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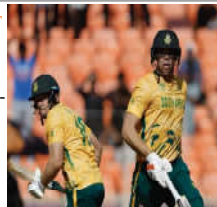


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First Digital, Print Daily of Balochistan

Editor: Asim Khan.

QUETTA VOICE

Rs.10.00 Vol.VII:No.133

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Thursday 12, February, 2026



Balochistan Assembly Denounces Terrorism, Calls for Unity Against Violence

Staff Reporter:

Quetta: The Balochistan Assembly on Tuesday strongly condemned the wave of terrorist violence witnessed on January 31 across Quetta and other districts of the province, describing the attacks as a direct assault on innocent civilians and security personnel. The House unanimously passed a resolution rejecting terrorism in all its forms and reaffirming support for the state's efforts to restore peace and stability in Balochistan.

Lawmakers from both government and opposition benches

participated in the discussion, agreeing that violence against unarmed citizens could not be defended under any political or social justification.

Members stressed the need for political unity and institutional coordination to counter militancy and protect the lives of ordinary people.

Addressing the House at the conclusion of the debate, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that terrorism could not be legitimised by claims of deprivation or underdevelopment.

He emphasised that the Constitution of Pakistan obligated citizens to remain loyal to

the state and made it clear that armed rebellion was unacceptable in any form.

"Dialogue is possible, but it cannot be forced through violence. Any engagement must remain within constitutional limits," he said.

The chief minister condemned the killing of labourers and civilians in Karachi and other affected areas, questioning how such acts could be linked to political grievances.

Referring to ongoing development efforts, he noted that thousands of previously non-functional schools had been restored across the province, in-

cluding in Gwadar, arguing that progress was underway despite security challenges. He reiterated that terrorism must be condemned outright and rejected without ambiguity.

Opposition member Zahid Ali Reki urged the government to address economic and political concerns through negotiations. He pointed to prolonged border closures with Iran and Afghanistan and rising unemployment as key factors contributing to unrest, stating that poverty and lack of opportunity were pushing young people toward conflict. He called for structured dialogue to resolve these issues peacefully.

However, provincial minister Ali Madad Juttak strongly disagreed, saying that militant groups were deliberately targeting innocent civilians and disrupting public life. He stated that the government was committed to enforcing the writ of the state across Balochistan and stressed that terrorism required a firm response from both political leadership and security institutions.

Other members of the Assembly also condemned the attacks, while underscoring the need for peaceful, constitutional, and political solutions to address long-standing challenges in the province.

Non-bailable warrants issued for Aleema Khan, Sohail Afridi

NEWS DESK:

Courts in twin cities on Tuesday issued non-bailable arrest warrants in two separate cases involving senior PTI figures Aleema Khan, sister of party founder Imran Khan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi.

The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Rawalpindi issued a non-bailable arrest warrant for Ms Khan in connection with the November 26 PTI protest case registered at Sadiqabad police station.

ATC Judge Amjad Ali Shah ruled that there was no legal justification for Ms Khan's absence from court proceedings, noting that she neither appeared nor sought an exemption.

Her counsel, Faisal Malik, also failed to attend the hearing, prompting the court to proceed with the case in their absence.

The court accepted the request of Special Prosecutor Zaheer Shah to include NCCI official Salman Niaz as a prosecution witness and adjourned the hearing until Wednesday (today).

Earlier, the same court rejected Ms Khan's petition seeking removal of terrorism charges, dismissing her challenge to the court's jurisdiction under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA).

Judge Amjad Ali Shah ruled that the case fell within the scope of the ATA, rejecting the defence's argument that protest-related charges should not be tried in an anti-terrorism court.

Ms Khan is accused of relaying a message from her brother Imran Khan from Adiala jail, allegedly calling for nationwide protests, which prosecutors claim led to violence.

Special Prosecutor Zaheer Shah argued that the Faizabad protest turned violent, resulting in injuries to police officers and gunfire striking a police van – actions that, he said, met the legal threshold for terrorism.

The prosecution also accused the defence of employing delaying tactics, including seeking adjournments due to a lawyers' strike.

During earlier proceedings, the court ordered the unfreezing of bank accounts belonging to the Shaakat Khanum Memorial Trust and Namal University, clarifying that prosecutors had never requested their freezing.

The November 26 protests saw PTI supporters march towards Islamabad despite government restrictions, clashing with security personnel in the Red Zone.

Following the unrest, multiple cases were registered under the PPC and Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act at Taxila, Sadiqabad, and Naseerabad police stations.

Proceedings in the Sadiqabad case continue at the ATC Rawalpindi.

KP CM's warrant Meanwhile, an Islamabad court issued a non-bailable arrest warrant for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi in a case pertaining to misleading statements against state institutions and damage to their reputation.

The case was registered by the National Cyber Crime Investigation Authority (NCCIA) under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peeca), 2016, following allegations that the chief minister made false and defamatory claims against state institutions.

During the hearing, Senior Civil Judge Abbas Shah noted that CM Afridi had once again failed to appear despite being summoned multiple times. Subsequently, the judge ordered his immediate arrest and directed law enforcement authorities to ensure his production before the court. The hearing was then adjourned till Feb 21.

Akhtar Mengal Officially Steps Down from National Assembly

Muhammad Zeeshan:

ISLAMABAD: The Speaker of the National Assembly has formally accepted the resignation of senior politician and Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Sardar Akhtar Mengal, bringing an official end to his tenure in the lower house of parliament.

Sardar Akhtar Mengal, who was elected from the Khuzdar constituency, had submitted his resignation from the National Assembly in 2024.

After completion of procedural requirements, the resignation has now been approved, parliamentary sources confirmed. Following the acceptance, relevant authorities have been notified, and the Khuzdar National Assembly seat has been declared vacant.

The development paves the way for further steps in line with electoral laws and parliamentary rules. Akhtar Mengal, a prominent political figure from Balochistan, has remained an influential voice on provincial rights and national political matters. His departure from the National Assembly is being viewed as a significant moment in the country's parliamentary landscape, particularly



Early in the context of the federal level, the move could have implications and electoral dynamics in the province. Political observers believe

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

How Long Will Quetta Pay the Price for SSGC and Federal Negligence?

Editorial: Quetta is once again at the mercy of a winter crisis that has become all too familiar: low gas pressure, unannounced load shedding, and complete administrative silence. Every year, citizens are told to "bear with the situation" as temperatures fall and heaters, stoves, and geysers turn useless. Yet the authorities responsible — the Southern Gas Company (SSGC) and the federal energy managers — continue to operate without accountability.

A City Freezing While Authorities Look Away

The people of Balochistan are right to ask: Why must Quetta suffer the same crisis every winter while no structural reform is introduced? Why are consumers forced to pay heavy bills for a service that barely exists? And why do officials in Karachi and Islamabad continue to treat Balochistan's gas issues as a seasonal inconvenience rather than a governance failure?

Despite Balochistan being an energy-producing region, its residents struggle every winter for the very resource extracted from their own soil. This contradiction reflects a deep-rooted policy imbalance in the federation,

where Balochistan remains last on the priority list — not because of a shortage of resources, but because of a shortage of political will.

SSGC's Repeated Excuses and Decades of Mismanagement

The SSGC's performance adds another layer of frustration. Each year, the company offers the same explanations — "excessive demand," "pipeline pressure issues," "technical challenges."

Yet no one explains why these problems remain unresolved despite decades of complaints. Why have there been no significant infrastructure upgrades? Why has the company failed to introduce a clear winter management plan for Quetta? Why is communication with consumers absent?

The unannounced nature of the load shedding exposes a complete disregard for public convenience. When outages are not scheduled or announced, families cannot plan meals, heating, or even basic daily routines. Hospitals and clinics struggle to maintain warm environments for patients. Small businesses suffer. And in a city where temperatures can drop below freezing, such negligence is not

just inconvenient — it is dangerous.

Federal Government's Weak Oversight and Balochistan's Low Priority

The federal government cannot escape responsibility either. Energy management is a national issue, and the pattern of winter mismanagement in Balochistan reflects weak oversight, poor planning, and an unfair allocation of resources. The silence of policymakers during these crises sends a clear message: Quetta's suffering is not a priority.

What Quetta needs is not another round of hollow statements. It needs a transparent winter gas plan, proper infrastructure investment, honest communication with the public, and real accountability for SSGC. Most importantly, it needs the federal government to finally treat Balochistan as an equal stakeholder in national resource management.

The people of Quetta have endured enough. Their patience should not be mistaken for acceptance. Without decisive action, this recurring winter crisis will continue to expose not only the inefficiencies of SSGC but also the federal government's unwillingness to address long-standing injustices.

The Looming threat of Climate Crisis in Pakistan



Sardar Mengal:

Climate change is unleashing its worst effects in the form of heavy rainfalls and disastrous floods. Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change had already waved multiple red flags about dire consequences of climate change in Pakistan. The authorities should have been on their toes in response to the contours of the crisis but we witnessed everything otherwise.

Balochistan Vulnerable to Climate Crisis

It is noteworthy that almost 30 districts of Balochistan have been badly hit by the current climate emergency. People who were already drowning in man made disasters of inflation, poverty,

political crisis are currently drowning in a Natural disaster. Nushki, Khuzdar, Lasbela, Bolan and Jhal Magsi received much of the inflictions of flash floods.

