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Pakistan Faces Growing HIV Challenge; 84,000 Cases Registered Nationwide

NEWS DESK:

Pakistan is witnessing a concerning rise in HIV infections, with official health data confirming thousands of new cases in recent years. In a recent press briefing, Federal Health Minister Syed Mustafa Kamal revealed that the country now has 84,000 registered HIV patients, signaling an urgent need for improved infection control and public awareness.

The trajectory of the virus has accelerated, with over 14,000 new HIV cases registered in 2025 alone. This statistics reflects an average of 1,182 new infections every month. While these numbers are alarming, Minister Kamal clarified that the spike is largely due to expanded screening and testing efforts.

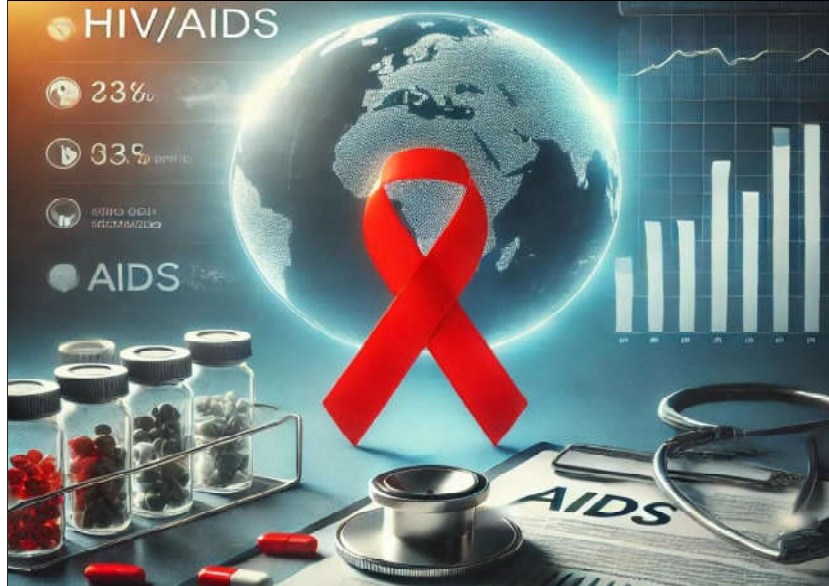
The government has significantly increased the number of diagnostic centers, leading to a higher detection rate of previously "hidden" cases.

One of the most critical issues facing the healthcare system is the "missing" patient demographic. Currently, 61,000 patients are receiving regular treatment through government facilities. However, roughly 23,000 registered individuals remain untraced.

Health experts warn that patients outside of the medical loop are at higher risk and can inadvertently contribute to the further spread of the virus.

Unlike many global trends, a significant portion of HIV transmission in Pakistan, including cases among children, is linked to unsafe medical practices. The reuse of syringes and poor infection control in healthcare settings are cited as major contributing factors.

To address this, the government is implementing a ban on the reuse of specific large-bore sy-



ringes and is tightening sterilization protocols across clinics. Minister Kamal also debunked rumors of fresh epidemics in specific regions like Taunsa, stating that no new clusters have been reported

there this year. The Ministry of Health emphasizes that HIV is a manageable condition. With consistent antiretroviral treatment, patients can lead healthy lives and reduce

their viral load to levels that prevent transmission. The government's 2026 strategy focuses on:

• Expanding free testing and counseling services.
• Launching nationwide awareness campaigns to combat medical care to stabilize the epidemic.

As Pakistan expands its

Green Bus Service Launched to Sheikh Zayed Cardiac Institute Quetta



Web Desk:

In a major step to improve urban transport in Quetta, the Balochistan government has launched the Green Line bus service connecting key areas of the city with the Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan Institute of Cardiology.

The initiative was introduced on the directives of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti to provide safe, affordable, and reliable travel facilities to the public.

According to the Balochistan Transport Depart-

ment, the Green Line bus service will operate daily from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM, with buses departing every 45 minutes.

The regular schedule is designed to reduce waiting times and ensure consistent transport availability for commuters.

The route covers several important areas of Quetta, including BA Mall, FC Hospital, Nawab Killi, Zarghoonabad, Haji Manan, Labour Colony, Abdul Khaliq Chowk, Christian Colony, Highway Mart, Mili Zai, Nasran, NUST, and SMBZAN IC, making it easier for residents across the city to

access essential services. Officials said the Green Line bus service in Quetta is especially aimed at facilitating patients and their attendants by providing direct and comfortable access to the cardiac institute.

The project is part of broader efforts to modernize the public transport system in Balochistan and enhance mobility for citizens.

The government reiterated its commitment to expanding public welfare initiatives, with a strong focus on improving transport infrastructure in Quetta to support growing urban needs.

IHC to hear Imran, Bushra's pleas against conviction in £190m corruption reference on April 30

NEWS DESK:

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday fixed appeals filed by former prime minister Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi against conviction in the £190 million corruption reference for tomorrow (April 30).

According to the supplementary cause list issued by the registrar's office, a division bench comprising Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar and Justice Muhammad Asif will take up CrI. Appeal 63/2025 (filed by Imran) and CrI. Appeal 64/2025 (filed by Bushra) on Thursday. Both appeals challenge the convictions under the Pakistan Penal Code with sentences exceeding seven years.

Earlier this month, IHC CJ Dogar observed that if arguments on the appeals commenced, the court could decide the matter within seven days. "We will fix the appeal for two days every week — you meet your client and assist the court," the chief justice told Barrister Salman Safdar, who

is the counsel for the PTI founder. Imran — imprisoned since Aug 5, 2023, for concealing details of Toshakhana gifts — is serving a 14-year sentence at Rawalpindi's Adiala jail in the £190m case, also known as the Al-Qadir Trust case.

An accountability court in Islamabad had sentenced Imran and Bushra to 14 and seven years in prison, respectively, on Jan 17, 2025, in the case. Subsequently, both had challenged their convictions before the IHC.

The case alleges that the couple obtained billions of rupees and land worth hundreds of kanals from Bahria Town Ltd to legalise Rs50 billion identified and returned to the country by the United Kingdom during the PTI government.

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QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Trump's Peace Plan: Legitimising Israel's Occupation

Editorial:

A Peace agreement often loses its credibility when it fails to recognize the rights of the oppressed. This is the case with President Trump's much-surfaced Gaza peace plan. Far from being a genuine step toward peace, it presents a surrender document that legitimizes Israel's long-standing occupation of Palestine. Sadly, this so-called peace plan was endorsed by major Muslim countries, including Pakistan.

While standing with Trump, Netanyahu, accused of war crimes, accepted the plan and also threatened to finish the job if Hamas does not accept the plan wholeheartedly. However, outrage sparked among various analysts when Netanyahu claimed victory in Hebrew language at Tel Aviv. The question arises: How can Trump propose a plan for peace without involving an international arbitrator—the United Nations Organisation? Critics have rejected this plan on various grounds.

First, the plan has no two-state solution. However, it blurs the possibility of an independent Palestinian state in the future. Sadly, Netanyahu has already repudiated the idea of an independent state. Also, President Trump called Palestine recognition by France, Britain, Canada, and Spain a reward to Hamas. So far, the United States has stopped Israel from occupying the West Bank,



but some government officials of Netanyahu intended to do so.

