By our correspondent



TEHRAN: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of Pakistan, recently made a significant visit to the General Staff Headquarters in Tehran, marking an important chapter in the military diplomacy between Pakistan and Iran. Welcomed with a ceremonial guard of honor by the Iranian Armed Forces, his arrival underscored the high level of respect and the seriousness with which both countries regard their defence relationship.

During his visit, Field Marshal Munir met with Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces.

Their discussions centered on the shifting dynamics of regional security, with a shared emphasis on deepening bilateral military cooperation. Both leaders acknowledged the importance of a robust defence partnership in a region that faces a complex web of challenges ranging from border security to wider geopolitical tensions.

A significant part of their dialogue focused on practical measures to enhance security mechanisms along the lengthy and sensitive Pakistan-Iran border. Both sides expressed a desire to not only secure this frontier but to transform it into a corridor for trade and economic exchange, recognizing that peace and prosperity go hand in hand. The idea of turning border areas into hubs of economic activity reflects a broader regional ambition to promote stability through connectivity rather than confrontation.

This visit follows Field Marshal Munir’s earlier meetings with key Iranian leaders, including the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Syed Ali Hosseini

Khamenei, and President Masoud Pezeshkian. These engagements, alongside the ongoing official trip to Türkiye, Iran, and Azerbaijan with the Prime Minister’s delegation, highlight Pakistan’s concerted efforts to strengthen ties with its neighbors through diplomacy, security cooperation, and economic collaboration.

The military dialogue between Pakistan and Iran, conducted at such high levels, sends a clear message about the intent to build trust and address shared challenges collaboratively. In a region often marked by volatility, these steps towards partnership and mutual understanding offer a hopeful path towards lasting peace and stability.

Pakistan’s armed forces mark 27 years of nuclear pride

By our correspondent

RAWALPINDI: On the 27th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer, the Armed Forces of Pakistan, alongside the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and the Services Chiefs, extended heartfelt felicitations to the people of the country, marking a day of profound national significance.

Youm-e-Takbeer commemorates the historic moment in 1998 when Pakistan declared itself a nuclear power, a milestone that not only reshaped the strategic balance in South Asia but also affirmed the nation’s sovereign right to self-defence.

This landmark achievement stands as a testament to Pakistan’s unity, resolve, and enduring pursuit of dignity and peace.



It reflects the collective will of a nation determined to safeguard its sovereignty amidst complex regional dynamics. At the heart of this success lies the vision and leadership of Pakistan’s pioneers, including scientists, engineers, and military strategists whose dedication made the country’s defence capabilities unsailable.

The day serves as a solemn reminder of the trust placed in Pakistan’s strategic assets—a national responsibility that transcends generations. It underscores the country’s commitment to a doctrine of credible minimum deterrence, focused on maintaining peace and stability in a volatile region.

The Armed Forces have reiterated that Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal remains purely defensive, designed to deter aggression and ensure peace.

As Pakistan marks Youm-e-Takbeer, the occasion is not only one of celebration but also of reflection and resolve. The nation honors the sacrifices that paved the way for this achievement and renews its pledge to remain vigilant, united, and steadfast.

The Armed Forces stand firmly alongside the people, continuing their journey toward strength, stability, and self-reliance—an enduring commitment to securing Pakistan’s future in a challenging world.

Nepra approves Rs39.97/unit rate for K-Electric

K-Electric has once again been allowed to draw more money from Karachiites’ pockets than any other distribution company (Disco) in the country

By our correspondent

KARACHI: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has given its nod to a significant revision in K-Electric’s power supply tariff, setting an average rate of Rs39.97 per unit for the fiscal year 2023-24. The decision, which marks an 18 percent jump from the earlier rate of Rs33.82, comes as part of a long-term framework spanning seven years—from 2023-24 to 2029-30—aimed at reshaping the utility’s financial and operational footing.

But the move is already fueling concerns that Karachi’s residents will shoulder a disproportionate burden compared to electricity consumers elsewhere in the country. This latest approval follows NEPRA’s earlier ruling on K-Electric’s transmission and distribution tariffs, effectively replacing a multi-year arrangement that had expired on 30 June 2023.

Though framed as a regulatory necessity, the new structure is being criticized by energy watchers and citizen groups who argue that K-Electric has once again been allowed to draw more money from Karachiites’ pockets than any other distribution company (Disco) in the country.

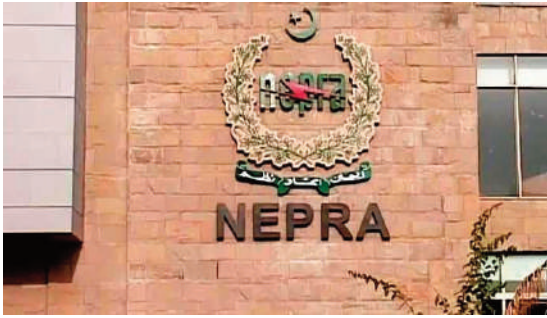
The numbers underscore the gap. With K-Electric’s newly set tariff standing at Rs39.97 per unit, sources familiar with the sector point out that it is 34 percent higher than the Rs29.78 base tariff currently applicable to other Discos.

Even a glance at NEPRA’s own breakdown confirms the upward pressure. Of the new unit cost, Rs31.96 is attributed to power purchase expenses, Rs2.86 to transmission, Rs3.31 to distribution, and Rs2.28 to a supply margin. An additional 44 paise per unit has been tacked on to cover legacy adjustments. In what might appear to be an attempt to soften the blow, NEPRA has clarified that these revised figures will not be directly passed on to consumers.

In keeping with national policy, electricity rates are to remain uniform across the country, meaning the federal government will bridge the gap by subsidizing the differential for K-Electric’s customers. Still, the reassurance rings hollow for many, particularly in Karachi, where grievances against K-Electric’s performance run deep. The utility’s track record on outages, billing complaints, and customer service has long been a source of friction.

Critics argue that pouring more money into the system—especially through a subsidized structure—without tangible service improvements will only embolden inefficiency.

K-Electric has been instructed to improve its recovery rate, which now must climb from 93.25 percent to 96.50 percent over the tariff period.



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Kh Asif takes aim at Modi after India’s regional stumbles

By Asghar Ali Mubarak

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif lashed out at Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, declaring that “Modi has finally been cut down to size” following India’s electoral setbacks and perceived regional failures.

Asif stated that leaders like Modi endanger not just their own nations but global peace. He compared Modi’s leadership to that of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, saying both have destabilized their regions through extremist policies. “People like Narendra Modi bring ruin upon their countries and the world when they come to power,” Asif remarked, adding, “Modi now sees his political demise looming — and in



many ways, it has already happened. The Indian public is still in shock at what has transpired.”