People were left stranded to flow with the waves as seen in footages, circulating on social media. Unfortunately, disturbing pictures of dead bodies of children covered with mud, families who were sitting helplessly on debris of their houses and sinking

valuable of the people couldn't awaken the government from its stupor. Even more gloomily, the enraging waves of floods engulfing lives and property, converting everything into dust & debris and wreaking havoc all

around- couldn't merit breaking news on national media.

Prior disregard and later delayed response have multiplied inflictions of the catastrophe.

Loss of land communication has further isolated the stricken areas making true estimation of destruction more exhausting.

Timely decision and act can reduce the effect of Climate Change.

To stop ballooning problems into crisis; rescue, relief and rehabilitation operations should be carried out on full scale as the current pace is insufficient to meet the requirement. NDMA and PDMA need to reach out to the peripheral areas that are out of the

radar.

It's high time for the provincial and federal coalition government to pay special attention to those whose lives are at the stake. Political parties need to rise above the traditional politics and launch concerted efforts to help out the calamity stricken at the earliest. Social welfare organisations should come forward to heal the lesions of suffering humans. On national media, there should be special discourse and discussion on settlement and rehabilitation of the affected people.

In addition to ensuring: re-building of eroded infrastructure, compensation for losses, clean water, adequate supply of food, there should be numerous

measures in pipeline to overcome the post-flood outcomes such as increased risk of infectious diseases. The flood-stricken area can become a breeding ground for many health related problems. Supplying preventive medicines and upholding precautionary measures can halt the onslaught of infectious diseases.

The state machinery in its all forms should come into play to navigate a safe passage out of this hurricane of climate emergency enveloping us now.

The author is a final year MBBS student at King Edward Medical University Lahore, Pakistan. He can be reached on twitter via @SardarMengal11.

IRC reaches to 29,000 out of school girls in Balochistan

By Shakoor Khan: International Rescue Committee (IRC) under its Teach & Educate Adolescent Girls with Community Help (TEACH) project, reached out to 29,000 out-of-school girls of 5 districts of Balochistan including Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Nushki, Kharan and Chagai.

"IRC is striving hard to promote girl's education in Balochistan besides imparting vocational trainings on financial literacy and trades to make them financially independent," said Shareef Mengal, Head of IRC Balochistan during a policy dialogue titled "Improving future of girl's education in Balochistan held in collaboration with UK aid at local hotel here."

Balochistan Education Minister Naseebullah Mari was the chief guest while representatives from the Education ministry, Directorate of Special Education,

Literacy, Non-Formal Education & Human Rights Department, Balochistan Assessment and Examination Commission, Balochistan Textbook Board, Policy Planning Implementation Unit, Provincial Institute of Teachers Education, Education Support Programme, Global Partnership of Education, German Agency for International Cooperation, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund Society for Community Strengthening and Promotion of Education, Balochistan, Institute for Development Studies and Practices, Japan International Cooperation Agency also attended the event.

The event hosted conversations with mul-



multiple stakeholders including education experts and government functionaries on the barriers faced by girls in the province in pursuing their education and solutions to combat those barriers.

salient feature of the project IRC

While highlighting the salient feature of the project IRC chief in Balochistan Shareef Mengal said under the 'Girls' Learn' stream of the project, 22,000 girls received classes on Package A, B and C of non-formal curriculum, of them 4000 enrolled in mainstream formal schooling system.

Under 'Girls Earn' stream of the project, 7000 girls completed Package A of the non-formal curriculum, out of these 7000 girls, 5000 received training on financial literacy and business development planning. 2400 girls received training on 8 vocational trades and toolkits and 250 girls received financial grants to start a business.

Naseebullah Mari, Education Minister Balochistan, on the occasion urged that "We must do our part to remove the barriers federal by girls in the region so that every girl can pursue her education and become a valuable member of society."

"The Government is making all out efforts to combat the low literacy rate which has affected

girls from all ethnic groups, and socioeconomic backgrounds," He said. "We are committed to assist and contribute to building economically prosperous, and educated Balochistan, to every child has access to education."

He however welcomed the support extended by the International Rescue Committee for providing educational and vocational training opportunities, saying he is very grateful for the on-ground initiative of community-based schools in Balochistan."

Abdul Rauf Baloch - Secretary Secondary Education on the occasion appreciated the contributions of IRC for girl's education in Balochistan.

He shared that education is a complex subject which cannot be discussed without WASH, health and other facilities.

This makes it a responsibility of all relevant departments and stakeholders who should play their role effectively.

Zain Ul Abedin Khan, Deputy Director Programs, IRC, in his remarks said that "We as a society need to commit to prioritize and focus on Girls' Education through adequate resources. Girls' education in Balochistan is one of the biggest challenges faced by the country and to deal with it we must work with innovative methods like Non-Formal Education."

He further added

that, "Over the years, we have realized that if girls are unable to reach school, all stakeholders need to fill the gap and provide access to life-long learning opportunities like productive skills and life-skills within communities."

Girl's education is correlated with lower rates of poverty

The panel discussions established an opportunity for the policy makers and practitioners to understand that girl's education is correlated with lower rates of poverty and improved health outcomes. While stimulating dialogue, the stakeholders pledged to work together to eradicate the barriers to girls'

education by providing gender inclusive facilities and quality of education.

The event was a culmination of three sessions where the first was hosted to discuss the barriers faced by girls in pursuing their education. The panelists of the first session classified the barriers into 3 categories: Cultural, Economic and Service Delivery. The panelists recommended Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs) as a viable option while integrated with skill-based trainings and digitalized education.

Initiatives to combat the barriers to education

The second session was focused on sustainable initiatives to combat the barriers with the help of Non-Formal Education in bridging the gap between primary and secondary schooling.

Chairperson of the session, Mr. Abdul Khaliq - Chief Planning Officer Policy, Planning, and Implementation Unit welcomed the participants and emphasized the importance of solutions to these barriers.

Mr. Ashraf Gichki - Director Literacy and Non-Formal Education shared contribution of NFE department toward provision of second chance of education to out-of-school children.

Personal struggles in overcoming the barriers to education

The third and final session gave the TEACH clients an opportunity to express their personalized struggles in overcoming the barriers to education.

Anam - client of TEACH project from Pishin shared that after joining TEACH ALP center,

she can read books and newspapers. Simra from the same district shared that her parents don't allow travelling long distances to attend school but after opening of ALP center at doorstep, she was able to join the classroom for first time in her life. Haleema from Nushki district shared that her mother is the only breadwinner of home and works at households of others to earn income. Haleema shared that she is the only child of her family who can read, thanks to joining ALP center.

10 dead after shooter opens fire at high school in Canada

NEWS DESK: Ten people including the shooter are dead after an assailant opened fire at a high school in western Canada on Tuesday in one of the country's deadliest mass casualty events in recent history.

The outbreak brought to Canada the type of mass shooting more common in the neighbouring United States, and was carried out by a shooter described as female, police said. Six people were found dead inside a high school in the town of Tumbler Ridge in British Columbia, two more people were found dead at a residence believed to be connected to the incident, and another person died on the way to hospital, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police said.

At least two other people were hospitalised with serious or life-threatening injuries, and as many as 25 people were being treated for non-life-threatening injuries, police said.

A suspected shooter was also found



dead from what appears to be a self-inflicted injury, police said, adding they did not believe there were any more suspects or an ongoing threat to the public.

"It's hard to know

what to say on a night like tonight. It's the kind of thing that feels like it happens in other places and not close to home," British Columbia Premier David Eby told reporters. Police released

almost no details about the shooter except to say the person was described as a female — potentially an unusual development as mass shootings in North America are almost al-

ways carried out by men. A police active shooter alert said the suspect was described "as female in a dress with brown hair."

Police Superintendent Ken Floyd later confirmed at a news conference that the suspect described in the alert was the same person found dead in the school. Police did not say how many of the victims may have been

minors. Tumbler Ridge student Darian Quist told the public broadcaster CBC that he was in his mechanics class when there was an announcement that the school was in lockdown.

He said that initially he "didn't think anything was going on," but started receiving "disturbing" photos about the carnage at the school.

Then "it set in what was happening," Quist said. He said he stayed in lockdown for more than two hours when police stormed in, ordering everyone to put their hands up before escorting them out of the school.

Darian's mother Shelley Quist, also interviewed, said she embraced her son when they finally connected after the site was declared safe.

"He's not going to be out of my sight for a while now," she told the CBC. "Tight-knit community Tumbler Ridge is a remote municipality with a population of around 2,400 people

in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in northern British Columbia, approximately 1,155 km (717 miles) northeast of Vancouver.

Images of the town show a snow-covered landscape filled with pine trees.

Tumbler Ridge Secondary School has 160 students in grades seven through 12, roughly ages 12 to 18, according to its website.

The school was closed for the rest of the week and counselling will be made available to those in need, school officials said.

Officials said the town's small police force was on the scene within two minutes of receiving a call, and that victims were still being assessed hours after the incident.

Ramaphosa, Putin discuss return of South African fighters from Ukraine

NEWS DESK: South African President Cyril Ramaphosa held talks on Tuesday with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on returning South African fighters to fighting for Russian forces in Ukraine, his office said.