Second, Hamas and the Palestine National Authority, the only representatives of Gaza and the West Bank, have been eliminated in the process. Even the United States barred the Palestinian Authority from entering New York during the UNGA annual session. It reflects the colonial plan because peace is mutual; it cannot be imposed at the dictate of aggressors.

Zahid Hussain in his essay pointed out that it practically brings to an end the concept of a Palestinian state.

Third, in the post-war administration, both Hamas and PA have no share. The proposed plan contains the demilitarization of Hamas. They can live in peaceful coexistence after getting amnesty, and also safe passage will be given to those who want to exit. What kind of peace is this, where those who suffer have

no voice in the decisions that shape their future? This is total surrender to be forced on the group.

Fourth, this official instrument lost its credibility when the UN was excluded. It discredits the international organization. Although the question are raised about the ineffective role of the UN—unable to stop genocide—its sanctity must prevail. Critics always blamed the United States. For instance, every time the

US vetoed a resolution to stop Israel's evil deeds.

Fifth, Hamas has been given the ultimatum of 72 hours to accept the plan. It is not a plan but a surrender charter for the group. It means Hamas has no choice but to go with the plan. They are not consulted on their fate.

The Trump-Netanyahu plan has fortified Israel further. It openly advocates for Greater Israel. Sixth, this plan also

provoked worldwide criticism. Seventh, no future guarantee is mentioned in the proposed framework. It fails to prevent Israel from occupying. Most important, the prime minister of the UK during 2003, had been widely criticized for the invasion of Iraq based on false claims about weapons of mass destruction. He is regarded as a war criminal in the UK as well as in the Muslim world. Therefore, his appointment

outlined that Gaza will be governed by a political committee under the supervision of a Board of Peace which will be headed by Donald Trump and Tony Blair.

Most important, the prime minister of the UK during 2003, had been widely criticized for the invasion of Iraq based on false claims about weapons of mass destruction. He is regarded as a war criminal in the UK as well as in the Muslim world. Therefore, his appointment

peace hinges on the recognition of Palestine. Both the US and Israel have rejected recognition. Seemingly, they have no plan to recognize Palestine in the near future. The record of history demonstrates that illegal occupation and peace cannot move together. Peace remains impossible without an end to illegal occupation.

On the positive side of the plan, if this project is implemented, it will end ruthless killing and Gaza genocide. The aid blockade will be drawn. The supporters of this plan also cited the same reason. The deputy prime minister, Ishaq Dar, also said that the first priority of Pakistan is to end uncontrolled killing of Gazans. He further said that we are on a bid to remove all Netanyahu's excuses to continue war.

In the end, occupation, annexation, and illegal settlements cannot run with peace. Two states are the only answer to long-term peace. This controversial plan is biased and destined to crumble.

Gazans cannot be left to the mercy of warmongers. It is a wake-up call for the United States and the World to let Gazans live a free life in their own independent state. Netanyahu's transgression must not go with impunity. The only solution lies in an independent Palestinian state.

The writer can be contacted through: dinzaud19@gmail.com

Quetta has a better environment, rich culture, manageable population

Amjad Rashid

Quetta is not a case of deprivation related to lack of resources, not a case of unemployment, not a case of climate change, and not even a case of poverty. It's a true and real case of the richness of culture, environment, climate, natural resources, and manageable human population. Unfortunately our planners, thinkers, decision-makers proved to be very selfish and greedy.

In Quetta, we had municipal water posts (I wish I can get the pictures). Quetta was a natural habitat with a small population of trees, flowers. The city had few streets with few vehicles and dynamic socio-political harmony.

We did establish universities but abandoned knowledge.

Unfortunately, global and regional influences badly affected the capital with less modernization and more adversity. We did establish a university, but abandoned consciousness, we did build plazas, but without building codes. If we look back at the pictures of Quetta of the sixties. It was like Zurich but evolved as little Karachi or Mumbai. Transformed from little London to huge slums (full of garbage and filth).

Bad governance, poor education, corruption, and poor planning converted Quetta into an ugly place.

We don't see green Koh e Mur Daar a multi-lingual culture which was its beauty and uniqueness has vanished and replaced by the bricks and cement

Every day in the morning when I look at the sleeping beauty of Quetta I feel that the mother of Quetta (sleeping beauty) has become

which after few more years will look like a dumping place of garbage. We must listen and learn from our heroes like Rehman

Climate change poses a serious threat to the developing world Environment, Cli-

its true beauty and culture.

Now we from Adams to twenty-first century experienced, slavery, the industrial revolution, conflict of ideologies, various version of world orders

chambeli, bitakh, surkahi and places like hanna, thandi Sarak, and associated culture of art and poetry. Masses of

motherland is demanding the attention of all irrespective of our international commitments. It's a matter of our survival. We need a green economy,

driving to save and benefit humanity. But all our efforts to take humanity to its peak are bring ended up as a disaster. The temperature of the motherland is increasing.

habitat of Balochistan and our piece of Heaven once called as "miss it's jangly Gulab, chakore,

Balochistan facing a host of issues. First time after seventy-two years and since the establishment of Balochistan Province, its habitats are frequently faced by challenges like conservation. In the context of the above-mentioned scenario, our beloved

environment, rich culture, manageable population

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'No more nice guy': Trump tells Iran to 'get smart soon' on nuclear deal

NEWS DESK: US President Donald Trump on Wednesday urged Iran to "get smart soon" over a nuclear deal, declaring "No more Mr. nice guy!"

"Iran can't get their act together. They don't know how to sign a non-nuclear deal. They better get smart soon," Trump threatened on his Truth Social platform on Wednesday.

Notably, the post included an image of the US president wearing a black suit and sunglasses while holding a firearm, with explosions in an Iranian landscape behind him.

The US and Israel launched a joint offensive against Iran on February 28, prompting Tehran to respond with strikes on what it described as US interests across the region, many of them in Gulf countries.

A ceasefire was announced on April 8 through Pakistani mediation, followed by talks hosted in Islamabad on April 11-12, but the negotiations ended without an agreement.

Trump later said the truce had been extended at Pakistan's request pending a proposal from Tehran.

He signalled Monday that he was unlikely to accept Iran's latest proposal to end the war after Tehran proposed a plan to reopen the Strait of Hormuz while leaving questions about its nuclear program for later negotiations.

Iran urges UNSC action on Gaza, condemns Israeli regime for regional instability



Addressing an open briefing of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on the Situation in the Middle East, held in New York on April 28, Iranian envoy to the UN Saeed Javani warned that Gaza remains under siege amid continued Israeli military attacks and humanitarian restrictions, according to Iran's semi-official Tasnim News Agency.

"Gaza remains devastated and under siege. Israel, the occupying re-

gime, continues to violate the ceasefire through military attacks and severe restrictions on humanitarian access, deepening hunger and civilian suffering," he said.

"At the same time, illegal settlement expansion in the West Bank continues in clear violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, further entrenching occupation and instability."

He stressed that any viable solution must

guarantee a permanent ceasefire, the withdrawal of occupying forces, and full humanitarian access, while reaffirming the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and calling for accountability for violations of international law.