Referring to Pakistan’s recent gains in cyber and digital warfare, the Defence Minister claimed that the Pakistani military and cyber units had achieved “remarkable success against India,” and asserted that the scale and precision of these actions were unprecedented. “Our armed forces, and

even our youth, have made history in the realm of modern warfare,” he said, hinting at both institutional and informal digital campaigns that have challenged Indian narratives online.

Turning to domestic matters, Asif also commented on a recent statement made by Aleema Khan, sister of the PTI founder. He suggested her tone implied a possible search for reconciliation.

Israel faces mounting isolation over Gaza war crimes

News Desk

GAZA: As Israel’s brutal attacks in Gaza continue, statements from its allied countries, including the United States, reveal a deepening international isolation for Israel. According to a report by a major American newspaper, alongside earlier criticism from Britain, Canada, and France, now the United States, Germany, and Italy have also voiced concerns over Israel’s escalating violence in Gaza.

US President Donald Trump, speaking to reporters before leaving for New Jersey, said talks were ongoing with Israel and expressed hope for a swift resolution to the crisis. Just hours later, the German government issued unusually strong criticism of Israel’s actions. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz questioned what the Israeli military hoped to achieve by caus-



ing such harm to civilians in Gaza.

Italy’s Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani joined the chorus, calling on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to halt the attacks, demand an immediate ceasefire, and secure the release of hostages held by Hamas. Earlier, Britain, Canada, and France had warned in a joint statement of serious consequences if

Israel failed to change course. Meanwhile, France is planning a conference with Saudi Arabia in June to discuss the establishment of a Palestinian state, signaling a push for diplomatic solutions.

An Israeli journalist noted that such widespread criticism from traditional allies is unprecedented and leaves Israel increasingly isolated on

the global stage. What is most alarming, they said, is that the United States, historically Israel’s staunchest supporter, has refrained from issuing strong supportive statements this time. This shift highlights the growing unease among Israel’s allies over its conduct in Gaza and marks a critical moment in its international relations.

Zardari honors polio workers for 99pc reduction in cases

The President urged parents to welcome vaccination for their children, stressing the urgent need to overcome myths and misconceptions that hinder immunization efforts

By Asghar Ali Mubarak

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has lauded the unwavering dedication, vigilant monitoring, and remarkable courage of Pakistan's polio workers, whose relentless efforts have led to a staggering reduction of polio cases by over 99 percent in the country. In a heartfelt tribute, he honored the brave health workers and security personnel who have sacrificed their lives in the face of cowardly attacks aimed at undermining Pakistan's mission to become polio-free.

In a message marking the nationwide polio eradication campaign running from May 26 to June 1, President Zardari high-



lighted the ambitious target of vaccinating 45.4 million children under the age of five across both urban centers and remote areas. The campaign mobilizes more than 400,000 workers who will visit homes door-to-door, delivering life-saving polio drops with the hope of securing a healthier future for the nation's youngest generation.

The president appealed directly to parents to open their doors and ensure their children receive the vaccine, emphasizing the critical need to dispel persistent myths and misconceptions surrounding immunization. He called upon teachers, religious leaders, and community members to actively support the campaign by fos-

tering trust and raising awareness about the vaccine's safety and effectiveness.

President Zardari also urged the media to amplify the message that the polio vaccine remains the strongest weapon in the fight against the disease. He expressed full support for his daughter, First Lady Asifa Bhutto Zardari, whose tireless advocacy has added momentum to the national effort. Her appeals to parents, community influencers, and youth reinforce the message that the eradication of polio is a shared responsibility requiring collective commitment.

Reflecting on the dramatic progress since the 1990s, when polio cases were alarmingly high, Pres-

ident Zardari condemned the recent tragic attack in Noshki, where a polio team's security personnel were targeted, resulting in the death of a police officer. Offering condolences to the bereaved family, he honored all those courageous workers who continue to risk their lives to reach every child, no matter how difficult the terrain.

Despite the immense progress, the president warned that polio has not yet been defeated. The recent rise in cases during 2024 serves as a stark reminder of the challenges ahead, particularly in reaching remote and displaced populations. Maintaining a high vaccination coverage remains essential to ensure the virus is fully eradicated.

MQM-P marks Youm-e-Takbeer with tribute to nuclear milestone

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Marking the 27th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer, Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) Chairman Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui paid tribute to Pakistan's nuclear achievements, calling the moment a defining milestone in the nation's history. In a special message to the nation, Dr. Siddiqui recalled that on this day in 1998, the combined resolve of Pakistan's scientists, technical experts, and armed forces fortified the country's defence and altered the strategic balance in South Asia.

He described the nuclear tests as a bold and historic step that infused the country with renewed confidence, national pride, and a sense of security. "Our nuclear capability has not only secured our territorial integrity but



has also served as a powerful deterrent, maintaining the balance of power in the region," he said.

Dr. Siddiqui also drew a direct line between the determination that led to the nuclear tests and the Pakistan Armed Forces' recent operational success. He praised the outcome of Operation Bunyad-ul-Marsous, crediting it as a modern-day manifestation of the confidence and

courage that took root in the national psyche after Pakistan joined the ranks of nuclear-armed states. "The legacy of Youm-e-Takbeer continues to echo through our military victories today," he noted.

Urging the nation to reflect on the sacrifices that made such achievements possible, Dr. Siddiqui said this day must also be a moment of collective gratitude and remembrance.

Pakistani Qawwal enchants Houston audience with Sufi music

By Amjad Qaimkhani

HOUSTON, TEXAS: Award-winning Pakistani Qawwal Sher Miandad captivated a large audience with his mesmerizing Sufi renditions at a special Mehfil-e-Sama held at the Pakistan Center in Houston, often called "Mini Karachi."

The event, organized by Pakistani industrialist Jameel Darani and community leader Shahid Ali Suni, brought a vibrant Sufi ambiance to the

gathering. Internationally acclaimed Qawwal Sher Miandad and his troupe enchanted attendees with a variety of soulful Qawwali performances. Sher Miandad's melodious voice deeply touched the hearts of the audience, who showed their admiration by showering him with dollars, a traditional gesture of appreciation for Qawwals, especially since he had travelled all the way from Pakistan.

The mehfil was attended by prominent community fig-

ures including Siraj Narsi, president of the Pakistan Association of Greater Houston; Arif Azeem, leader of Friends of Karachi; Faheem Akhund, president of Karachi University Alumni; former MQM MPA Imamuddin Shehzad; along with other respected community leaders such as Imtiaz Ahsan, Salman Razaqi, Syed Shehzad, Shehla Maroof, Falak Zahra, Moez Habib, and a large number of overseas Pakistanis.

Provincial advisor, minister discuss climate communication

By our correspondent

KARACHI: The Provincial Advisor on Environment, Climate Change, and Coastal Development for Sindh, Dost Muhammad Rahumo, recently held a meeting with Senior Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, alongside MPA Dr. Sikandar Shoro,



signaling a renewed push for closer coordination between environmental initiatives and public communication strategies within the province.