The South African government said in November it had received "distress calls" from 17 men who were trapped in the epicentre of the fighting in Ukraine's Donbas region after being tricked into joining mercenary forces.

President Ramaphosa and President Putin pledged their support to the process of returning South African fighters fighting alongside

Russians in Ukraine," the president's office said in a statement.

"In this regard, teams from both sides will continue their engagements towards the finalisation of this process," it said.

Ukraine's foreign minister said in November that more than 1,400 citizens from 36 African countries had been identified among the Russian ranks.

Kenya deplores use of citizens as "cannon fodder" in war.

An investigation spoke to four Kenyans recently returned from Russia who said they were tricked by a Nairobi recruitment agency into

travelling to Russia under false promises of well-paying jobs.

In December, Kenyan authorities said around 200 citizens had been sent to fight in Ukraine, of whom 23 had since been repatriated.

This is an understatement, said the four Kenyan recruits. The daughter of South African former president Jacob Zuma is among several accused of recruiting men to join Russian mercenaries in the Ukraine war.

Pretoria warned its citizens last year not to fall for recruitment scams, after multiple social media influencers shared campaigns promising young women jobs

in a Russia-based programme that has been accused of abuses.

"Cannon fodder" Kenyans Kenya on Tuesday condemned as "unacceptable" recruiters luring Kenyans to Russia with promises of lucrative jobs, only to send them to Ukraine's front lines as "cannon fodder."

In recent weeks, mounting reports indicate that Kenyans deceived into travelling for high-paying work in Russia are dying in the battlefield, with others sustaining serious wounds.

An investigation published this week revealed the web of deception into which four men with no military background fell — forced to sign contracts with the Russian army and swiftly sent to the front lines in Ukraine.

"It's unacceptable for them to be participants in this conflict," junior foreign minister Korir Sing'oei said. The four, three of whom returned wounded, were given contracts written in Russian. One had expected to work as a salesman, two as security guards and the fourth as a high-level athlete.

"These individuals are used as cannon fodder on the war front," Sing'oei said. "No Kenyan would voluntarily enter into that kind of engagement."



Chinese captain pleads not guilty to damage charge in Baltic Sea cable case

NEWS DESK: The Chinese captain of a Hong Kong-registered cargo ship pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to a charge of criminal damage, following allegations that his vessel damaged undersea cables in the Baltic Sea.

Wan Wenguo, 44, the captain of the container ship Nanyang Polar Bear, is alleged to have damaged underwater natural gas pipeline and submarine telecom cables between Finland and Estonia on October 8, 2023, according to a Hong Kong charge sheet reviewed by Reuters.

The charge sheet stated that Wan had been "reckless" and "without lawful excuse damaged the property belonging to another."

Finnish investigators said the container vessel had dragged its anchor to sever the Balticconnector gas pipeline.

Finnish police later retrieved a broken anchor from the seabed



near the pipeline, and technical examinations showed it belonged to the container vessel that was missing a front anchor.

A lawyer for Wan, Jerry Chung, earlier said 18 prosecution witnesses would be called to testify in the case that includes one charge of criminal damage, as well as two

charges of failing to ensure the ship complied with safety requirements under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea.

Wan also pleaded not guilty to those two charges. These witnesses include crew members, Hong Kong officials, and experts in maritime matters,

Chung added.

The Baltic Sea region has been on high alert for sabotage after a series of outages involving power cables, gas pipelines and telecom links since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

NAO has boosted its military presence with frigates, aircraft and naval drones.

Warming climate threatens Greenland

NEWS DESK: Standing in his boat with binoculars in hand, hunter Malik Kleist scans the horizon for seals. But this February, the sea ice in southwestern Greenland has yet to freeze, threatening traditional livelihoods like his.

"Normally the seals are on the ice or in the more calm waters. But today we had to sail all the way into the fjords to find them," the 37-year-old tells AFP.

The Arctic region is on the frontline of global warming, heating up four times faster than the rest of the planet since 1979, according to a 2022 study in scientific journal Nature, causing the sea ice to retreat.

Seals rely on pack ice to give birth, to rest and for protection.

Hunters increasingly have to sail farther along the jagged coast of Sisimiut, navigating into the fjords for several hours to find them.

Traditionally, hunters' boats would head straight out to sea slowly pushing through the ice and creating holes that attract seals coming up for air.

But without any



ice, "it's too windy and the waves are too big," Kleist says.

Last year was exceptionally warm in the vast autonomous territory, with several temperature records beaten, according to the Danish Meteorological Institute (DMI).

In December, the Summit Station, located at the height of Greenland's ice sheet, recorded an average temperature of -30.9 degrees C (-23.6 Fahrenheit), 8.1C higher than the December average during the period 1991-2020.

US, Azerbaijan sign strategic partnership

NEWS DESK: US Vice President JD Vance on Tuesday visited Azerbaijan, arriving from Armenia as part of a regional trip aimed at consolidating a US-brokered peace process between the Caucasus neighbours.

The visit follows US President Donald Trump's mediation last year of a peace agreement between the historical rivals Baku and Yerevan, which have fought two wars over the Karabakh region.

Vance sparked controversy by deleting and his wife had laid a wreath "at the Armenian Genocide memorial to honour the victims of the 1915 Armenian genocide." His office said the post was published in error by staff not part of the delegation.

In Baku, Vance met with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev before the two signed a strategic partnership agreement between the United States and Azerbaijan.

Vance said the agreement will formalise that partnership and make it very clear that the United States-Azerbaijan relationship is one that will "stick." The United States will "ship some new boats to Azerbaijan to help you with territorial waters protection," he told Aliyev as they made statements to the press.



a new phase, including in defence cooperation, "through equipment sales." "We will continue cooperation in the field of security and will work together on counterterrorism operations."

On Monday, Vance held talks with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan in Yerevan. The visit is expected to advance a flag ship transport communications project integrating the two countries into a new east-west trade route. Azerbaijan seized Karabakh in a 2023 lightning offensive, ending three decades of rule by Armenian separatists.

At a White House summit in August 2025, Trump brokered an agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan that saw the two countries commit to renounce claims on each other's territory and re-

train from using force.

Before the meeting with Aliyev, Vance said the issue of Armenian separatist leaders imprisoned in Azerbaijan will be "certainly going to come up" in talks with Azerbaijani leaders.

Last week, a military court in Baku handed lengthy sentences, including life jail terms, to Armenian separatist leaders in a war crimes trial. More than 20 Armenian human rights groups sent an open letter urging Vance to help secure the release of Armenian detainees in Azerbaijan.

The US State Department said the visit would "advance President Donald Trump's peace efforts and promote the Trump Road for International Peace

and Prosperity (TRIPP)."

The TRIPP is a proposed road-and-rail corridor designed to link Azerbaijan with its Nakhchivan exclave, cut off from the mainland by Armenian territory, while integrating the region into a wider east-west trade route connecting Central Asia and the Caspian basin to Europe. Washington has presented the project as a confidence-building measure following decades of conflict between the two countries.

Aliyev said the TRIPP "will make another contribution to peace, development and cooperation in the region." Azerbaijan sees the opening of regional communications as the main precondition for signing a comprehensive peace treaty with its rival.

Imran Khan's health is fine, says lawyer after meeting in Adiala Jail

ISLAMABAD (INP): Barrister Salman Sadiq, appointed by the Supreme Court as a friend of the court, held a lengthy meeting with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder and former prime minister Imran Khan at Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, with a detailed report on the jailed leader's condition and facilities set to be submitted to the top court on Wednesday.

According to officials and court proceed-

ings, the meeting lasted around three hours. After leaving Central Jail Rawalpindi, commonly known as Adiala Jail, Sadiq avoided formal media talk and did not share detailed remarks about the discussion. In a brief exchange with journalists outside the prison, he confirmed that access had been granted in line with court orders and said Imran Khan's health was fine. He added that it would

not be appropriate to comment further before submitting his written report to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court appointed Barrister Salman Sadiq as judicial representative during

the hearing of appeals filed against the trial in the Toshkhana criminal case.

The bench directed that he be allowed to meet Imran Khan and review his living conditions in jail.

A two-member bench headed by Chief Justice Yahya Afridi ordered that Sadiq be given full access to the PTI founder's barracks and related facilities so he could prepare a comprehensive written re-

port. The court also separately sought a report from the jail superintendent regarding the condition, treatment and available facilities provided to the former prime minister in custody.



ISLAMABAD: Jam Kamal Khan and Cham Nimul during a delegation-level meeting to strengthen Pakistan-Cambodia trade, industrial cooperation, and supply chain integration.

Govt to train 1m non-IT professionals in AI skills

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Tuesday said a nationwide programme to train one million non-IT professionals in AI skills will be launched to boost productivity and improve livelihoods.

Speaking to students from various universities during Indus AI Week 2026 in Islamabad, the minister said the past two years had witnessed a revolutionary shift in emerging technologies, with artificial intelligence reshaping economies, education systems and employment structures worldwide.

She said Pakistan had responded to these changes through a "whole-of-government approach" under AI," she said, adding that the government's

Prime Minister, aimed at ensuring coordinated planning and effective implementation.