The Security Council must act decisively to compel Israel to fully uphold the ceasefire in Lebanon, immediately halt all attacks against civilians and its infrastructure, and withdraw all its

occupying forces."

The United States and the Israeli regime must bear full responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity must be pursued in accordance with international law.

The Security Council must act decisively to compel Israel to fully uphold the ceasefire in Lebanon, immediately halt all attacks against civilians and its infrastructure, and withdraw all its

longer has a single, undisputed clerical arbiter at the pinnacle of power, a break with the past that may be hardening Tehran's stance as it weighs renewed talks with Washington.

Since its creation in 1979, the Islamic Republic has evolved around a supreme leader with final authority on all key matters of state.

IRGC tightens grip as wartime power shift hardens Iran's stance

first day of the war, and the revelation of his wounded son.

Mojtaba, who ushered in a different order dominated by commanders of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and marked by the absence of a decisive, authoritative referee.

Mojtaba Khamenei remains at the apex of the system, but three people familiar with internal deliberations say his role is largely to legitimise decisions made by his generals rather than issue directives himself.

War-time pressure has concentrated power into a narrower, harder-line inner circle weeks ago as Iran's pivotal figure, including on the night a ceasefire was announced.

Mojtaba, who was severely injured in the opening Israeli and US strike that killed his father and other relatives and left him disfigured with serious leg wounds, has not appeared publicly and communicates through IRGC aides or limited audio links because of security constraints, two people close to his inner circle said.

There was no immediate reply from the Iranian foreign ministry to a request for comment on the issues raised in this article.

Iranian officials have previously denied any divisions over negotiations with the United States.

Real power wielded by wartime leadership, insiders claim.

The diplomatic face of Iran at the talks with the US has been Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, more recently joined by parliament speaker Mohammed Bagher Ghalibaf - a former Guards commander.

Tehran mayor and presidential candidate - who has emerged during the war as a key conduit between Iran's political, security and clerical elites.

On the ground, however, the central interlocutor has been IRGC commander Ahmad Vahidi, according to a Pakistani and two Iranian sources who identified him weeks ago as Iran's pivotal figure.

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Bangladesh measles outbreak kills over 220 children since March

NEWS DESK: Bangladesh recorded 227 child deaths since March in one of its worst outbreaks of measles in decades, with the number of suspected cases reaching nearly 35,000, government data showed on Wednesday.

One of the hardest hit areas is Kurukpata in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, home to Indigenous communities, which border war-torn Myanmar.



rural areas are often left out of vaccination coverage, and some families avoid vaccination programmes due to fear.

"The most affected area of Chittagong Hill Tracts is Kurukpata, one of the remotest parts of Bangladesh," district health chief Sheikh Fazle Rabbi told AFP, saying more than 80 children had been treated for measles.

Local Kurukpata council head Kratung Mro said the cases were unusually high.

"Communication from Kurukpata is difficult," he said.

"People, mostly farmers, are among the poorest and cannot afford even boat or motorcycle fares to reach the hospital."

Kratung Mro said the government should "launch awareness programmes and bring Indigenous communities under vaccination coverage".

Ngangoi Mro, 30, a farmer, brought his two-year-old son, Rengle Mro, who was suffering from high fever, cough and diarrhoea, to the clinic. "We walked four kilometres and then took a vehicle to the hospital from our village, as my boy became very weak," he told AFP.

Measles is one of the world's most contagious diseases, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), and is spread through coughs and sneezes.

It can affect people of any age but is most common among children, and can cause complications that include brain swelling and severe respiratory problems.

Since March 15, the number of suspected cases nationwide has reached 34,980, mostly among children aged between six months and five years.

Bangladesh health officials, with the aid of the UN children's agency, WHO and the security forces, are working to vaccinate children.

UK government challenges lifting of ban on pro-Palestinian group

NEWS DESK: Lawyers for the British state argued at London's High Court on Tuesday that a ruling by UK judges lifting a government ban on pro-Palestinian group Palestine Action should be scrapped.

Appealing the court ruling, the lawyers said the judges' earlier description of the impact of the ban on human rights had been "overstated and wrong".

The government banned Palestine Action in July last year, days after activists protesting against Israel's genocide in Gaza broke into an air force base in southern

England and caused millions of pounds worth of damage to two aircraft.

The UK government is now appealing against the High Court's ruling from February that the ban on Palestine Action was "disproportionate" to the risk it posed and should be lifted.

James Eadie, for the government's Home Office, said the court had failed to consider that parliament had deemed the ban "both effective and appropriate".

"The protection of national security and of the public from terrorism was central (to the ban)," he said in written submissions to the court.

The 2025 ban by the Labour government of Prime Minister Keir Starmer put Palestine Action on a blacklist that also includes Palestinian Hamas and the Lebanese Iran-backed group Hezbollah, and sparked a severe backlash.

The ban made it a criminal offence to be a member of the group or to demonstrate support for it - punishable by up to 14 years in prison under terrorism legislation.

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Musk lawyer says OpenAI 'stole a charity', as trial against AI firm, Sam Altman begins

NEWS DESK: A lawyer for Elon Musk told jurors at the start of a high-stakes trial against OpenAI on Tuesday that the defendants undermined his vision that artificial intelligence be used to benefit society, because the defendants were interested in collecting riches for themselves.

"The defendants in the case stole a charity, and we're asking you to hold them accountable," Musk's lawyer Steven Molo told jurors in his opening statement in an Oakland, California, federal court.

Musk is suing OpenAI, its Chief Executive Sam Altman and its President Greg Brockman, saying they betrayed him and the public by abandoning the ChatGPT maker's mission to be a benevolent steward of AI for humanity, and transforming the nonprofit into a profit-seeking juggernaut.

A defence lawyer will make an opening



statement later on Tuesday. Musk, Altman and Brockman attended the trial.

Musk, the world's richest person, is seeking \$150 billion in damages from OpenAI and Microsoft, in which he said Altman as "Scam Altman" and accused him of stealing a charity.

Even before jurors were seated, there was conflict as OpenAI lawyers complained about Musk's posts on X on Monday, in which he assailed Altman as "Scam Altman" and accused him of stealing a charity.

US Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers said she was loath to issue a gag order, and urged Musk to "try to control your propensity to use social media to make

things work outside the courtroom. Perhaps you've never done that before."

Musk agreed to minimise his social media activity, as did Altman.

OpenAI was co-founded by Musk and Altman in 2015 with a goal of developing AI to benefit humanity and fend off rivals such as Google.

Molo said "Elon became more worried" as the technology advanced.

Israel sets 2-week deadline for Lebanon talks, warns of renewed military escalation

NEWS DESK: Israel has set a two-week deadline for reaching an agreement with Lebanon during their US-mediated negotiations.

warning of renewed military escalation if talks fail, according to Israeli media on Wednesday.

The public broadcaster KAN said Tel Aviv has established a "limited timeframe" for the talks.

not exceeding two weeks, in a bid to secure what it described as a "real agreement"

between the two sides.

The outlet said Israel has linked the current ceasefire arrangement - extended until mid-May - to reaching a substantive deal with Lebanon within that period.

"We cannot wait indefinitely... we will give negotiations only an additional two weeks," KAN said, citing an unnamed Israeli official.