Though specifics of the discussions were not made public, the meeting reflected an important step in the Sindh government's evolving approach to tackling the complex challenges posed by climate change and coastal management. As Sindh grapples with rising environmental threats—from coastal erosion to unpredictable weather patterns—the need for clear, consistent communication has become ever more pressing.

The conversation between Rahumo and Memon appears to be part of a broader realization that addressing these urgent issues requires not only robust policy and development efforts but also effective engage-

ment with the public. By aligning environmental objectives with the province's information ministry, the government hopes to ensure that vital messages about climate resilience and sustainability reach communities in ways that are both accessible and actionable.

The presence of Dr. Sikandar Shoro, a key politi-

Laghari's death linked to police action, autopsy reveals

By Imtiaz Hussain

MORO: A postmortem report has confirmed that Irfan Ali Laghari, the young protester who died following police action during demonstrations in Moro, sustained multiple injuries including a fatal blow to the head — from which a metal fragment was retrieved from his brain. The

found lodged in a wound near his spine. Swelling was also noted in both the brain and lungs.

Laghari was critically injured during a protest in Moro against canal construction on the River Indus. Demonstrators had marched towards the residence of Sindh's interior minister, Zia-ul-Hassan Larjar. The protest turned violent



postmortem, conducted on 23 May 2025, revealed that Laghari had suffered several bruises and wounds across his body.

According to the medical findings, his skull was fractured on the right side and a deep injury was observed on the lower surface of the brain. A startling detail in the report states that a piece of metal was embedded in the middle section of his brain, while another metallic object was

after police responded with live fire and tear gas. Laghari succumbed to his injuries at Civil Hospital on Friday.

Tensions further escalated when police raided the hospital morgue during funeral preparations and seized Laghari's body.

The crackdown on mourners and nationalists led to the arrest of several activists, including a TikTok figure associated with Sindhi nationalist groups.

METRO MATTERS

MQM-P protests unpaid pensions outside KMC

By our correspondent

KARACHI: The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) staged a protest outside the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) building, raising alarm over the prolonged non-payment of pensions and dues owed to thousands of retired employees from the city's town municipal administrations (TMAs).

The demonstration, led by the Pensioners' Action Committee, echoed growing frustration and anger among pensioners and their families, who say they've been ignored for far too long by both the KMC administration and the Sindh government. The protest site bore witness to retired municipal workers and their supporters gathering in the sweltering heat, many holding placards demanding justice and relief.

Their collective message was clear: the silence from those in charge is no longer acceptable. For many, these unpaid pensions are not just numbers on a spreadsheet—they are survival lifelines that have been unjustly withheld. Ali Khurshidi, MQM-P leader and Leader of the Opposition in the Sindh Assembly, addressed the media during the demonstration. He condemned the authorities for their persistent neglect and called the inaction of the Sindh government a "criminal silence."

Khurshidi demanded the immediate release of all outstanding pension payments, saying the delay had pushed retired municipal workers into financial distress, with many unable to afford basic necessities. "It is unconscionable," Khurshidi remarked, "that those who served the city for decades are now being abandoned in their twilight years. The state has a moral and constitutional responsibility to care for its pensioners."

He pressed the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation and the Sindh government to not only clear the backlog of payments but also to institute a lasting mechanism that ensures pensioners are never subjected to such uncertainty again. The MQM-P, he said, would continue to raise its voice until the matter is resolved permanently and justly. The party also reiterated its demand for the formulation of a comprehensive and binding policy to protect the rights of municipal pensioners in Karachi.

Sohail University startups shine at Sindh exhibition

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Three dynamic startups from Sohail University stood out at the inaugural Sindh Startup Exhibition, where their innovation, ingenuity, and entrepreneurial drive captured the attention of judges, visitors, and dignitaries alike.

Organized by the Sindh Higher Education Commission (SHEC) in collaboration with the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), the event brought together 50 promising ventures from across the province.

Among the many participants, the Sohail University teams drew particular praise for their unique solutions and forward-thinking approaches. Their projects, shaped through academic mentorship and real-world relevance, reflected not only creativity but a commitment to tackling contemporary challenges through entrepreneurship.

A highlight of the event came when Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah visited the Sohail University stall. Taking time to engage with the young innovators, the chief minister commended their efforts and the university's role in encouraging research-led enterprise. His words of encouragement were warmly received by the students and faculty, reinforcing the importance of government support in nurturing a robust startup culture in Sindh.

Karachi to build parking plazas in collaboration with ADB

By Aziz Khatri

KARACHI: A delegation from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), led by Hussain Hader, Julia Hallnagel, and Umer Shafique, met with Karachi's Mayor, Barrister Murtaza Wahab, to discuss collaborative efforts aimed at supporting and improving the city's sustainable transport sector. The meeting focused on practical solutions to address Karachi's chronic traffic and parking challenges, which have long plagued the bustling metropolis.

Both parties reached a consensus on the construction of dedicated parking plazas in strategic downtown locations, specifically along M.A. Jinnah Road and I.I. Chundrigar Road. These key thoroughfares, known for their heavy congestion, are expected to benefit significantly from the new infrastructure, which aims to streamline parking and ease vehicular flow. The project is seen as a crucial step towards enhancing urban mobility and making daily commutes more manageable for Karachi's residents.

Mayor Wahab emphasized the urgency of swift implementation, stressing that the success of such initiatives depends not only on timely completion but also on strict enforcement of parking regulations. He expressed hope that the project would deliver immediate relief to the city's longstanding traffic woes, highlighting the need for coordinated action among city authorities, development partners, and the public.

The meeting was attended by senior city officials, including Akhlaq Yousafzai, senior director coordination to the mayor, and Daniyal Alishan Siyal, director media, underscoring the administration's commitment to transparency and effective communication throughout the project's development. The engagement with the ADB signals a promising collaboration aimed at building a more sustainable and accessible transport system in Karachi, a city grappling with rapid urbanization and growing mobility demands.

Traffic police officer shot dead near Mai Kolachi

By our correspondent

KARACHI: A traffic police officer was shot and killed near Mai Kolachi crossing in Karachi on Tuesday, in what appears to be a targeted attack.

According to police officials, the officer was stationed at a traffic police checkpoint when armed assailants on a motorcycle approached and opened fire before fleeing the scene. The slain officer was identified as Zain, who was posted at the Sultanabad traffic section.

The Sindh home minister has taken notice of the incident and requested a detailed report from the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) South. SSP South, Manzoor Ali, visited the crime scene shortly after the attack.

Speaking to media, he confirmed that the officer was struck by two bullets out of three fired by a lone assailant. He added that an investigation is now underway to identify and apprehend those responsible. The killing has sparked fresh concerns about the safety of law enforcement personnel deployed on city roads.