Shaza Fatima said Parliament passed the Digital Nation Pakistan Act last year, providing a comprehensive roadmap for the country's digital transformation. A major milestone under this framework was the approval of Pakistan's first-ever National Artificial Intelligence Policy, endorsed by the federal cabinet in September 2025. "The AI policy covers every critical dimension—including infrastructure, data centres, computing power, human resource development, education reforms, international collaboration, and the ethical and inclusive use of AI," she said, adding that the government's

priority was not just policy formulation but tangible results on the ground.

The minister said the Prime Minister, while inaugurating Indus AI Week, announced a \$1 billion investment in a youth bulge of more than 150 million people, entrepreneurial potential and growing digital maturity.

The second pillar focused on global leadership dialogue, with more than 50 international technology leaders, ministers, chief information officers, chief technology officers and CEOs participating in policy discussions. "These deliberations culminated in the Islamabad Declaration, reflecting Pakistan's stance on artificial intelligence governance and international cooperation."

Explaining the broader objectives of Indus AI Week, Shaza Fatima said the initiative was built on three pillars. The first aimed to project Pakistan's technological readiness to the world by highlighting its youth bulge of more than 150 million people, entrepreneurial potential and growing digital maturity.

The second pillar focused on global leadership dialogue, with more than 50 international technology leaders, ministers, chief information officers, chief technology officers and CEOs participating in policy discussions.

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Pakistan's first quantum computing hackathon concludes

ISLAMABAD, Feb 10 (INP): The closing ceremony of Pakistan's first Quantum Computing Hackathon held at the National Centre for Physics (NCP) marked the successful conclusion of a landmark three-day national initiative aimed at advancing emerging technologies and nurturing the next generation of scientific innovators.

Addressing the participants as the Chief Guest, Chairman Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) Dr. Raja Ali Raza Anwar praised the event, highlighting its youth focus, intellectual depth, and collaborative spirit demonstrated by young researchers and innovators from across the country. Recalling global discussions on the future of quantum science, Dr. Anwar said quantum technology—once considered distant and abstract—is rapidly becoming a transformative force shaping tomorrow's world. He highlighted the historical evolution of quantum science and emphasized its emergence as one of the most promising frontiers of modern research.

Before the Chairman's address, Director General, National Institute of Lasers and Optronics (NILOP), Dr. Manzoor Ikram welcomed the participants and dignitaries. He outlined the journey of the hackathon, which began in May last year following engagements with Pakistan's Mission to the United Nations in Geneva and international science diplomacy organizations promoting quantum innovation worldwide.

He explained that the event was organized in collaboration with the Open Quantum Institute, CERN, and international partners, with the dual objectives of raising public awareness about quantum technologies and developing practical quantum algorithms. Dr. Anwar urged participants to remain connected beyond the competition, build a national community of quantum innovators, and continue collaborative research across institutions. He also encouraged academic and research organizations to regularly host similar innovation-driven events to maintain momentum in advanced sciences.

The chairman underscored that quantum computing is designed to complement conventional computing systems rather than replace them, enabling breakthroughs in areas requiring massive computational power. He stressed that sustained institutional support, investment in research, and the nurturing of human intellect are essential to fully harness emerging technologies.

Highlighting human capacity as both the greatest challenge and strength of scientific advancement, Dr. Anwar expressed satisfaction at the strong participation of youth and the encouraging gender balance witnessed at the hackathon.

calling it a positive sign for Pakistan's scientific future. He urged participants to remain connected beyond the competition, build a national community of quantum innovators, and continue collaborative research across institutions. He also encouraged academic and research organizations to regularly host similar innovation-driven events to maintain momentum in advanced sciences.

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Protest in Lahore on martyrdom anniversary of Afzal Guru

LAHORE (INP): Kashmiri Centre Lahore held a protest outside the Press Club on the martyrdom anniversary of renowned Kashmiri freedom leader Muhammad Afzal Guru.

Muhammad Afzal Guru was hanged in New Delhi's Tihar Jail on February 9, 2013, in what legal experts and human rights defenders have consistently termed a judicial killing, carried out to appease India's majoritarian political sentiment. His remains were buried inside the jail premises and never returned to his family for a proper burial.

Afzal Guru, calling it a grave violation of human rights.

They noted that even the Indian Supreme Court had acknowledged the absence of substantial evidence against him. By executing him despite this, they said, the Indian judiciary demonstrated its failure to uphold the Constitution's law, moral values, and human rights hold little significance in India.

Afzal Guru was remembered as a shining star of the Kashmiri freedom movement, who sacrificed his life for the liberation of his homeland. Speakers expressed outrage that the Supreme Court admitted the lack of evidence yet

still imposed the death penalty, questioning the very nature of justice and law in India.

They further said that Afzal Guru, by embracing martyrdom on the gallows, showed the world that Kashmiris are ready to make the ultimate sacrifice for freedom from Indian occupation.

They demanded that the mortal remains of martyrs Afzal Guru and Muhammad Maqbool Butt be exhumed from the Tihar Jail cemetery in Delhi and returned to the Kashmiri people for proper burial in their homeland.

Senior leaders who addressed the protest included Ghulam Abbas Mir of the Pakistan People's Party, Inam-ul-Hassan Kashmiri, former MPA Farzana Butt, senior PML-N leader Begum Safia Ishaq, prominent religious scholar Allama Ashiq Syed Hussain, General Secretary Kashmir Action Committee Farooq Azad, Captain Mushtaq.

Professor Asma Hassan Sheikh, Kashmiri leader Nazim Butt, Leader Muhaz-e-Rae Shumari Aftab Nazki, prominent religious scholar Allama Mushtaq Qadri, renowned intellectual Nazir Bhinder, Sheikh Amjad Iqbal, Mahmood Tazeer, and others.



ISLAMABAD: The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, chairing the 57th meeting of the NJPMC, at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Terrorists have no connection to islam, says Ashrafi

RAWALPINDI (INP): Prime Minister's Coordinator for Religious Harmony Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi on Tuesday said terrorists had no connection to Islam and called on the nation to unite against extremism.

Speaking at the "Paigham-e-Pakistan Conference" here, attended by scholars, religious leaders and representatives of various institutions, he condemned attacks on mosques, places of worship, women and children as acts of cowardice.

"Those targeting sites associated with Hazrat Khadija al-Kubra (RA), Islam's first believer and sup-

porter, are clearly enemies of Islam," Ashrafi, who is also Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council and Coordinator of Paigham-e-Pakistan, said. He cited the Quran, emphasising that anyone who unlawfully kills a believer is condemned to hell, adding that "terrorists' actions are incompatible with Islamic teachings".

Referring to the wounded victims at PIMS hospital, he said, "We may be weak, but Allah Almighty is not," drawing parallels with historical assaults on the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). Hazrat Ali (RA) and Hazrat Ali (RA) during prayers.

Ashrafi noted that the recent terror attack on the worshippers at Islamabad's Faralai mosque had united the nation, with victims showing courage and resilience.

He warned that forces in India, Israel and Afghanistan were involved in stirring unrest in Pakistan.

"Terrorists are being trained in Afghanistan and supplied with weapons for attacks here," he said, stressing that Pakistan would counter internal threats but not tolerate destabilisation on its soil. He added that investigations into mosque security were ongoing and that police officers had also been martyred or injured during opera-

tions against facilitators of terrorism. The Prime Minister has instructed the Federal Health Minister to personally oversee treatment of the wounded, he added.

Ashrafi urged all religious scholars to adhere to the "Paigham-e-Pakistan code of conduct", warning against hate speech targeting any sect. Misuse of positions of authority within mosques would not be tolerated, and violators would receive no support or protection. At the conclusion of the conference, the participants offered special prayers for the martyred officers and wounded of the Khadija al-Kubra Mosque attack.



ISLAMABAD: His Excellency Mr. Verzhn Kistafin, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, called on the Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr. Mushtak Malik.

Balochistan Investment Board Reviews Progress of Shrimp Farming Project in Lasbela

Karachi: Vice Chairman of the Balochistan Investment Board (BIB), Bilal Khan Kakar, chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress of the ongoing shrimp farming project in Dam area of Lasbela district. The meeting was attended by senior officials from the Fisheries Department, Government of Balochistan, project team members, local civil representatives, and Assistant Commissioner Winder, Saif Mughal. Progress Review and Coordination Strategy.

During the meeting, participants reviewed the current status of the shrimp farming project and discussed key challenges.

Emphasis was placed on improving inter-departmental coordination to ensure smooth and timely implementation.

Bilal Khan Kakar highlighted that the



shrimp (prawn) farming initiative in Lasbela is not only a major step toward promoting investment in Balochistan but also a significant opportunity to create employment for the local population and boost the Investment and Local Employment The Vice

Chairman stated that the project is expected to play a vital role in the economic development of the region, generating new job opportunities and strengthening the aquaculture sector in Balochistan.

He directed all relevant departments to accelerate the pace of work through enhanced cooperation and a coordinated strategy to meet project targets efficiently. Community Engagement and Sustainable Development Local community representatives shared their concerns and suggestions during the session.

Participants agreed that the success of the shrimp farming project depends on ensuring the trust, participation, and inclusion of the local population.

The meeting also emphasized strengthening community-level awareness and communication mechanisms to support long-term sustainability.