According to the broadcaster, Israeli assessments indicate that failure to achieve

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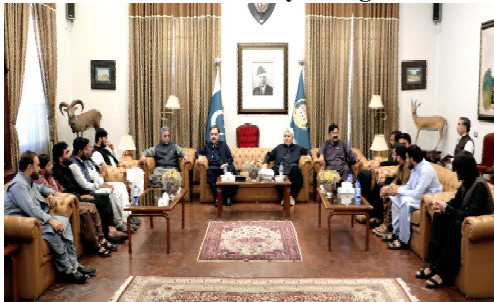


Governor Balochistan Stresses Political Dialogue, Unity and Public Service for Stability in Region

QUETTA : Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has said that in view of the prevailing regional tensions, elected representatives and political leaders carry a major responsibility to steer the country and province toward political and economic stability through serious and courageous decisions.

He expressed these views during a meeting at the Governor House Quetta with Balochistan Awami Party leader and Parliamentary Secretary Prince Omar Ahmedzai. Haji Muhammad Khan Lehr was also present on the occasion.

The Governor said that politics is not about confrontation but about meaningful dialogue and public service during the ups and downs of life, where there is no space for turning personal differences into enmity. He stated that throughout his political career he has followed the principle of responding to negativity with positivity and



reconciliation with forgiveness.

He emphasized maintaining respectful and friendly relations with political figures, tribal leaders, religious scholars, and elders across ethnic lines, calling it a matter of pride to uphold such inclusivity. Governor Mandokhail added that his political philosophy is based on spreading harmony among communities, uplifting marginalized groups,

uniting people, and illuminating areas of darkness. He reiterated that during political transitions he has always maintained strong and respectful relations with leaders at both national and provincial levels, as democracy must be reflected in behavior and governance.

He further stated that during political transitions he has always maintained strong and respectful relations with leaders at both national and provincial levels, as democracy must be reflected in behavior and governance. He also emphasized

omment priorities, the Governor said that education, health, and infrastructure projects undertaken during his tenure are aimed at benefiting future generations. He reiterated that his struggle is for public welfare, not personal gain.

He concluded that political leadership rooted in public service leads to social justice, economic equality, and religious harmony. He also emphasized

stated that he has never pursued revenue in tribal or regional matters and has consistently promoted constructive engagement and positive relations. He reiterated that his struggle is for public welfare, not personal gain. He also emphasized

C&W Secretary Babar Khan Orders Strict Action Over Delays in Development Projects Across Balochistan

QUETTA: Secretary Communications and Works Babar Khan has reiterated that timely completion of ongoing development projects remains the top priority of the government, warning that negligence will not be tolerated.

He expressed these views while chairing a high-level review meeting to assess the progress of development schemes across the province. The meeting was convened based on reports received from Deputy Commissioners, Planning & Development, and Monitoring & Evaluation departments.

Chief Engineer, Superintending Engineers, and district engineers



neering officers from all six zones participated in the meeting via Zoom.

During the session, officials from each district presented detailed briefings on incomplete projects, highlighting progress, financial constraints, and technical challenges.

The C&W Secretary stated that although

timely completion of projects is a major challenge, it can be achieved through efficient utilization of available resources. He directed all concerned officers to accelerate the pace of work and avoid unnecessary delays.

He further warned that strict action will be

found guilty of negligence or delays in project completion.

Additionally, contractors failing to perform their duties will face legal action, including blacklisting. Babar Khan emphasized that the government is committed to completing public welfare projects within the

stipulated timeframe to ensure maximum benefit for the people.

Keywords: Quetta news, Balochistan development projects, C&W department, Pakistan, infrastructure progress, government accountability, project delays action, public welfare schemes, construction projects Balochistan

Girls' Sports Competitions Conclude at Jashn-e-Baharan Kech Festival 2026 in Turbat

TURBAT: The girls' sports competitions held under the Jashn-e-Baharan Kech Festival 2026 concluded with the final closing ceremony at the Girls Model High School Turbat.

Assistant Commissioner Turbat Muhammad Hanif

Kabzi attended as the chief guest, while Deputy Commissioner Sports Officer Ghaffar Yousof, were present on the occasion.

The final match was played between Girls High School Balochi Bazar and Girls Model High School Turbat. Balochi Bazar High School delivered an impressive performance, securing victory by 25 runs.

During the closing ceremony, trophies, shields, and cash prizes were distributed among outstanding players. Sports Officer Ghaffar Yousof also presented a shield to the chief guest.

Speakers highlighted the importance of such sporting events, stating that they provide female students with opportunities to showcase their talent and promote healthy activities within society. Participants appreciated the successful of the festival and emphasized the need to continue such initiatives to provide positive and constructive opportunities for the youth.

It is worth noting that the festival is being organized under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Kech Yasir Iqbal Dashti. While girls' competitions were held at Girls Model High School Turbat, boys' events are ongoing at Boys High School Chahsar, with the final scheduled for Thursday. Keywords: Turbat sports, Jashn e Baharan Kech Festival 2026, girls sports, Balochistan, student competitions Pakistan, youth activities Turbat, sports events Kech, female participation sports, cultural festival

Advertisement for WAPDA (Water and Power Development Authority) inviting bids for various electrical and plumbing items. Includes a list of items like 'Green Paper Legal Size 400 Sheets Per Box 40 Grams', 'Black Paint', 'White Wall Paper', etc. with prices and quantities.

DC Quetta Reviews Leased Metropolitan Properties, Orders Comprehensive Data and Stronger Anti-Encroachment Measures

QUETTA : Deputy Commissioner Quetta Meherullah Badini chaired an anti-encroachment review meeting of the Metropolitan Corporation, including ac-

leased to individuals. The discussion covered lease terms, conditions, expiring leases, and procedures for repossessing properties.

complete and comprehensive data of all metropolitan properties and present it within the coming week. The move aims to



measures, and those nearing expiry.

The meeting was attended by Head Administrator Metropolitan Zafid Khan Khilji, the Metropolitan Law Officer, Chief Municipal Officer (CMO), and other relevant officials.

During the session, officials presented a detailed briefing on metropolitan-owned properties

The meeting also reviewed the progress of ongoing anti-encroachment operations across the city. Achievements and challenges were discussed, and the Deputy Commissioner directed officials to further intensify and improve the effectiveness of these operations.

DC Meherullah Badini instructed authorities to compile

develop a more effective strategy for managing public assets and ensuring transparency. Keywords: Quetta news, Metropolitan properties, DC Meherullah Badini, anti-encroachment operation, public property management, urban governance Quetta, municipal administration

Loralai Revenue Meeting Reviews Agricultural Dues Recovery, ADC Orders Strict Monitoring and Digitization

LORALAI: An important meeting on the recovery of agricultural dues was held under the chairmanship of the Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Muhammad Ismail

but further efforts are needed to achieve set targets. Addressing the meeting, ADC Muhammad Ismail directed that recovery of agricultural

the recovery process and conduct regular performance reviews to enhance efficiency. Additionally, the ADC directed that the digitization of land records be accelerated.



Mengal in Loralai.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Nadeem Akram, revenue department officials, and field staff.

During the session, a detailed review of the overall recovery situation across the district was conducted, along with progress on the ongoing campaigns.