Sindh bans gifting of Ajrak, caps in schools

By Musarrat Arif

KARACHI: The Sindh government has issued a firm directive banning the practice of presenting Ajrak and Sindhi caps as gifts in schools, signaling a broader push to curb ceremonial traditions that place undue burdens on children. In a notification circulated by the provincial authorities, schools have been explicitly instructed to discontinue the custom of giving gifts during official functions, and to end the practice of making students stand to greet guests at these events.

The move reflects growing concern over the use of students in ceremonial protocols, which the government now deems inappropriate. Officials stated that such practices not only distract from the core purpose of education but may also inadvertently place pressure on children to perform roles more suited to formal protocol officers than school-going youth.

The notification makes it clear that using children for reception duties or symbolic gift presentations is no longer acceptable. It warns of strict disciplinary action against those who defy the orders, marking a decisive shift away from traditional rituals in favor of creating a more child-focused and respectful school environment.

This development is likely to stir debate across Sindh, where the Ajrak and Sindhi cap are deeply embedded in the cultural fabric. While the government's intention is to shield students from tokenistic roles and reinforce the primacy of learning, the challenge will be balancing cultural respect with institutional reform.

Heavy rains disrupt daily life in Pakistan

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Strong winds, heavy rain, and landslides have caused widespread damage across several cities in Pakistan, leaving many communities struggling to eight points due to landslides, disrupting travel and supply routes.

Meanwhile, snowfall continues intermittently at Babusar Top and Diamer, further complicating conditions. Chilas is also affected by rain and landslides, causing closures on

the Karakoram Highway near Diamer and Lower Kohistan. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, hailstorms and heavy rainfall have swollen streams and rivers, raising flood concerns.

Authorities have urged caution and advised people to avoid travelling on affected routes until the weather improves. The storms highlight the increasing vulnerability of communities to extreme weather events during changing seasons.

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How Rafale downed in just ₹50k

A remarkable story has surfaced, shedding light on how Pakistan obtained crucial video evidence of a downed Indian Rafale fighter jet—footage that proved pivotal in confirming one of the most high-profile aerial confrontations between the two countries. This incident, which unfolded on 7 May, has since reverberated across the subcontinent, not only for its military significance but also for the extraordinary means through which the evidence was secured. On that day, Pakistan claimed it had shot down six Indian aircraft, including three Rafale jets. Initially, these claims were met with widespread skepticism. The Rafale, often hailed as the “hawk of the skies,” is considered one of the most advanced fighter jets, boasting cutting-edge stealth and manoeuvre ability features that render it nearly impossible to bring down.

To many observers, Pakistan’s assertion seemed more bravado than fact. However, the narrative dramatically shifted when video footage emerged showing the wreckage of a Rafale jet—an irrefutable piece of evidence that quickly silenced many doubters. What followed was an intriguing tale of espionage, audacity, and a glimpse into the shadowy world of intelligence operations. A rare behind-the-scenes story of how Pakistan came to possess the footage. Soon after the Rafale jet was downed, Indian security forces had swiftly cordoned off the crash site, preventing civilians or unauthorized personnel from entering. This swift lockdown was typical of the Indian military’s approach in sensitive situations, intended to control information flow and maintain secrecy around military losses.

Yet, despite these tight security measures, Pakistani field intelligence units working along the border learned something extraordinary. They discovered that an Indian agency officer had somehow managed to sneak a video recording of the crash site. Remarkably, the operatives identified the officer’s rank and even obtained his phone number. This was a crucial breakthrough that would set in motion a daring operation. What happened next reads like a spy thriller. A Pakistani official, masquerading as a representative of an international media organization, reached out to the Indian officer. The pretext was simple: express interest in the footage for news coverage, thereby piquing the officer’s curiosity and tempting him with a lucrative offer.

It was “a shot in the dark,” but the gamble paid off. The Indian officer, tempted by the promise of money, agreed to share the footage—provided he was paid up front. The demand was for 50,000 Indian rupees, a modest sum given the significance of the video. The payment was made quickly and discreetly, after which the footage was delivered to the specified Pakistani contact. The video was authentic, captured directly at the crash site. It clearly showed the aircraft’s markings and the unmistakable shape of a Rafale jet, leaving no room for doubt or denial. Once the video was released publicly, it spread rapidly across social media and international news outlets. The footage forced international observers, analysts, and governments to reconsider their positions and acknowledge that one of India’s most prized and technologically advanced aircraft had indeed been shot down.

It was a rare concession in a region where information is often tightly controlled and military losses are rarely admitted openly by either side. The broader significance of this episode extends beyond the downed jet itself. It reveals much about the lengths intelligence operatives and journalists will go to obtain critical information in a conflict where narratives are fiercely contested. It also shows how modern warfare is not only fought in the skies or on the ground but in the digital realm, where a single piece of video evidence can alter public perception and diplomatic discourse. The fact that a single phone call, combined with a relatively small payment, could change the narrative of a high-stakes military engagement is a testament to the power of information in the 21st century. Moreover, the incident sheds light on the vulnerabilities within military and intelligence establishments.

Despite stringent security measures and attempts to control information, cracks inevitably appear, exploited by those on the other side. The involvement of an Indian officer willing to trade footage for money speaks to human elements of curiosity, greed, or perhaps disillusionment within the ranks—factors that intelligence agencies are perpetually trying to manage or exploit. In the complex and often tense relationship between India and Pakistan, every such episode feeds into a larger story of mistrust, rivalry, and the ongoing struggle for strategic dominance. Both nations have long been engaged in a shadow war involving espionage, misinformation, and proxy skirmishes. The downing of the Rafale and the subsequent revelation of the video footage provide a striking illustration of this dynamic—where the battlefield extends beyond physical confrontations to psychological and informational fronts. The incident should prompt reflection on how fragile truth can be in conflict zones, where facts are often the first casualty.

Yet it also shows that in the era of smartphones and instant communication, controlling information has become a more difficult task. Even the most advanced militaries cannot entirely contain what leaks out from behind their lines. Ultimately, the story of the downed Rafale jet and the video that confirmed it will remain a landmark moment in the long and fraught history of India-Pakistan relations. It is a story of courage, cunning, and the enduring importance of information. As tensions persist, such episodes serve as a reminder that wars today are fought as much in shadows and screens as in skies and on soil. What remains to be seen is how both countries will respond to this revelation in the long term—whether it will deepen hostilities or prompt a cautious reassessment of strategies on both sides. One thing, however, is clear: in the age of information, the power to shape reality often lies not with the might of missiles or jets, but with the stories that people tell—and the videos they manage to capture.

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

By Uzma Ehtasham



In a region long haunted by the spectre of militancy and cross-border intrigue, Pakistan’s recent security operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa mark a decisive moment. Over the course of targeted encounters in Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, and Khyber district, nine armed militants were killed—individuals reportedly backed by India in a broader campaign of proxy warfare. The operations, carried out with clinical precision and guided by intelligence, signal a recalibrated national approach to an old but evolving threat. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), these militants were directly involved in orchestrating terror attacks across the region. Their elimination, accompanied by the seizure of weapons and ammunition, is not just a tactical success but a symbol of strategic vigilance.