Commitment to Chief Minister's Vision for Sustainable Growth The forum reaffirmed its commitment to the vision of Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, focusing on sustainable development, modern agriculture, and effective utilization of water resources across the province.

Officials assured that the Lasbela shrimp farming project would be completed on time in accordance with its planned objectives.

Provincial Minister Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran Holds Open Court in Rakhni, Vows Improved Water and Sanitation Services

Barkhan Rakhni: Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, received a warm and en-

Khetran prioritized direct public engagement by holding an open court (Khuli Kacher).

A large number of citizens from various

and improved sanitation services remains the government's top priority.

Government Commitment to Complete

system. He reiterated that public service is his mission and pledged to utilize all available resources for the develop-

sphere filled with national enthusiasm. The children responded with excitement and appreciation. Meetings



thusiasm welcome during his visit to Rakhni. Party workers and local residents gathered at multiple points, where reception camps were established. Supporters showed flower petals and chanted slogans to express their support.

Open Court Addresses Clean Drinking Water and Drainage Issues. During the visit, Sardar Abdul Rehman

participated and presented concerns related to clean drinking water, drainage systems, ongoing development projects, and basic civic facilities.

The Provincial Minister issued on-the-spot instructions to concerned officials for the immediate resolution of public complaints. He emphasized that providing safe drinking water

Public Health Engineering Projects Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran assured residents that all ongoing Public Health Engineering projects in Rakhni and Barkhan district would be completed on time. He further announced that emergency measures will be taken in water-scarce areas to address short-

ages and improve the overall water supply

ment and prosperity of Rakhni and surrounding areas.

Patriotic Interaction with Children Highlights Visit A heartwarming and patriotic moment was witnessed when the Provincial Minister interacted with children during the visit.

He engaged in friendly conversation and chanted "Pakistan Zindabad" alongside them, creating an atmo-

sphere filled with national enthusiasm.

The children responded with excitement and appreciation. Meetings

Commissioner Sibi Chairs Divisional EPI Task Force Meeting, Calls for Stronger Polio Eradication Measures



Sibi: Commissioner Sibi Division, Asadullah Faiz, chaired a meeting of the Divisional Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) Task Force to review vaccination performance and polio eradication efforts across the division.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Sibi Major (R) Ilyas Kabzai, Divisional Director Health Dr. Abdul Khaliq, AC PHO Dr. Ihsanullah, NPO WHO Dr. Rahat, and other relevant officials.

Deputy Commissioners, EPI heads, and EOC representatives from other districts of Sibi Division joined the session via video link.

Review of Vaccination Performance and KPIs. Commissioner Sibi was given a detailed briefing on the overall EPI situation, including vaccination coverage from October to December 2019.

Key performance indicators (KPIs), coverage and dropout rates, surveillance and supervision, NEIR (National Electronic Immunization

Registry), and the performance of partner organizations. The meeting also reviewed vaccination attendance and data regarding unregistered vaccinators in NEIR.

Urgent Need for Coordinated Polio Eradication Efforts. Addressing the meeting, Commissioner Asadullah Faiz highlighted that only two countries in the world still report the presence of the poliovirus, stressing the urgent need for coordinated and effective measures to eliminate the disease completely.

He appreciated the efforts of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and termed the establishment of a divisional-level EPI forum a positive step, noting that this was his first meeting.

Focus on Sewerage System to Improve Environmental Sanitation. The Commissioner directed Deputy Commissioners to allocate funds under BSDI for improving sewerage systems and covering open drains where necessary.

BEFORE THE JUDGE BANKING COURT QUETTA DISTRICT COURT/KACHEHRY SHARA-E-IQBAL QUETTA SUIT NO. 25/2026

Habib Bank Limited, Liaquat Bazar Branch Quetta.

Plaintiff

VERSUS

Nasir Hayat S/o Muhammad Ashraf.
Address: R/O House No. 4-37/31 B, Khakabad Road Quetta.
Cell No: 0300-7839099.
CNIC No: 54400-5614112-5.

Defendant

SUIT FOR RECOVERY OF RS. 1,265,709/00- US \$ OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (RECOVERY OF FINANCES) ORDINANCE 2001.

NOTICE UNDER FORM IV APPENDIX B OF C.P.C. 1908

The above noted defendant.

WHEREAS the plaintiff has instituted a suit against you under section 9(5) of the Banking Companies Ordinance XLVI of 2001 for RS. 1,265,709/00-balance of principal & interest/mark up/trent due to him of which copy can be obtained from this court, on or, hereby summoned to obtain leave from the court within 30 (thirty) days, from the service hereof to appear and defend the suit, and within such time to cause an appearance to be entered for you.

In the default whereof the plaintiff will be entitled at any time after expiration of such 30 (thirty) days to obtain decree as prayed in the plaint.

Leave to appear may be obtained on an application to the court supported by an affidavit or declaration showing that there is defense to the suit on the merits, or i.e. if, it is reasonable that you should be allowed to appear in the suit. Date of hearing is 16-03-2026.

GIVEN under my hand and seal of the court, this 10 day of February, 2026.

(SAIFULLAH KHAN)
Registrar
Banking Court Quetta

Deputy Commissioner Ziarat Reviews Education Performance, Directs Strict Monitoring of Matric Exams

Ziarat: Deputy Commissioner Ziarat, Abdul Qadoos Achakzai, chaired a meeting of the District Education Group to review the perfor-

Matrix Examinations During the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Abdul Qadoos Achakzai, chaired a meeting of the District Education Group to review the perfor-

tract teachers' vacancies will be issued by February 28.

He further stated that newly functional schools, previously



mance of the education department and discuss ongoing academic matters.

The meeting was attended by District Education Officer Latifullah Gharshin, District Officer Education Abdul Malik, District Officer Education (Female) Maimoona, DDO Female Farzana Arbab, DDO - Naqeebullah Kakar, and ADO Sanjavi Muhammad Zaman Durrani. All Deputy District Officers (DDOs) presented detailed reports and briefed the Deputy Commissioner on their respective areas.

examination centers where 9th and 10th annual matric exams are currently underway across the district.

He emphasized the need to play an active role in eliminating cheating and ensuring transparency in the examination process.

He also instructed officials to ensure the provision of necessary facilities at all examination centers.

non-functional, will be formally opened by March 1 after forming a committee for proper oversight.

No compromise on Education Standards Highlighting the importance of education, Abdul Qadoos Achakzai stated that no compromise will be made on educational standards and all decisions will be based strictly on merit.

He reaffirmed the district administration's commitment to promoting education across Ziarat district and warned that negligence in this regard will not be tolerated.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Executive Engineer (Buildings) CWP/PS-4 Department District Quetta, invites sealed proposals for the work listed below. Government of Balochistan intended to date from interested contractor's terms for the work listed below.

Earned Money 2% Rs., Tender Fee 1000/- for each work

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost Rs.	Time Limit	TSE NO.
1	Construction of Boundary Wall DC Office complex Karhi, Leves Thana Bhat, Leves Thana Bhat, AC Office Sums, Nao Tehelhar House Sums, DC Annex, AC Office Bhat, Tehelhar House Sums (Under BSDI Phase-I)	Rs.12,162,77/-	180 Days	TSE-25092072285
2	Provision of Furniture, Screens Lab, IT Lab & Sanitation of Govt Girls Inter College District (Under BSDI Phase-I) District Karhi	Rs. 8,712,87/-	180 Days	TSE-25092072233
3	Repair & Purchase of Furniture for Public Library District (Under BSDI Phase-I) District Karhi	Rs. 4,350,45/-	180 Days	TSE-25092072233
4	Repair, Construction & Sanitation of (BT) Civil Dispensary (DC), One BHU (Under BSDI Phase-I) District Karhi	Rs. 15,00,168/-	180 Days	TSE-25092072233
5	Repair, Construction & Sanitation of (BT) Civil Dispensary (DC), One BHU (Under BSDI Phase-I) District Karhi	Rs. 12,87,281/-	180 Days	TSE-25092072285

The procurement shall be carried out in accordance with Specification Public Procurement Regulatory Authority rules, 2014. **BASIC ELIGIBILITY:** The Contractor must have valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council in relevant category C-6 or above in relevant discipline and registration with tax authorities in NTN & Sales Tax Department, where applicable. Presence in Active Tax Payer List. The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. **Registration:** Registration is required. The bidder must have completed 2 Assignment of similar nature of work. Turn over of at least for Sr No.1 (Rs.513,943 PKR), Sr.No2 (Rs.699,249 PKR), Sr.No3 (3,465,348 PKR), Sr.No.4 (1,161 PKR) and Sr. No.5 (1,000-600 PKR) Amounts in 2 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm. **Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) C-6 and above (Up to 25 million) in Relevant Category and Specialized Codes (CE 11) (Solar), CE 11 (Solar Energy), CE 10 General Buildings, and maintenance. METHOD OF PROCUREMENT:** Single stage, Two Envelope Bidding Procedure. **BIDDING / TENDER DOCUMENTS:** Issuance: The Contractor / Firms can obtain the bidding documents from the address mentioned below on production of green chalan from for an amount of Rs. 1000/- (Non-refundable) deposited in the head of account C-02708 through Government Treasury / National Bank of Pakistan or can be downloaded from website of BPRA under TSE Nos. mentioned above against each work, from the date of publication of this invitation on the website of BPRA. The contractor / firms who obtain bidding documents by downloading them from BPRA website will also be required to produce prescribed green chalan from above mentioned fee. Earned Money as mentioned above should be submitted in the form of bank guarantee or Deposit at Call from a scheduled Bank. **Dead Line of Submission:** The Bidding Documents duly filled and attached with two copies of the documents must be delivered in sealed envelopes by hand or through registered mail to the address mentioned below on or before 27-02-2026, at 12:00 PM. Opening: The tender document will be open on same day i.e. 27-02-2026, at 1:00 PM, before procurement committee in the presence of contractors or their authorized representatives / agents. **Place of Issuance and Submission will be:** Address: Office of the Executive Engineer (Buildings) CWP/PS-4 Department District Karhi. Telephone No: 0524-15555. E-mail Address: engr.chulian@gmail.com. **Bid validity 90 days**