Officials briefed the chair that field operations have been intensified to ensure timely recovery of dues, while legal action is also being taken against defaulters in accordance with regulations.

It was noted that recovery rates have improved in some areas.

dues must be ensured under all circumstances, warning that no negligence or delay will be tolerated.

He emphasized that timely recovery is essential for strengthening the revenue system, increasing government resources, and ensuring completion of development projects.

He instructed all officers to perform their duties with integrity and professionalism, while urging field staff to improve performance and take indiscriminate action against defaulters to meet targets.

The meeting also decided to maintain continuous monitoring of

stating that the use of modern technology will improve transparency and facilitate better public services.

It was further decided to launch public awareness campaigns to inform farmers about the importance of timely payments, while ensuring staff availability at facilitation centers to resolve public issues promptly.

Keywords: Loralai news, revenue recovery Pakistan, agricultural dues Loralai, ADC Muhammad Ismail Mengal, land record digitization, public awareness campaign, government revenue system, development projects

Legal notice from the District Court, Quetta regarding a suit for recovery of personal loans. The notice details the plaintiff (Askari Bank Limited), the defendant (M.A. Jinnah Road Branch Quetta), and the guarantors/defendants. It also mentions a separate suit for recovery of personal loans with a bearing account number.

Stocks swing, oil edges up with Iran war peace talks stalled

NEWS DESK: Asian stocks fluctuated on Wednesday while oil prices swung as talks to end the Iran war appeared to be at a standstill and the crucial Strait of Hormuz no nearer being reopened.

While the White House has said Donald Trump and his team were considering Tehran's latest proposal to restore traffic through the waterway, CNN and the Wall Street Journal said the president was sceptical.

The Islamic Republic this week submitted a plan that would reportedly see it ease the chokehold and Washington lift its retaliatory blockade on the country's ports as talks continued, including over its nuclear programme.

While US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Iran's proposal was "better than what we thought they were going to submit", he insisted any eventual deal had to be "one that definitively prevents them from sprinting towards a nuclear weapon".

Iranian defence ministry spokesman Reza Talei-Nik said Washington "must abandon its illegal and irrational demands", adding the United States



was "no longer in a position to dictate its policy to independent nations".

Qatar warned of the possibility of a "frozen conflict" if a "frozen resolution is not found. Concerns about the

stalled peace push have pushed crude prices higher for more than a week, with Trump's decision to cancel his envoy's trip for peace talks in Pakistan last weekend adding to the downward mood.

Brent is above the level it hit before the two sides announced a ceasefire at the start of April, sitting around \$112, while West Texas Intermediate broke \$100 Tuesday for the first time in two weeks.

Both contracts were slightly higher on Wednesday.

"Iran wants the blockade lifted and access to its flows restored," wrote Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management.

"Washington holds that lever and is in a hurry to give it away without extracting value.

"Meanwhile, the longer this drags on, the more second-order effects start to bite. Storage pressure builds,

production risks emerge, and the system begins to strain in ways that futures prices cannot ignore."

There was little major reaction to news that the key producer, the United Arab Emirates, had decided to withdraw from the OPEC and OPEC+ oil cartels on Friday, calling it a strategic decision.

Still, CNN also cited sources familiar with the mediation as saying the two sides were not as far apart as they seemed.

It added that intense diplomacy continued and talks were focused on a staged process with the first part of a potential deal aimed at returning to the pre-war status and reopening the Strait.

Iran's nuclear programme would be dealt with down the line, it said.

Equity markets were mixed, with Hong Kong, Shanghai, Jakarta and Manila up while Sydney, Singapore, Seoul and Taipei fell.

Traders were given a weak lead from Wall Street, where the Nasdaq-led losses owing to a tech selloff that came on the back of a report in the Wall Street Journal that ChatGPT-maker OpenAI had missed targets on the

number of users and revenue.

The news came as markets gear up for the release of earnings from Wall Street titans Amazon, Google, Meta and Microsoft this week.

The Federal Reserve will also conclude a two-day meeting later in the day, with investors keeping tabs on its outlook for inflation and interest rates as energy costs soar.

Key figures

West Texas Intermediate: UP 0.7 percent at \$100.62 a barrel

Brent North Sea Crude: UP 0.6 percent at \$111.93 a barrel

Hong Kong - Hang Seng Index: UP 1.1 percent at 25,951.05

Shanghai - Composite: UP 0.2 percent at 4,084.68

Tokyo - Nikkei 225: Closed for a holiday

Euro/dollar: UP at \$1.1715 from \$1.1712 on Tuesday

Pound/dollar: UP at \$1.3522 from \$1.3515

Dollar/yen: DOWN at 159.60 yen from 159.64 yen

Euro/pound: UP at 86.64 pence from 86.64 pence

New York - Dow: UP 0.1 percent at 41,491.93 (close)

London - FTSE 100: UP 0.1 percent at 10,332.79 (close)

President Zardari invites investment in 'priority sectors' on China visit

NEWS DESK: President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday invited Chinese investment into "priority sectors," particularly alternative energy sources, state-run Radio Pakistan reported.

The president arrived in China on Saturday for a week-long visit to the Hunan and Hainan provinces for engagements related to economic and trade cooperation.

President Zardari held a meeting with the chief executive officer (CEO) of Hangzhou Jinhong Group.

Wang Jian, in Sanya, where he invited the Chinese company to invest in "priority sectors, including alternate energy, water treatment, and electric vehicle battery systems", according to Radio Pakistan.

The president, according to the report, "noted that Pakistan is actively encouraging foreign investment in

various sectors, especially water treatment, electric vehicle battery systems and alternate energy".

"Such partnerships could support sustainable growth and industrial development."

The report said, adding that President Zardari assured the company of "all possible facilitation to foreign companies seeking to invest in the

province, particularly under private partnership frameworks".

The report added that the "Hangzhou Jinhong Group is already engaged in multiple projects and ranks among the top one hundred businesses."

Groups in China, with operations spanning heavy industry, agricultural technology, and the tea industry.

coal gasification, renewable energy, agriculture and irrigation".

President Zardari held a range of engagements during his China visit so far, including the signing of memoranda of understanding (MoUs) to strengthen bilateral cooperation in water desalination,

agricultural technology, and the tea industry.



Consortium submits bank guarantee for 25pc PIA stake

NEWS DESK: The Arif Habib-led consortium has submitted a standby letter of credit (LC) and a bank guarantee to the Privatisation Commission to acquire the remaining 25 per cent of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) shares from the government.

The consortium submitted its financial instruments on time, with April 28 being the deadline for the offer submission process.

The consortium had acquired a 75pc stake in the national flag carrier for Rs135 billion, while the remaining 25pc will cost Rs45bn.

The consortium's total investment amounts to Rs180 billion, including Rs55 billion paid to the government and Rs125 billion invested in PIA.

The consortium expects that all procedural requirements are expected to be completed

without delay so the acquisition process can proceed smoothly toward completion.

The development marks a significant step in PIA's long-running privatisation process, with the consortium signalling its readiness to take control once regulatory formalities are cleared.

"The Arif Habib group has submitted bank guarantees that the money would be avail-

able in 12 months," Shahid Ali Habib, CEO of Arif Habib Ltd, told Dawn. The consortium, which includes Fatima Fertiliser, Fauji Fertiliser, AKD Group, and Lake City Holdings, now holds 100pc of the airline.