Yet the significance of these encounters goes beyond numbers or weapons recovered—it lies in the message being sent: that Pakistan will no longer tolerate militancy, whatever its origins, and will counter it through a mix of resolve, readiness, and refined intelligence. This shift in posture coincides with deepening regional tensions. Following the disputed events in Pahalgam and claims of a false flag operation, India’s increasingly aggressive stance has drawn global attention. In response, Pakistan launched “Operation Bunyān-e-Marsūs,” during which the military claims to have downed six Indian fighter jets, including three Rafale aircraft. While India has yet to fully acknowledge the extent of those losses, the aftermath has seen a renewed push in indirect warfare—what many in Islamabad interpret as an effort by New Delhi to reassert pressure through unconventional means.

Proxy militancy is not new in South Asia. For decades, both countries have accused each other of fuelling unrest in their respective border regions. But what makes the current phase distinct is the precision with which Pakistan is choosing to respond. It’s no longer about sweeping operations or reactionary postures.

The new playbook appears to rely on surgical strikes, actionable intelligence, and pre-emptive action—methods that aim to dismantle terror cells before they metastasize. The response from the civilian leadership has been swift and supportive. Both President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif praised the military for its professionalism and effectiveness. Their words of commendation, however, must be

more than ceremonial. If this campaign is to achieve long-term success, political will must remain unwavering.

Short-term victories on the battlefield must be backed by a long-term internal security vision—one that identifies and isolates the fault lines that allow militancy to fester, be it economic marginalization, administrative lapses, or ideological exploitation. What happens next will be crucial. Militancy, especially with suspected foreign support, is not limited to a single district or moment in time.

To root it out, Pakistan must expand its operations beyond current hotspots. Balochistan, parts of South Waziristan, and even urban centers cannot be overlooked. This is a national challenge that demands a national response. Security cannot be compartmentalized. Nor can the threat be seen in isolation from its underlying causes. The reality is that hybrid warfare is no longer a future threat—it’s a present one. It blends conventional tactics with psychological operations, digital propaganda, and asymmetric strikes.

In such a complex theatre, border security is necessary but not sufficient. Vigilance must extend inward—to social media spaces where narratives are shaped, to schools and madrassas where minds are moulded, to the economic peripheries where disillusionment breeds desperation.

Pakistan has an opportunity here. Not only to restore peace, but to set a precedent that foreign-backed subversion will meet both strategic resistance and internal resilience. That requires more than bullets. It calls for investment in institutions, community engagement, and the political maturity to prioritize unity over short-term scoring. For too long, Pakistan’s narrative has been reactive—responding to crises as they unfold. This time, it must write a different story. One that shows not just the capacity to fight terror, but the foresight to prevent its return.

Because at stake is not just military prestige or territorial integrity—it is the everyday dignity of citizens who deserve to live without the constant threat of violence. These latest operations are a reminder of what’s possible when intelligence, intent, and integrity align. But the road ahead will require even greater clarity. The enemy, after all, is not always in uniform. It hides behind ideology, across borders, and sometimes even within systems. And if Pakistan is to protect its sovereignty in the truest sense, then the art of defence must go hand in hand with the architecture of peace.

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blindly. It is to acknowledge without engaging. It is a conscious act of grace, a kind of mental editing that saves space for what matters most. A wise leader, for example, may notice a team member’s small misstep and still choose to celebrate their growth instead of pointing fingers. A seasoned partner might resist the impulse to argue over a careless remark and instead preserve the warmth of the moment. A friend may hear

By Atiq Raja



In an age awash with noise—be it news alerts, endless scrolls of social media, or the clatter of daily obligations—one of the most profound pieces of advice comes not from a modern guru or digital detox coach, but from the 19th-century philosopher and psychologist William James. “The art of being wise,” he once wrote, “is the art of knowing what to overlook.” It’s a line that feels almost too quiet for the times we live in. Yet, in its simplicity, it speaks volumes. We often think of wisdom as something built on knowledge—knowing more facts, understanding more theories, keeping up with more information. But in a world where the next opinion, outrage, or distraction is only a click away, perhaps wisdom now demands something different. Not the capacity to absorb more, but the strength to choose less.

To look at something, understand that it exists, and gently set it aside. Not because it’s invisible, but because it’s not worth our inner peace. To overlook is not to ignore

“The art of being wise is knowing what to overlook.”
— William James

gossip but decide not to pass it on, not out of fear, but out of maturity. This idea of mental restraint, of prioritizing peace over provocation, is not often celebrated in the noisy arenas of modern life.

We are encouraged to react, to respond, to always have an opinion. Social media thrives on this energy—this constant need to engage with every piece of drama, every thread of anger, every flash of outrage. The result? Exhausted minds, brittle emotions,

and a culture that finds it harder to forgive or forget. Our minds, much like our bodies, have limits. There is only so much emotional energy we can spend before it starts to deplete us. When we give equal attention to what hurts and what heals, to what uplifts and what undermines, we dilute our strength. In truth, the mind was never built to hold onto everything. The art lies in filtering. In asking ourselves: what truly deserves my attention? What builds me, and what breaks me?

Knowing what to overlook is not just about peace—it is about grace. Toward others, but perhaps more importantly, toward ourselves. We all carry imperfections, old mistakes, unmet expectations. If we choose to revisit them constantly, to re-analyze every flaw, we risk turning reflection into self-punishment. Wisdom lies in letting go of that which cannot be changed. In offering ourselves the same kindness we so often withhold. That soft, forgiving space within us is not weakness—it is where healing begins. There is strength in choosing what not to say. In holding back the retort, the criticism, the sarcastic reply that may feel satisfying in the moment but chips away at trust over time. Silence, when chosen with intent, is not suppression—it is clarity. It says: I know

I could engage, but I also know it’s not worth the cost. I value the relationship more than the argument. I value my peace more than my pride.

And while this may sound like some lofty ideal, it is a skill—one that can be learned, practiced, and refined over time. Start small. Pause before reacting. Ask yourself, “Will this matter in five years?” Often the answer is no. The remark made in haste, the awkward encounter, the unwashed dish—these moments rarely define our lives, yet they so often define our moods. Perspective, then, is the quiet tool we must carry in our pockets. Not to escape the world, but to better live in it.

Mindfulness helps. It isn’t just a buzzword; it’s a discipline of returning your attention to what actually matters. When you reflect regularly, you start to recognize patterns—what drains you, what uplifts you. And once you see clearly, you start choosing wisely. You begin to save your strength for battles that are truly aligned with your values, your goals, and your sense of self.