Terms and Conditions: Terms and conditions are mentioned (incorporated) in detail in bidding documents. A procuring agency may cancel the bidding process at any time prior to acceptance of bid or proposal, as per provision in BPRA, rule 2014. Note: It may be noted that no Pay Order will be Accepted/Entertained and firm's complete Title/Name should be written on the Call Deposit. Only original contractors / authorized representatives are allowed to participate in the tender's un-authorized representative will not be allowed.

Executive Engineer (Buildings) CWP/PS-4 Department District Karhi

PRG No.3723/11-02-2026

BEFORE THE JUDGE BANKING COURT QUETTA DISTRICT COURT/KACHEHRY SHARA-E-IQBAL QUETTA SUIT NO. 26/2026

Habib Bank Limited, Chaman Road Branch.

Plaintiff

VERSUS

Ghulam Qasim S/o Ashiq Hussain.
Present Address: Noor Muhammad Street, Lat No.3 House No. 132, Muhallah Ghulistan Colony, Rawalpindi.
Permanent Address: Jan Muhammad Colony, Masoom Shah Road, Tehsil and District Multan.
Cell No: 0332-8708121.
CNIC No: 36302-6273166-1.

Defendant

SUIT FOR RECOVERY OF RS. 1,403,405/10- US \$ OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (RECOVERY OF FINANCES) ORDINANCE 2001.

NOTICE UNDER FORM IV APPENDIX B OF C.P.C. 1908

The above noted defendant.

WHEREAS the plaintiff has instituted a suit against you under section 9(5) of the Banking Companies Ordinance XLVI of 2001 for RS. 1,403,405/10-balance of principal & interest/mark up/trent due to him of which copy can be obtained from this court, on or, hereby summoned to obtain leave from the court within 30 (thirty) days, from the service hereof to appear and defend the suit, and within such time to cause an appearance to be entered for you.

In the default whereof the plaintiff will be entitled at any time after expiration of such 30 (thirty) days to obtain decree as prayed in the plaint.

Leave to appear may be obtained on an application to the court supported by an affidavit or declaration showing that there is defense to the suit on the merits, or i.e. if, it is reasonable that you should be allowed to appear in the suit. Date of hearing is 16-03-2026.

GIVEN under my hand and seal of the court, this 10 day of February, 2026.

(SAIFULLAH KHAN)
Registrar
Banking Court Quetta

ECC agrees to sell old PASSCO wheat stock

NEWSDESK: The government has decided to clear the liabilities of banks and employees of the Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO) by disposing of the old stored wheat through competitive bidding.

PASSCO has been holding stocks of imported wheat since 2022 and paying billions of rupees in interest costs. During discussions in a recent meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC), the Ministry of National Food Security & Research explained the background of the case and the factors behind the decision to go for competitive bidding for the sale of wheat stock.

These factors included prevailing prices of local wheat in the market, probable escalation in prices, quality and ageing of imported wheat, cost of storage, reluctance of buyers and the PASSCO winding-up process.

It was highlighted that the expected date for the award of a contract would be February 15, with the lifting of wheat by March 15, once the decision was finalised. The food security ministry and PASSCO held a series of meetings and consultations to determine the reserve price



while taking into account all the relevant factors. The ECC was told that wheat prices had risen by Rs100 per 40 kg in recent days, and the increase may be added to the proposed reserve price for local wheat. Accordingly, they recommended the price of

Rs4,400 per 40 kg for local wheat and Rs4,070 for imported wheat. The committee inquired about the disposal plan for the remaining stock, responding to which the food ministry explained that it would be decided based on the level of success in the

auction, market prices at that time and the potential of the new crop. The ECC agreed to review the situation by the end of February. It recommended that proceeds of the auction should be used to cover the employee severance package and pay off bank li-

abilities. The ECC considered the summary submitted by the Ministry of National Food Security regarding the disposal of 500,000 metric tons (±15% per PPRA rules) of PASSCO wheat stock through competitive bidding and ap-

proved the proposal with the stipulation that the reserve price per 40 kg of local wheat shall be Rs4,450 and the price of imported wheat shall be Rs4,070 with efforts to fetch maximum prices. The ECC directed the ministry to share

progress and updates on the situation by the end of February. It also decided to clear the liabilities of banks and employees of PASSCO.

PASSCO revealed that as of April 1, 2025, it was holding 2.448 million metric tons of wheat. Of this stock, Azad Jammu & Kashmir had been allocated 300,000 metric tons and Gilgit-Baltistan 160,000 metric tons, leaving 1.988 million tons for disposal.

At present, PASSCO is bearing a heavy financial burden on account of bank mark-up, storage and handling costs, compounded by the slow lifting of allocated wheat by government agencies. Owing to very low demand from agencies, the PASSCO board recommended the disposal of wheat stock through open competitive bidding as a viable option in its 155th meeting held on August 11, 2025.

Keeping in view the prevailing market conditions, the ECC was apprised by the Ministry of National Food Security that because of the ageing imported stock and the need to avoid market distortion, the PASSCO board of directors, in its 160th meeting held on December 5, 2025, approved the disposal of 500,000 metric tons of wheat (imported

and local) on a First-In-First-Out (FIFO) basis through open competitive bidding. The proposed quantity comprised 294,994 tons of imported wheat (2022 lot) and 250,006 tons of local wheat.

The food ministry said that on January 2, 2026, PASSCO management proposed a reserve price of Rs3,400-3,500 per 40 kg for local wheat and Rs3,200-3,300 for imported wheat. These prices were based on prevailing market rates at that time.

However, prices rose in the local market from January 8 to 15. Consequently, the ministry constituted a committee for fresh determination of reserve prices. The committee met on January 16 and after detailed deliberations and consideration of all relevant factors, it recommended indicative reserve prices ranging from Rs4,180 to Rs4,290 per 40 kg for local wheat and from Rs3,900 to Rs4,070 for imported wheat (inclusive of taxes).

Based on these prices, the estimated financial loss from the disposal of 500,000 tons ranged from Rs13 billion to Rs22.11 billion. Separately, the annual carrying cost of the proposed quantity was estimated at over Rs1 billion.

Auto sales soar to 43-month high

NEWSDESK: Sales of cars, pickups, vans and sport utility vehicles clocked in at 23,055 units in January, marking a 43-month high, reflecting a 36 per cent year-on-year (YoY) and 74pc month-on-month (MoM) increase.

Cumulative sales rose 43pc to 111,377 units in 7MFY26, up from 77,686 units in 7MFY25. Myesha Sohail of Topline Securities said the sharp MoM surge was largely driven by new-year registrations, as customers typically delay deliveries to secure January registrations for better resale value.

The strong YoY growth was supported by new market entrants, lower interest rates, easing inflation, and improving macroeconomic sentiment, she said.

Saggar Engineering Works Ltd (SEWL) reported all-time high sales of 2,004 units in January, up 72pc MoM. SEWL sales in 7MFY26 were 9,214, up by 49pc YoY.

Tractor demand shrinks, truck and bus sales surge to record high.

Indus Motor Company (IMC) and Honda Atlas Cars Ltd (HACAR) recorded 43-month high sales in January, she added.

HACAR posted growth of 64pc YoY and 86pc MoM to 3,620 units in January.

Honda City and Civic models sales rose to 3,364 units, which were a 43-month high. BRV and HRV models surged by 14pc YoY and 25pc MoM to 256 units in January. HACAR sold 15,659 units in 7MFY26, up by 68pc YoY.

IMC posted a 52pc YoY and 119pc MoM growth to 5,060 units. Corolla, Yaris and Cross sales together went up 90pc YoY and 93pc MoM to 4,078 units.

Me a n w h i l e ,

Fortuner and IMVs fell 17pc YoY but rose to 982 units in January, up 72pc MoM. SEWL sales in 7MFY26 were 9,214, up by 49pc YoY.

25,623, showing a growth of 61pc YoY. In 2 and 3-wheelers, sales increased by 31pc YoY and 13pc MoM to 181,790 units in January, marking an all-time high. This took cumulative 7MFY26 sales to 1.1m units, up 32pc YoY.

Atlas Honda Ltd (AHL), the maker of the popular CD70 bike, yet again recorded all-time high monthly sales of 157,059 units in January. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) raised its FY26 growth forecast to 3.75-4.75%, 0.5% points higher than its previous range, despite a contraction in exports in the first half of the year and a widening trade deficit.