Changes and full private control are expected by early May, freeing the airline from government-appointed board members.



IMF okays 60% cut in gas levy

NEWS DESK: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has allowed Pakistan to modify the price formula used to determine the captive gas levy, which will reduce gas prices for industrial consumers using the fuel for in-house power generation by up to 60%.

However, the IMF has conditioned the reduction with no adverse impact on the existing withdrawal of electricity from the national grid by the industrial consumers. In case of a dip in power demand, the government would increase the gas levy to 20% a month before the scheduled time of August this year, said the sources.

Government sources told The Express Tribune that the global lender had communicated its decision to allow Pakistan to change the methodology being used to determine the captive power levy.

According to the new arrangement, the levy will now be set by shifting the reference price from the peak of B3 industrial rate to a weighted average of the peak and off-peak B3 industrial rate.

This single change will result in a 60% reduction in the levy rate for March. Based on the current peak rate, the captive levy is Rs1,303 per mmbtu, which, if set at the weighted average of both rates, will come

down to Rs522 per mmbtu, giving a relief of 60%. The 60% reduction is not guaranteed, but the past 10 months levy trend showed that user prices could go down in the range of 30% to 60%.

The request to change the price formula had been made by Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik last month during the third review talks. At that time, the IMF stated that it would examine the feasibility of calculating the levy by using average tariffs, but did not make a final decision.

The government calculates the levy by considering the difference between the power tariff for the B3 industrial category notified by Nepra and the self-power generation cost

of captive power plants (CPPs) at the gas tariff notified by Ogra. The IMF again rejected Pakistan's requests to freeze the 15% additional gas levy on industry's in-house power plants and to exempt efficient plants from the levy. It has told the government to increase the rate to 20%, which, according to the IMF, is more important now to keep prices high after the adjustment in the calculation formula.

However, in case the demand from the national grid plummeted, the IMF may ask Pakistan to increase the rate to 20% from July, the sources said.

They added that according to the IMF decision, if the demand for electricity from the national grid still drops fur-

ther, the levy may even have to be increased above 20% to address the issue.

The levy is the difference between the scheduled notified industrial tariffs, intended to force industries to stop using gas to generate in-house electricity and shift to the highly expensive and unaffordable national power grid.

The petroleum minister last month informed the IMF that the CPP levy was causing significant losses to Sui companies, as imported gas had been diverted to low-end consumers. Owing to past policy mistakes, consumers are unwilling to pay high electricity prices and are shifting to other sources, primarily rooftop solar.

Regulator declares loadshedding illegal

NEWS DESK: In an interesting show of lampooning, the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) publicly confirmed that revenue-based loadshedding is illegal, but the Power Division rejected this, saying the practice would continue nevertheless to avoid the addition of Rs400bn to the circular debt already rearing its head to Rs1.8 trillion from about Rs1.6tr nine months ago.

At a public hearing on an insignificant 27 paise per unit fuel cost adjustment (FCA), the government also reported that it was considering removing the petroleum levy on furnace oil to shield the power consumers from high tariffs because of the unavailability of liquefied natural gas (LNG), subject to clearance from the International Monetary Fund.

Chief financial officer of Power Planning and Monitoring Company (PPMC), Naveed



Quisar, said there was no shortage in Karachi, but K-Electric was following revenue-based loadshedding in high-loss areas.

He also confirmed revenue-based loadshedding in the rest of the country, otherwise the circular debt would increase by over Rs400bn, which already stood at Rs1.798tr at March 31, when compared to Rs1.161tr at the start of FY26.

Power Division

vows to continue practice

Nepra member Amina Ahmed said revenue-based loadshedding is illegal.

Asked where the law stood when something declared illegal in multiple decisions and announced at the public hearing by the regulator was not only confirmed to be in vogue by the regulated entities on the same occasion, but also announced to continue

in future as well. Members of the regulator conducting the public hearing remained silent despite reminders from other intervenors.

Mr Quisar said the gas supply to the power sector had increased to 140 million cubic feet per day (MMCFD) from 80 MMCFD, while an LNG cargo was expected to start delivering about 100 MMCFD more within days, further increasing the gas supply to about 250 MMCFD.

Babar gifts returning fans century as Zalmi thrash United to make final

NEWS DESK:The floor shook at the National Bank Stadium here on Tuesday night as fans returned to the stands for the first time since the commencement of the 11th edition of the IHL Pakistan Super League last month.

The seismic activity, however, intensified each time Babar Azam arrived at the striker's end. The "Babar, Babar" chants reverberated across the venue mightily each time the bowler ran towards the crowd's favourite player.

Each time Babar's bat met the ball, that clap of the willow merged into the consequent, deafening cheers.

And when that hit turned into a boundary, 32,000 fans turned raucous.

Deprived of attending PSL matches owing to the government's austerity measures all season until they were allowed to do so for the playoffs, the fans wanted a gift and Babar gave them one.

The Peshawar Zalmi skipper added the fireworks to the festive night, hitting a blistering century to lead his side to the PSL final after a hapless Islamabad United in the Qualifier.

The right-hander hit 103 off 59, smashing 12 fours and four sixes as Zalmi made their fifth PSL final with the hope of winning their first title



after their 2017 crown. Babar's masterclass began from the very first over.

Facing pacer Richard Gleeson, he carelessly a straight drive for two, punched a boundary through midwicket with authority, and guided another single.

The tone was set. In the second over, he sliced a short ball aerially over backward point

and unfurled a majestic swivel pull that traced to the midwicket boundary.

A flick off the pads over midwicket for six in the third over showcased his class, taking him to 22 off just 12 balls.

Mohammad Harris provided explosive support at the other end, hammering Imad Wasim for a monstrous six over cow corner and sweep-

ing boundaries with audacity. The opening stand raced to 72 in a little more than six overs before Harris (5 off 16) holed out to long-off Shadab Khan.

Zalmi were 80-1, already looking ominous on a flat pitch. Kusal Mendis joined Babar and the pair added 84 runs in quick time. Mendis, aggressive as ever, dealt in bound-

arries, including a de-

lightful ramp over the keeper off Faheem Ashraf.

Babar, meanwhile, eased into his groove. He brought up his half-century off 40 balls with a boundary off Imad in the 11th over a moment greeted with thunderous applause.

PSHAWAR Zalmi pacer Aaron Hardie celebrates after dismissing Islamabad United opener Sameer

Minbas—White Star flourished until the 15th over when Mendis (41 off 26) miscued a pull off Faheem and was caught at midwicket.

Disaster struck immediately. Shadab (3-42), bowling with venom, clai-m-ed Michael Bracewell and Abdul Samad in consecutive deliveries—a hat-trick ball that Aaron Hardie survived.

Zalmi suddenly wobbled at 165-4 in the 16th over, with Babar on 58 in the powerplay. Sameer, particularly aggressive, hammered seven boundaries in his 44 off 23 balls, including crisp cover drives and powerful pulls. Conway contributed 20 off 14 with two sixes before Michael Bracewell induced a soft leading edge to cover in the fifth over.