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May 28th, Youm-e-Takbir; A very auspicious day for Pakistan

By Asghar Ali Mubarak



The journey from Youm-e-Takbir to Muarka Haq is one of great victory and pride. May 28, Youm-e-Takbir, is a profoundly significant day for Pakistan, just as May 10, Muarka Haq, marks a defining triumph in the country’s struggle for truth. Youm-e-Takbir means “Day of Takbir” – the day Pakistan, with the resounding call of “Allahu Akbar”, delivered a clear message to its enemies that it is self-sufficient in its defence. May 2025 has now taken its place not only in Pakistani history but also in the military chronicles of the world—etched in memory in a way that future generations may never forget. At present, Pakistan’s defence is invincible by the grace of Allah. May 28 remains a blessed day for Muslims across the subcontinent and around the globe. The mountains that witnessed these nuclear tests stand as silent testimony to the strength and resolve of Pakistan, echoing the chants of praise and Takbir.

Pakistan now marks 27 years since becoming a nuclear power, and today, May 28, Youm-e-Takbir is being commemorated across the country. It is a day of national pride, while May 10 signifies a major victory in Pakistan’s ongoing struggle for truth and justice. As a Pakistani, I feel proud and immensely fortunate to have been born on May 28 in Sibi, Balochistan. I completed my early education at Government High School Babu Mohalla in Quetta. I love my native city and my province for their rich cultural heritage.

As a child, I often wondered why my date of birth wasn’t August 14, September 6 or March 23. But after May 28, 1998, I came to cherish the significance of being born on this historic day. On that day in 1998, I was working at Daily Jang in Rawalpindi. There were no mobile phones then. We received the momentous news from Radio Pakistan that the country had conducted successful nuclear tests and had become a nuclear power.

It’s important to note that, like May 28, May 10 has now also secured its place in the nation’s history. Pakistan’s military has firmly established its reputation across the globe. The entire nation stands proud of its courageous armed forces, who stunned the world with a swift and decisive response to the enemy. The Pakistan Army’s persistent efforts to eliminate terrorism are equally commendable. Even India now recognizes that Pakistan knows how to defend itself. The path to achieving nuclear capability was initiated by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. It was Nawaz Sharif who, despite international pressure, made the bold decision to proceed with nuclear tests—shattering Indian arrogance and pride. On May 28, Pakistan declared its independence on its own terms, asserting its sovereignty over the lure of foreign dollars. Youm-e-Takbir became a pivotal day, safeguarding the freedom, sovereignty and future of generations to come.

Pakistan’s youth must now rise to meet the challenges the nation faces. They are the vanguard of a nation that must stand as a wall of steel to protect Pakistan’s dignity, defence and interests. Each year, May 28 is celebrated as Youm-e-Takbir—the day Pakistan became the first Islamic nuclear

power. In response to India’s nuclear tests, Pakistan, under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, conducted five successful nuclear tests in Chagai, Balochistan, on May 28, 1998. Pakistan’s next challenge is to build an invincible economy, for without economic strength, no country can maintain a strong defence. The entire nation pays homage to its brave soldiers and stands shoulder to shoulder with the government and the Pakistan Army. In responding to India’s nuclear tests on May 28, 1998, Pakistan earned its place as the first nuclear power in the Muslim world and the seventh overall. All Pakistanis remember this day with pride.

Following India’s nuclear tests, there was immense pressure on Pakistan not to retaliate. But unity among the people, the determination of the leadership and the commitment of scientists made the impossible possible. Pakistan had to respond to maintain the regional balance of power. After the partition, India wasted no time in developing its nuclear program, with support from the US and its allies. It carried out its first test in 1974, without facing global resistance. Then came the nuclear tests of May 11 and 13, 1998. India followed up with threats to Pakistan. In response, both political and public pressure mounted, leading the Pakistani government to decide to proceed with nuclear tests. International actors attempted to dissuade Pakistan—through pressure, incentives and threats of sanctions.

Despite all this, then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif stood firm. Chagai in Balochistan was selected as the test site. On the morning of May 28, 1998, all military installations were put on high alert. A ten-member team reached the observation post,

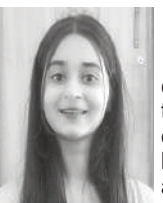
ten kilometres from the test site. Among them were the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission Dr Ashfaq, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, Dr Samar Mubarak, four scientists from Kahuta Research Laboratories, and General Zulfikar, leading the Pakistan Army team. At 3:16 pm, the detonation button was pressed. The explosions took place in six stages. May 28, 1998, is remembered as the day the Islamic Republic of Pakistan tested one of the world’s most powerful weapons. Technology is crucial to a nation’s rise or fall. Along with courage, the right weapon can make all the difference. Pakistan not only built an atomic bomb—it mastered the means to deliver it.

The Shaheen III missile can reach any part of India. The Babur III missile, capable of operating from a submarine, can strike targets on land and at sea up to 700 kilometres away. Today, Pakistan’s defence remains impenetrable by the grace of Allah. May 28 continues to be a revered day for Muslims across the subcontinent and the globe. The mountains of Chagai remain guardians of Pakistan’s strength, echoing the call of Takbir. This success is not just a technological triumph—it is a symbol of Pakistan’s self-reliance, integrity and defensive sovereignty. On this day, Pakistan proved to the world that it can respond decisively to threats. Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan and his team worked tirelessly to achieve this goal, backed by the government, the people and the armed forces. Youm-e-Takbir teaches us that when a nation is united, no goal is beyond reach.

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Indigenous knowledge guides climate resilience | Let Greenland be

By Sehar Nazir Chaudhary



Indigenous knowledge stands out as an essential, yet often overlooked, source of resilience. For generations, Indigenous communities have adapted to shifting environments using wisdom rooted in observation, experience, and a deep spiritual connection to the land. What modern science is only beginning to appreciate has long been lived and practiced by these communities. Their insights aren’t theoretical—they are practical, tested, and deeply localized. From navigating unpredictable weather to managing fragile ecosystems, Indigenous peoples

have long demonstrated how to live sustainably. These are not passive traditions; they are dynamic systems of knowledge passed through oral traditions, rituals, and daily practices.

This includes agricultural methods like crop rotation, mixed cropping, and agroforestry—all of which protect soil fertility, reduce land degradation, conserve biodiversity, and even sequester carbon.

These aren’t merely techniques—they are acts of ecological stewardship. In arid regions, Indigenous communities have designed water conservation strategies such as rainwater harvesting, underground storage, and efficient irrigation—long before the modern world recognized water scarcity as a global crisis. Coastal communities have developed early warning systems for tsunamis and storms, based on signs from nature: the behavior of birds,

changes in sea level, and shifting wind patterns. These methods show not just survival, but a nuanced understanding of how nature speaks.

This knowledge is not static. It evolves, adapts, and remains relevant because it is tied to the environment in real time. In a world grappling with unpredictable climate shifts, the flexible and adaptive nature of Indigenous practices offers a lifeline. Yet, despite this immense value, Indigenous voices are often sidelined in national and global climate strategies. Marginalization of these communities persists—not only socially and economically, but intellectually and politically. It is time to shift that narrative. Governments, policymakers, and climate organizations must move beyond token inclusion and actively collaborate with Indigenous leaders. Their expertise should not be seen as a cultural footnote but as a vital part of climate governance.