The governor said differences in projections were not unusual and reflected timing issues, including the IMF's incorporation of flood-related assessments in its latest outlook.

"All these sources and indicators, along with FY26-Q1 data, point to a broad-based recovery in all three sectors of the economy," he said. He added that the central bank believed that

State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) chief sees growth up to 4.75% despite IMF downgrade

NEWSDESK: Pakistan's central bank chief expects the economy to grow as much as 4.75% this fiscal year, pushing back against a recent downgrade by the International Monetary Fund.

Governor Jameel Ahmad, in written responses to Reuters, argued the recovery is broader and more durable than headline export data suggest.

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) raised its FY26 growth forecast to 3.75-4.75%, 0.5% points higher than its previous range, despite a contraction in exports in the first half of the year and a widening trade deficit.

The governor said differences in projections were not unusual and reflected timing issues, including the IMF's incorporation of flood-related assessments in its latest outlook.

"All these sources and indicators, along with FY26-Q1 data, point to a broad-based recovery in all three sectors of the economy," he said. He added that the central bank believed that

agricultural activity had remained resilient despite floods, and "it is even performing better than its targets."

He added that financial conditions had eased significantly following a cumulative 1,150-basis-point cut in the policy rate since June 2024, and that the full impact was still feeding through. This, he said, was supporting growth and improving price and economic stability.

The central bank last month held its

benchmark rate at 10.5%, defying expectations for a cut.

The divergence with the IMF comes at a delicate moment for Pakistan, which is emerging from a balance-of-payments crisis under a \$7 billion IMF programme.

Export drag, remittance cushion. Pakistan's previous growth spurts have often led to currency pressure and a decline in foreign exchange reserves, making

sustainability of the cur-

rebound a key question for investors.

Ahmad said high-frequency indicators and 6% growth in large-scale manufacturing in July-November point to strengthening demand, while agriculture has remained resilient despite last year's floods, he said.

While exports declined in the first half of the fiscal year, Ahmad said the fall reflected low global prices and border disruptions rather than softer activity.

He said the current

account deficit should stay within 0-1% of GDP, as strong remittances offset the wider trade gap and lift reserves.

Above programme targets, with further gains expected due to Eid festival-related inflows.

"Additionally, if the government decided to tap global capital markets for any debt issuance, then that would be on the upside of our current assessment," he said.

Pakistan plans to issue panda bonds, a yuan-denominated debt sold in China's domestic market around the upcoming Lunar New Year, as part of efforts to diversify external financing and broaden its investor base.

He said the central bank has been consistently purchasing dollars in the interbank market to strengthen foreign exchange buffers, with data published regularly. He said that while economic stability has improved, structural reforms remain key to sustaining stronger growth and improving productivity.



Fixed power charge to be levied per kW, not per connection

NEWSDESK: The government on Tuesday reluctantly conceded that the industrial sector had, for the first time, been fully freed from cross-subsidy to compete globally, as it disclosed a higher-than-expected fixed charges on residential electricity consumers.

At an almost one-way public hearing on Rs4.04 per unit average cut in power rates for industrial consumers and imposition of fixed charges on residential consumers, the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) were all praise for each other for a long overdue "great move" and "first step in the right direction".

No representative appeared on behalf of more than 28.5 million residential consumers who will be subject to the fixed charges.

The power division team, led by Additional Secretary Mehfooz Bhatti and comprising the chief financial officer of Power Planning and Management



Company (PPMC), Naveed Qaiser, reported that fixed charges would be collected from residential consumers at the rate of Rs200-675 per kilowatt a month and not attract Rs4.050 per connection per month.

This means the charge will be linked to the sanctioned load regardless of consumption.

A consumer with a 2kW sanctioned load would pay Rs400 per month at a Rs200 per kW rate, while a 3kW consumer would pay Rs2,500 per month at Rs500 per kW. A 6kW sanctioned load would attract Rs4,050 per month at Rs675 per kW.

Mr Qaiser said it was also for the first time that a two-part tariff would be charged to consumers to cater for the Rs2.56 trillion annual fixed cost of capacity.

While the move reduces off fixed charge would increase by Rs132bn, to Rs355bn (10 per cent) from Rs223bn (7pc) at present, excluding 18pc GST and other surcharges and duties.

He said that the Rs31bn to be collected through fixed charges would be used to reduce the variable tariff of consumers using more than 300 units per month to

minimise their incentive to move away from the national grid, while the remaining Rs101bn would be used to ease the industrial burden.

Mr Bhatti said the industrial tariff would now come down to around 13 cents per unit from around 13.3 cents, though it was still higher than regional competitors, but involved no cross-subsidy.

Separately, the financial advisory firm Optimus Capital Management worked out the average power tariff for protected consumers in the first 100-unit slab, increasing by 76pc or Rs8 per unit due to the fixed charge.

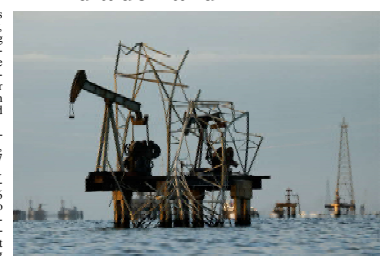
Oil gains on US-Iran tensions, better India demand

NEWSDESK: Oil prices gained on Wednesday, buoyed by escalating risk as US-Iran talks remained tenuous, while signs of an easing surplus spurred by better demand support from India also added strength.

Brent crude oil futures were up 57 cents, or 0.83 per cent, at \$69.37 a barrel by 07:11 GMT. US West Texas Intermediate crude rose 56 cents, or 0.88pc, to \$64.52. "Oil retains a bullish tail-risk bid as US-Iran talks continue but remain fragile, keeping the Strait of Hormuz risk premium supported amid ongoing sanctions pressure, tariff threats tied to Iranian trade, and heightened US regional military posture," LSEG analysts wrote in a report.

Iranian trade, and heightened US regional military posture, LSEG analysts wrote in a report. Tehran to gauge Washington's seriousness and showed enough consensus to continue on the diplomatic track.

Diplomats from Iran and the US held talks in Oman last week in an effort to revive diplomacy,



after US President Donald Trump positioned a naval flotilla in the region, raising fears of new military action.

While oil prices first eased after Oman's foreign minister said discussions tied to the US-Iran talks with Iran's top security official were productive, hopes of a peaceful resolution were later dashed following reports that the US may send a second aircraft carrier to the Middle East if talks fail, ANZ analysts said in a note.

Trump said on Tuesday he was considering sending a second

aircraft carrier to the Middle East, even as Washington and Tehran prepare to resume negotiations aimed at averting a new conflict.

Also supporting oil prices were signs of easing surplus, as markets absorbed some surplus barrels seen in the last quarter of 2025. "With mainstream oil on water returning to normal levels and demand for it in India rising, oil prices are likely to remain supported in the near term," Vortexa market analyst Xavier Fang said.

Indian refiners are avoiding Russian oil

purchases to help New Delhi seal a trade pact with Washington, in turn stepping up purchases of oil from the Middle East and West Africa.

Traders are also waiting for weekly US oil inventory data from the Energy Information Administration on Wednesday. Analysts polled by Reuters estimated on average that crude inventories rose by about 800,000 barrels in the week to February 6, while distillate and gasoline inventories likely fell by about 1.3 million barrels and 400,000 barrels, respectively.

All-round Pakistan outclass USA by 32 runs in T20 World Cup showdown

NEWS DESK: Pakistan beat the United States by 32 runs in their T20 World Cup Group A game at the Sinhalese Sports Club Ground in Colombo on Tuesday.

The win avenged Pakistan's shock defeat at the hands of USA in the T20 World Cup two years ago and handed them a second win in as many games following their close three-wicket win over the Netherlands on February 7.

Pakistan posted a target of 191, and in response, the United States managed a respectable 158-8 in their 20 overs, with strong performances from opener Shayan Jahangir (49 off 34) and middle-order batsman Shubham Ranjane (51 off 30).

Usman Tariq was the pick of the bowlers for Pakistan, securing figures of 3-27 in his four overs, while Shadab Khan contributed with a decent 3-26 in his spell. Meanwhile, pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi and spinners Mohammad Nawaz and Ahmed bagged a wicket each.

"It was a clinical performance as we batted really well to post 190 and we knew we could defend that," said Pakistan captain Salman Agha.

"There is always room for improvement, we'd like to bowl better in the powerplay before the next game," he added.

USA captain Monank Patel said, "We were in the game in the powerplay but again in the middle overs we couldn't show intent and lost wickets."

Pakistan's next game is against arch-rivals India in Colombo on Sunday, a game only cleared by Pakistan government on Monday after initially announcing a boycott of it.

Earlier, Pakistan Opener Sahibzada Farhan hit a robust half-century, hitting five sixes and six fours in his 41-ball 73, and was aided by a brilliant 32-ball 46 by Babar Azam (four fours, one six) as Pakistan, who were sent in to bat, took advantage of a good batting pitch. Farhan and fellow



opener Saim Ayub, who scored 17-ball 19 with two sixes, put on 54 in five overs before Pakistan lost two wickets in the sixth over of the innings bowled by Shadab van Schalkwyk. Ayub was caught off a

slower one while skipper Salman Agha holed out on the deep square-leg boundary for one.