In response, United made a promising start. Devon Conway and Sameer Minhas, the latter in blistering form, put on 58 in the powerplay. Sameer, particularly aggressive, hammered seven boundaries in his 44 off 23 balls, including crisp cover drives and powerful pulls. Conway contributed 20 off 14 with two sixes before Michael Bracewell induced a soft leading edge to cover in the fifth over.

The crowd sensed history in the 17th over, facing Gleeson, Babar

got under a fuller delivery outside off and flayed it over covers. Then, on the fifth ball, he met a pace-off delivery in the slot, presented the full face of the bat and muscled it straight down the ground for six.

Helmet off, arms aloft, a sprint of joy followed by a leap and a heartfelt prostration on the turf—Babar had reached his fourth PSL century off 58 balls, joining Usman Khan as the joint-highest century-maker in a single PSL season.

He also equalled the record for most runs in a PSL campaign as the stadium erupted in pure ecstasy.

Babar fell soon after but his departure did not stall Zalmi's momentum as Hardie unleashed a late onslaught, smashing 20 off 10 balls, including a six and two fours to help Zalmi to a formidable 221.

World Cup to get cash boost as FIFA unveils red card crackdown

NEWS DESK:FIFA on Tuesday boosted overall World Cup cash disbursements to nearly \$900 million following concerns over the spiraling costs for teams taking part in the tournament.

Football's global governing body said in a statement that money shared between the 48 teams taking part in the finals in Mexico, Canada and the United States would now total \$871 million, up from an initial figure of \$772 million announced in December.

The cash injection was announced following a meeting of FIFA's ruling council ahead of the body's Congress taking place in Vancouver on Thursday.

The hefty increase comes after several FIFA members reportedly argued that the high cost of travel, tax and overall operations could result in them losing money from taking part in the tournament.

FIFA has now moved to alleviate those concerns, hiking an

award of \$1.5 million for "preparation costs" to \$2.5 million for each of the qualified teams.

A payment of \$9 million for qualifying for the tournament has also been increased to \$10 million.

Further contributions for team delegations costs and increased team ticketing allocations are also part of the overall increase.

"FIFA is proud to be in its most solid financial position ever, enabling us to help all our member associations in an unprecedented way," FIFA President Gianni Infantino said in a statement.

"This is one more example of how FIFA's resources are reinvested back into the game."

FIFA is projected to earn around \$13 billion from the current four-year World Cup cycle, which concludes with this year's tournament, the largest World Cup in history.

FIFA's prize money for the 2026 tournament announced last year had already shattered the

cash handed out at the 2022 World Cup, increasing by 50 percent.

The increase in cash payments comes with FIFA increasingly under fire for the high cost of tickets to the tournament, while some local authorities in the United States have dramatically raised transport costs during the event.

Mouth-covering crackdown

FIFA, meanwhile, also confirmed law changes which will be rolled out at the World Cup, which kicks off in Mexico City on June 11.

From now on, players who cover their mouths during confrontations with opponents will face a red card as part of a new initiative aimed at combating racism.

In a statement following a meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) in Vancouver on Tuesday, FIFA confirmed that the rule was one of two law changes that would be introduced at the World Cup.

"At the discretion of the competition organisers, any player covering their mouth in a confrontational situation with an opponent may be sanctioned with a red card," IFAB said.

The new rule follows controversy earlier this year when Benfica winger Gianluca Prestianni was accused of racially abusing Real Madrid star Vinicius Junior during a Champions League game in February.

Prestianni was accused of calling Vinicius a "monkey" repeatedly while covering his mouth.

Prestianni denied racially abusing Vinicius but was later banned for six matches—with three of those suspended—for "homophobic conduct."

In a separate law change announced on Tuesday to be entered at the World Cup, IFAB said that red cards would also be introduced for players leaving the field of play in protest at a referee's decision.

PSL comes to life as fans return to stands

NEWS DESK:The stands were no more deserted as echoing chants replaced deafening silence.

While the National Bank Stadium has been home to HBL Pakistan Super League action for the last 20 days, it was only on Tuesday evening when cricket was well and truly back at the historic venue as Peshawar Zalmi and Islamabad United clashed in the Qualifier.

The colourful seats of the arena were finally occupied by real people, adding life to the Karachi breeze, that swept through the stadium gently.

But these enthusiastic lovers of the sport had hard-earned the privilege of attending the match almost 2 hours after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif gave the go-ahead to allow fan entry in the PSL playoffs following a ban due to the government's fuel-saving measures taken in the wake of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

Responding to the premiere's green light, arrangements had to be made hurriedly by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and the circumstances had their effect

on the fans' experience of buying the tickets.

Many were left frustrated by the glitchy website of the courier company which was the responsibility to sell the tickets online.

Others toiled in queues outside the courier company's two designated centres under the blazing sun since before afternoon.

At the box office was set up at the China Ground, a dusty parking space across the road from the National Bank Stadium.

Fans had started reaching the location as early as 10:00am.

And to the frustration of many, who "had literally filled the whole ground"—as per one of the workers of the ticket vendor told Dawn—the sales, which started at 12:00 noon were stalled in an hour after "people started getting violent".

The ticket sales at the China Ground resumed by 3:00pm again, but there were still issues of Computerised National Identity Card registrations while some fans stood confused after not receiving their tickets despite having paid online.

They were reportedly promised a refund, but still had to buy physical tickets to be able to attend the match.

The complications, however, relented with time, especially after PSL chief executive officer Salman Nasser visited the China Ground.

"I understand there have been issues and that has been mainly due to the fact that we had to make arrangements [for entry of fans] on a very short notice," he told reporters, adding that organisers were focused on preparing for Sunday's final, for which fans were allowed two days earlier.



Sinner queries schedule, surges into Madrid Open quarters

NEWS DESK:Jannik Sinner suggested the Madrid Open organisers should reconsider their tournament scheduling to avoid late-night finishes like the one Rafael Nadal experienced in the third round on Sunday.

In a rare 11:00 am start on Tuesday, Sinner moved past British 19th seed Cameron Norrie 6-2, 7-5 to reach the quarter-finals.

He explained he was put on first in Manolo Santana Stadium so that Nadal, his potential next opponent, would be scheduled in the afternoon to give the Spaniard time to recover from his three-set win over Joao Fonseca that ended at 1:00 am on Monday morning. "It's quite unusual for me," Sinner told Tennis TV about his early kick-off.

"I don't know the last time I played at 11. But for me it doesn't matter what time. I try to do my best. There was a question if it would be me or Nadal to play at 4. But I think it's right he plays at 4, because he finished very, very late."

"But at the same time, I feel like we need



to make some adjustments to the scheduling of the day. Two matches (starting) from 8pm to 10:00 level.

Sinner, who is bidding to reach the semifinals for the first time in the Spanish capital, will next face 19-year-old Jodar in what will be a highly-anticipated last-eight showdown.

The Italian world number one is just the second man in series history to win his first 20 Masters 1000 matches of the season, joining Novak Djokovic, who achieved that feat twice, in 2014 and 2015.

Later in the day,

Jodar's dream run on home soil continued with a convincing 7-5, 6-0 thumping of world number 66 Vik Kopriya.

The Madrid-born wildcard advanced to the biggest quarter-final of his young career, and improved to 12-1 on clay so far this season.