Documentation and protection of traditional ecological practices must be prioritized. Climate action frameworks should embed these systems alongside scientific models, not beneath them. Indigenous knowledge is not a relic of the past—it is living, evolving, and urgent. As we search for ways to slow climate change and build resilience, Indigenous perspectives should be embraced not as an alternative, but as a foundation. A sustainable future demands it. If the world is serious about addressing the climate crisis holistically, it must start by listening—to the land, and to those who have long known how to live with it.

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By Kieran Mulvaney

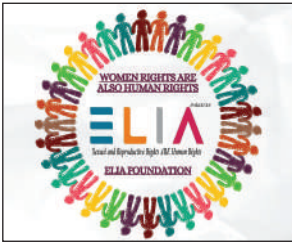
President Donald Trump insists the United States needs Greenland “very badly,” to the extent that he won’t “rule out” using force to attain it.

Such covetousness almost certainly owes at least something to the prospect of access to the mineral resources, including lithium, that Greenland is believed to harbor. But Trump himself has suggested a different motivation, musing in an interview about “Russian boats and... Chinese boats, gunships all over the place... going up and down the coast of Greenland.”

Trump’s obsession with annexing Greenland is a confounding solution to a problem that doesn’t even exist.

Moscow and Beijing undeniably have an increasing number of vessels operating year-round in Arctic waters. In Russia’s case, that’s hardly surprising: Russia accounts for 53% of the region’s coastline.

But its interests, and indeed those of China’s, have little to do with Greenland and a lot to do with its own Arctic waters, specifically the seaway along its north coast that Russia refers to as the Northern Sea Route (NSR). As sea ice decreases in thickness and extent as a result of climate change, the NSR is slowly opening up.



World Bank warns tariffs choking Pakistan's industry

Over the past decade, cumulative tariffs have surged by 117 percent, skewing competition and steering investment toward politically favored sectors instead of globally competitive industries

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank's recent report casts a stark light on Pakistan's trade and industrial policy framework, highlighting a troubling pattern of rising import tariffs that threaten to undermine the country's economic potential. The report identifies steep import duties—especially regulatory duties (RDs) and additional customs duties (ACDs)—as significant obstacles stifling industrial growth and hampering the nation's export performance.

It warns that the current system disproportionately benefits well-connected elites, fostering distortions that deter productive investment and innovation. Over the past decade, these cumulative tariffs have ballooned by as much as 117 percent, the report reveals, creating an uneven competitive landscape that encourages investment in politically



favored sectors rather than globally competitive industries. Instead of nurturing innovation and scaling up manufacturing, Pakistan's protectionist approach has slowed progress, leaving its export sector struggling.

The numbers underscore this decline: exports, which accounted for 15 percent of Pakistan's GDP in the 1990s, have slipped to just 10 percent by 2024—placing Pakistan at the bottom of the South Asian export league. The World Bank emphasizes the urgent need for policy reform to restore investor con-

fidence and diversify Pakistan's export base. Key recommendations include reducing the tariff slabs to more reasonable levels, eliminating opaque levies such as RDs and ACDs, and moving towards a market-driven foreign exchange system.

Ensuring reliable and affordable energy supplies for industry and improving access to business financing also feature prominently in the report's roadmap. Perhaps most crucially, the Bank calls for structural reforms including the full im-

plementation of the proposed Investment Act and a comprehensive overhaul of bankruptcy laws. These measures are aimed at making it easier for businesses to enter and exit the market, a critical step for fostering a dynamic and resilient private sector that can respond swiftly to market changes.

The report echoes longstanding grievances voiced by Pakistani exporters, who have struggled with high input costs, inconsistent policies, and restricted access to modern technology. These challenges have made it difficult for Pakistan to keep pace with regional competitors like Bangladesh, Vietnam, and India, who have steadily expanded their manufacturing and export footprints. As Pakistan prepares to engage with the International Monetary Fund and seek fresh foreign investment, the pressure to reform its tariff and industrial policies is mounting.

Barrister Gohar urges visible justice in judiciary

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has stressed the crucial role of the judiciary in ensuring that justice is not only done but is also visibly seen to be done. Speaking to the media outside the Islamabad High Court, he reminded observers of the swift judicial process in the case of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who was granted bail within 70 days.

Highlighting the ongoing political legal battles, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan pointed to the upcoming hearing of PTI founder Imran Khan's case, scheduled for June 5. He expressed cautious optimism that the judiciary would handle the case with fairness and deliver a verdict grounded in justice.

His comments come amid heightened public attention and anticipation surrounding a series of high-profile political cases that continue to unfold in Pakistan's courts, reflecting the broader tensions between the country's political parties and the legal system. As the nation watches closely, the demand for transparency and impartiality in these proceedings remains a central concern.

Asad Qaiser accuses PPP of hooliganism in Sindh

By our correspondent

PESHAWAR: Asad Qaiser, a senior leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), openly accused the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of engaging in hooliganism, asserting that protests are effectively banned in Sindh. Speaking to reporters in Peshawar, Qaiser contrasted the situation in Sindh with that of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where he praised the democratic atmosphere and freedom for protests to be officially registered without obstruction.

Qaiser highlighted the active involvement of PTI workers in demonstrations, underscoring the party's commitment to political expression despite the challenges. Addressing the issue of PTI founder Imran Khan's bail, he acknowledged its legal possibility but cast doubt on the impartiality of the justice system, suggesting government interference compromises fairness.

Sindh to expand electric bus service beyond Karachi

By Aziz Khatri

KARACHI: Following the successful launch of Pakistan's first electric bus service in Karachi, the Sindh government is now intensifying efforts to introduce similar electric bus services in other major cities across the province. A high-level delegation from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) recently met with Sindh's senior minister for transport, Sharjeel Inam Memon, in Karachi to discuss potential investments aimed at boosting the rapidly growing transport sector in the province.

US tariff war pushes ASEAN, China, Gulf states to unite

News Desk

KUALA LUMPUR: Leaders from Southeast Asia, China, and the Gulf gathered in Malaysia in a show of regional unity, as economic and geopolitical shifts continue to ripple outward from Washington's tariff-centric trade policy. The meeting, hosted in Kuala Lumpur, brought together representatives from ASEAN, China, and the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), aiming to deepen inter-regional collaboration and forge a stronger collective response to the challenges posed by protectionist trends.

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, addressing the high-level joint session, made a firm call for enhanced cooperation between ASEAN and the GCC, framing it as a necessary step to navigate an increasingly unpredictable global economy. Stressing that the "world is undergoing funda-



mental change," he warned that the rise in unilateral actions—especially the imposition of tariffs by the United States—could undermine economic resilience across developing and emerging economies.