Farhan and Azam then put on an 81-run third-wicket stand as Pakistan cut loose in the middle overs. Farhan

passed 1,000 T20 international runs in his 41st match before he was caught in the covers off spinner Harameet Singh in the 16th over.

Shadab launched an assault to score 30 off 12 balls before Pakistan

lost five wickets for just 13 runs in the last two overs. Schalkwyk was the best USA bowler with 4-25, following his four-wicket haul against India in the 29-run defeat on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Afridi

became the seventh Pakistan player to complete the milestone of 100 T20 matches after playing against the USA.

Prior to the match, Afridi received a commemorative cap from fel-

low pacer Naseem Shah in recognition of the achievement.

The T20 World Cup, co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka, began on February 7 but was overshadowed after Bangladesh refused to play in India citing security concerns amid soured political relations between the neighbours.

Bangladesh were replaced by Scotland in the tournament after the International Cricket Council (ICC) rejected their request to move their matches to Sri Lanka.

Pakistan expressed solidarity with Bangladesh and protested the ICC decision, subsequently announcing that the national team would not play against India.

The development to reverse Pakistan's boycott followed negotiations that included the ICC and the cricket boards of Pakistan and Bangladesh, along with consultations among national leaders such as Sri Lanka and the United Arab Emirates.

Pakistan's spirited fightback falls short in narrow loss to Australia



NEWS DESK: Pakistan's hockey team suffered a heart-breaking 3-2 loss to world number five Australia in the FIH Pro League on Tuesday, dented by a controversial video review in the dying seconds of a gripping encounter here at the Tasmania Hockey Centre.

The Green Shirts, showing tremendous spirit after a difficult first leg, fought back from two goals down only to see win snatched away.

Australia's Tim Brand had given the hosts a commanding first-half lead with

goals in the second and 19th minutes, capitalising on dominant possession that left Australian debutant goalkeeper Magnus McCausland a spectator. Another Tasmanian debutant, Lachele Rogers, was denied a dream debut moment when his shot hit the post.

Pakistan's resurgence began in the final quarter.

Ahmed Nadeem ignited the comeback with a superb field goal in the 49th minute. The momentum swung decisively when Sufyan Khan hammered home a penalty corner in the

53rd minute, levelling the score at 2-2 and exposing Australia's surprising inefficiency from nine set-piece chances.

With the match poised for a draw, controversy struck. A penalty corner was awarded to Australia in the 58th minute after a referral, a decision Pakistan hotly contested.

Blake Govers converted to restore Australia's lead. In a final cruel twist, Pakistan earned what seemed a last-gasp penalty corner with five seconds remaining, only for the decision to be overturned after another

successful Australian video referral.

The agonising loss extends a challenging run for Pakistan, who arrived in Australia after four straight defeats in Argentina.

Their campaign began with losses to the Netherlands (5-2, 7-3) and Argentina (3-2, 5-1).

Pakistan must now regroup quickly for a demanding schedule.

They face Germany on Wednesday, before a chance for redemption against Australia on Friday and conclude the leg against Germany on Saturday.

South Africa beat Afghanistan in double super over thriller at T20 World Cup



NEWS DESK: South Africa prevailed in a double super over thriller as Afghanistan came up agonisingly short of a famous victory after their T20 World Cup clash ended in a tie on Wednesday.

Afghanistan were 187 all out after South Africa scored 187-6 in Ahmedabad.

The teams were tied again after a breathless first super over saw them both score 187, before South Africa won the final ball of a heart-thumping second sudden-death showdown.

After South Africa bludgeoned 23 from their

second super over and wicket off the second ball of theirs, Rahmanullah Gurbaz was left needing four sixes off four balls for an unlikely victory.

Gurbaz sensationally launched Keshav Maharaj into the crowd three times with some huge blows.

A wide off the fifth ball meant Afghanistan still needed six to win but now, a four would send it, incredibly, to a third super over.

With nerves jangling and pulses racing, the left-arm spinner held his nerve to bowl a wide

Yorker that saw Gurbaz smack into the grateful hands of Davis Miller at point as he looked to hit a boundary. It was South Africa's second win in as many matches in Group D to be placed second behind Toppers New Zealand.

A few minutes earlier, after Gurbaz scored a brilliant 42-ball 84 in the chase, Afghanistan had needed 13 off the last over of the match to win with one wicket in hand.

After Kagiso Rabada bowled two no balls and a wide and Noor Ahmad hit a six, Afghanistan needed two

to win off three balls.

But Noor was run out going for the winning second run with the scores level.

South Africa pace bowler Lungi Ngidi was named player of the match after his 3-26 in four overs. "We lost so much weight today," said a smiling Ngidi. "Never been stressed in my life in a cricket game. Happy to come out on the winning side."

Quinton de Kock (59) and Ryan Rickelton (61) were the manstays of South Africa's innings as they put on 114 for the second wicket.

India call Pakistan 'quality side' ahead of T20 World Cup clash

NEWS DESK: India said on Tuesday it would be "a challenge" to face a "quality" Pakistan team in Colombo after Islamabad decided to play the blockbuster T20 World Cup clash.

The federal government late on Monday ended a week-long stand-off by rescinding its order for the cricket team to boycott the February 15 match.

"It's great that the game is back, on kind of never changed the preparation," said India assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate.

India will face a second Group A match against Namibia on Thursday in New Delhi before flying to Sri Lanka. It means a quick turnaround for Sunday's match, the biggest and most lucrative clash in world cricket.

"It's going to be a challenge going to Colombo where Pakistan have been for the last two weeks," added Doeschate. He further said, "We are delighted to have another chance to play against a quality side in the first phase of the tournament. We are fully focused on just bringing our best game to that fixture."

Pakistan's decision to go ahead with the match was hailed today as an outbreak of "good sense" and "good for cricket".

A frantic weekend of negotiations saw the International Cricket Council (ICC) and Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) chiefs fly to Lahore on Sunday for talks with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).

The governments of Bangladesh and Sri Lanka both wrote to Islamabad on Monday urging it to change its stance and allow the game to go ahead.

After "multilateral discussions, as well as the request of friendly countries, the Government of Pakistan hereby directs the Pakistan National Cricket Team to take the field on February 15", the government said on its official X account late on Monday night. The decision had been taken with the aim of "protecting the spirit of cricket", it added.

"Good for cricket"

Former India cricketer Madan Lal told AFP today that it was "good



for cricket". "We want strong teams to play so that the charm of the World Cup is not lost," he added.

Sri Lanka, who will host the match which generates multi-millions of dollars in advertising broadcast rights, sponsorship and tourism, also praised the decision.

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, in a social media post, thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Sharif for "ensuring the game we all love goes on". Veteran Indian journalist Pradeep Magazine told AFP "good sense has prevailed on all sides". Financial considerations would have been taken into account, he added. "Everyone realised that losing the revenue from an India-Pakistan match would have been a loss-loss situation for all ICC member nations," he said.

Also Read: Pakistan-born players shine for other nations - talent surplus or system failure?

The 20-team tournament has been overshadowed by an acrimonious political build-up.

Bangladesh, who refused to play in India citing security concerns, were replaced by Scotland. As a protest, Pakistan ordered the team not to face co-hosts India in the Group A fixture. Pakistan, who edged out Netherlands in the tournament opener on Saturday, would have conceded two points if they had forfeited the match. Pakistan will play all their T20 World Cup matches in Sri Lanka as part of an ICC deal that ensures the two nations only meet on neutral territory.

Sesko strikes late to rescue West Ham draw

NEWS DESK: Benjamin Sesko saved Manchester United from a fourth place in the Premier League, one point ahead of fifth-placed Chelsea in the race to qualify for the Champions League.

United held onto fourth place in the Premier League, one point ahead of fifth-placed Chelsea in the race to qualify for the Champions League.

Third-bottom West Ham's failure to find any rhythm for long periods of the first half.

They created a rare threat from Bruno Fernandes' corner, with Luke Shaw's close-range effort cleared off the line by Aaron Wan-Bissaka.

United's forwards were starved of service and when Amad Diallo had a sight of goal, he fired into the side-netting from an acute angle just before the interval.

Carrick's men paid for their lethargy five minutes into the second half.

Unable to trap West Ham with a high press, United were caught flat-footed by an incisive break.

Soucek picked out Jarrod Bowen on the

right flank and made a perfectly timed run to meet the England forward's low cross with a flicked finish from five yards.

It was a sloppy goal to concede, with Shaw and Kobbie Mainoo both guilty of slow reactions as the move gathered steam.

United were denied a 63rd minute equaliser after Casemiro's header was ruled out for offside following a VAR review.

Carrick's side dominated the closing stages but it appeared their final chance had gone when Joshua Zirkzee headed inches wide from close-range in stoppage-time.

However, there was a sting in the tale for West Ham as Sesko levelled with just seconds left.

Bryan Mbeumo swung in a teasing cross and Sesko deftly guided his finish past West Ham keeper Mads Hermansen from 10 yards.

Soucek picked out Jarrod Bowen on the

right flank and made a perfectly timed run to meet the England forward's low cross with a flicked finish from five yards.