Anwar described the current trade environment as precarious, arguing that blocs like ASEAN and the GCC must not be passive observers but active architects of their own future. "We must protect our shared interests with unity and strategic foresight," he said, pointing to the urgent need for trade diversification and in-

stitutional linkages that can cushion their economies from sudden external shocks.

While the meeting's formal outcomes remain under wraps, its symbolism was clear: regional actors are increasingly willing to recalibrate their partnerships and policies in response to a shifting global order. The gathering signaled not just concern over the consequences of American trade policy, but also a quiet confidence that the Global South can chart its own course—through cooperation, not confrontation.

Govt extends deadline for PIA acquisition offers

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Privatization Commission has officially extended the deadline for submitting expressions of interest (EOIs) for the acquisition of Pakistan's national airline, granting prospective bidders an additional 15 days. According to a notification issued by the commission, the new deadline is now set for June 19, replacing the earlier cut-off date of June 3.

The decision comes in light of the upcoming Eid holidays, which were expected to disrupt regular business activities and limit the time available for stakeholders to complete necessary documentation and internal approvals.

The commission emphasized that all other terms and conditions related to the airline's privatization remain unchanged, and the process will continue as previously outlined.

Korean dormant insurance claims open for Pakistani workers

News Desk

SEOUL: The Employment Permit System (EPS) Center has issued new instructions for Pakistani workers returning from South Korea, urging them to claim their dormant insurance benefits.

According to an official statement from the EPS Center, this dormant insurance covers crucial expenses such as travel guarantees and return costs, aimed at supporting workers as they transition back home after their overseas employment.

The Overseas Employment Corporation has also taken steps to assist eligible workers by publishing a list on its official website, naming those who have to claim their insurance.

India boosts drone budget after setback by Pakistan

News Desk

NEW DEHLI: India has sharply ramped up its investment in drone warfare following a recent strategic setback against Pakistan, allocating a staggering \$470 million to bolster its unmanned aerial capabilities over the next one to two years. The move marks a significant pivot in New Delhi's defence strategy, tripling its previous drone budget and underscoring the urgency with which it views the evolving regional security landscape.

The scale of the commitment has sent ripples through South Asia's already fragile military balance. Indian authorities have reportedly greenlit an emergency procurement fund of \$4.6 billion for defence acquisitions, a portion of which will now be used to rapidly amass a fleet of combat and surveillance drones. According to defence insiders, the urgency



is such that the usual bureaucratic and parliamentary procedures have been set aside in favor of expedited purchases, raising both eyebrows and alarm in equal measure.

Already, Indian forces have begun deploying Israeli-made drones in operations along the Pakistan border—an unmistakable signal of how swiftly the country is leaning into drone warfare. The use of advanced aerial surveillance and strike technology is intended to enhance real-time reconnaissance, improve border control, and, more signifi-

cantly, intimidate adversaries by showcasing India's growing technological reach.

Analysts suggest that this drone surge is not merely a tactical adjustment but a strategic manoeuvre aimed at neutralizing perceived Pakistani advantages in the aftermath of recent cross-border tensions. However, critics warn that such accelerated militarization risks escalating an already delicate situation. With both nuclear-armed neighbors jostling for technological dominance, the consequences of miscalculation are as real as ever.

Bilawal criticizes KP govt's confrontational politics

By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, chairman of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), has issued a stern warning against the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government's approach of confronting the public with force, cautioning that such a strategy will ultimately prove costly.

Speaking in a phone call with Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha, PPP president in KP, Bilawal sought details about the recent unrest that unfolded during the Save the Province rally in Peshawar. Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha informed Bilawal that the KP government, visibly unsettled by what was intended as a peaceful protest, resorted to tear gas shelling to disperse demonstrators.

The violence marred a rally that had been widely praised for its organization and clear message. Expressing his condemnation of the government's heavy-handed response, Bilawal criticized the use of force against citizens who are increasingly frustrated by issues of corruption, rising law-



lessness, and rampant unemployment in the province. He underscored that such tactics only deepen public discontent rather than quell it.

Bilawal vowed that the Save the Province movement would now intensify, spreading its reach to every street and alley across KP. He labelled the provincial government under the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) as a 'thug government,' asserting that its attempts to suppress the movement would ultimately fail. His remarks highlight the growing political tensions in KP, with opposition voices rallying against what they describe as authoritarian measures by the ruling party.

Cop killed in attack on polio team in Noshki

News Desk

NOSHKI: An attack targeting security personnel protecting a polio vaccination team in Noshki has left one police officer dead and another injured, prompting the temporary suspension of the immunization campaign in the district. The district health officer confirmed that following the violent incident, the polio drive has been put on hold as authorities assess the situation and bolster security measures.

Shahid Rand, spokesperson for the Balochistan government,



condemned the attack in strong terms, calling it a deliberate attempt to sabotage the national health initiative and spread fear among communities. He vowed that

efforts to identify and bring the perpetrators to justice would be intensified to safeguard the campaign and those involved.

The attack also drew

sharp condemnation from the highest levels of government. President Asif Ali Zardari expressed his condolences to the family of the martyred police officer, affirming that the fight against polio remains a national priority. He stressed that peace and normalcy will only return once the virus is completely eradicated from the country.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif described the assault on the team tasked with protecting children's future as utterly unacceptable. He assured the public that those responsible for disrupting the polio vaccination efforts

would face strict and decisive action under the law.

The incident underscores the persistent challenges faced by polio eradication campaigns in Pakistan, where health workers and their security teams have often been targeted by extremists seeking to halt vaccination drives. The suspension of the campaign in Noshki highlights the fragile security environment and the urgent need for stronger protective measures to ensure the safety of frontline workers and the continuation of critical public health efforts.



imprisonment since 2012.

Azharul Islam's case has been one of the most politically charged and closely monitored in recent years. As a prominent figure in Jamaat-e-Islami, a party with a contentious history and complex role during the independence conflict, his trial and subsequent sentencing were seen by many as emblematic of Bangladesh's broader struggle to deliver justice for war crimes while

As Bangladesh grapples with the consequences of this landmark judgement, it underscores the ongoing challenge of balancing the demands for justice with political realities. The Supreme Court's decision represents a critical moment in the country's journey, reflecting both the complexities of its history and the continuing quest for a path forward in reconciling the wounds of its past.

Members of the Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) joined the protest, showing solidarity with the retired workers and amplifying their demands for justice. The demonstration also saw the participation of Ali Khurshidi, opposition leader in the Sindh Assembly, who condemned the ongoing neglect faced by retired municipal employees. Khurshidi emphasized that these unpaid dues and pension delays are not isolated to Karachi alone but are a widespread problem afflicting local government bodies across Sindh, from Karachi to Kashmore.

He reminded the authorities that these workers had devoted years of service to the municipal corporation, and it is a matter of basic justice and dignity that they receive their pensions and dues without further delay.