Casper Ruud fought back from the brink to keep his title defence alive with a 6-7(4/7), 7-6(7/2), 7-6(7/3) victory over former finalist Stefanos Tsitsipas.

In a high-quality three-hour contest, Tsitsipas led 5-3 in the decider, holding two match points.

Man Utd beat Brentford to close on UCL berth

NEWS DESK: Manchester United moved within touching distance of qualifying for the Champions League as Casemiro and Benjamin Sesko sealed a 2-1 win against Brentford on Monday.

Casemiro put United ahead in the early stages at Old Trafford and Sesko doubled their lead before the interval.

Mathias Jensen's late strike couldn't stop United cementing their grip on third place in the Premier League.

They are 11 points clear of sixth-placed Brighton, with the top five guaranteed to reach next season's Champions League.

Michael Carrick's side need just two points from their last four matches to ensure their return to Europe's elite club competition for the first time since 2023-24.

On Sunday, United host bitter rivals Liverpool, who sit three points behind them in fourth, in a clash that will go a long way to deciding who finishes third.

Interim boss Carrick, who replaced

the sacked Ruben Amorim in January, is still waiting to discover if he will land the United job on a permanent basis.

The former United midfielder has made a strong case by steady return to Europe's elite club competition for the first time since 2023-24.

Amorim's turbulent reign.

Leading United into the Champions League would be another persuasive argument as co-owner Jim Ratcliffe considers his options.

A 1-0 win at Chelsea in their previous match had reignited United's top-five charge

after a home defeat against Leeds and a draw at Bournemouth.

Brentford last won at Old Trafford in 1937 and they paid the price for a slow start on their latest fruitless visit.

Casemiro strikes again. Kobbie Mainoo scythed through the Brentford defence with a superb run in the second minute.

but Amad Diallo wasted the chance with a close-range shot that was cleared off by Harry Maguire.

United's pressure was rewarded in the 11th minute as Casemiro finished off a well-worked corner routine.

Bruno Fernandes whipped the set-piece to Maguire and his looping header evaded a gaggle of Brentford defenders at the far post as Casemiro rose highest to head home from an acute angle.



Pakistan launches retaliatory strikes after Afghan border aggression: security sources

NEWS DESK: Security forces launched a strong retaliatory response under Operation Ghazab Lili Haq after unprovoked aggression by Afghan Taliban and terrorists along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, security sources said on Wednesday.

According to the sources, armed forces carried out precise strikes in the Chaman area, targeting and destroying several Afghan Taliban posts and vehicles. They said the effective response forced Afghan Taliban fighters and affiliated terrorists to retreat from their positions.

"The ongoing military action reflects the unwavering resolve of the armed forces to defend the country's territorial integrity and ensure border security."

"The operation Ghazab al-Haq will continue until all designated objectives are achieved," security sources said, and maintained that Pakistan's security forces remain



fully prepared and committed to responding to any cross-border aggression with force.

6 terrorists killed as attack on Bannu police post thwarted

NEWS DESK: At least six terrorists were killed early on Wednesday when Bannu police successfully repelled a major attack on the Mazanga police post, officials said.

According to police, heavily armed terrorists attacked the post in the early hours of Wednesday, but personnel responded promptly and foiled the assault.

An intense exchange of fire continued for some time, during which one terrorist was killed on the spot, while the bodies of five other terrorists were taken away by their accomplices. Following the incident,

Bannu District Police Officer (DPO) Yasir Afridi, along with Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Arshad Khan and teams from the Rapid Response Force and Quick Response Force, reached the scene immediately. They cordoned off the area and initiated a search operation.

Police recovered weapons and other equipment from the site, including magazines, hand grenades, bandoliers and other military gear. During the encounter, a constable sustained minor injuries and was shifted to a hospital where he was reported to

be out of danger. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General (IG) Zulfiqar Hameed praised the performance of the Bannu Police for their successful operation and announced cash rewards and commendation certificates for the personnel involved.

Meanwhile, Bannu Regional Police Officer (RPO) Sajjad Khan reaffirmed that the police will continue to stand as an "iron wall" against all forms of terrorism.

Bannu district has been the scene of repeated security incidents in recent months, with both civilians and local security forces coming under attack amid a broader surge in militant violence.

Days ago, five workers of the National Radio Telecommunication Corporation (NTRC) were abducted by unidentified armed men while they were working on a project.

On Sunday, a police officer was killed in an encounter with police in Chak Sabu, Pindi Bhattian tehsil of Hafizabad district, officials said.

Suspect in child murder case killed in police 'encounter' in Punjab's Hafizabad

NEWS DESK: A suspect wanted in the kidnapping and murder of a six-year-old boy was killed on Wednesday after allegedly coming under fire from his own accomplice during an "encounter" with police in Chak Sabu, Pindi Bhattian tehsil of Hafizabad district, officials said.

Hafizabad police spokesperson Head Constable Waqar Yousof told Dawn that the body of the missing child was recovered from nearby fields during a search operation. It was taken into custody and shifted to a hospital for post-mortem examination, while legal proceedings were initiated.

Pindi Bhattian Saddar police registered a first information report (FIR), dated April 28, a copy of which was seen by Dawn,

on the complaint of the victim's father. It invoked Sections 363 (punishment for kidnapping) and 302 (intentional murder) of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). The spokesperson further stated that initial investigations identified the suspect as 40-year-old Zahar Hashmat, a resident of Faisalabad

who had recently arrived in Pindi Bhattian and was working temporarily as a labourer.

Subsequently, a special team was formed under the supervision of the Pindi Bhattian sub-divisional police officer to arrest the other suspects, and roadblocks were established in the area.

In another FIR dated April 29, a copy of which was seen by Dawn, the Pindi Bhattian Saddar police claimed that the main suspect was killed by "his own accomplice's firing."

The second FIR was registered after the suspect's death. "A motorcycle carrying two suspects was seen speeding along a river embankment, where it was intercepted by a police mobile. Upon noticing the police presence, the suspects attempted to turn back but lost control and fell.

The suspects then opened fire on the police party," the FIR read. It further stated that the "police returned fire in self-defence, after which the exchange of fire continued for some time."

retaliatory strikes at key sites, including the Arana Complex, Dabghi check post, police headquarters, and Zakarhel post, which were destroyed.

Pakistan Air Force also targeted positions in Laghman province, destroying an arms depot, the ABF battalion

headquarters, and the Nangarhar brigade. Sources further said a Taliban post near the Mohmand sector was also destroyed, stress-

ing that only Afghan military targets were hit in line with international law. On April 15, three civilians, including two children, were martyred

judges to different high courts. However, he could not convince the commission's judicial members.

One JCP member told The Express Tribune that the commission, by majority, opposed suggesting rules before transferring judges from one high court to another.

Even the majority did not support the idea that valid reasons should be recorded for transferring judges from one high court to another.

Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar's transfer was particularly crucial. Everything was done with CJP Afridi's consent, and the SC even endorsed these transfers in the JHC.

Subsequently, the JCP succeeded in appointing Justice Dogar as IHC chief justice.

During the meeting, CJP Yahya Afridi remained firm on his earlier stance and opposed the transfer of IHC

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'Outspoken' trio of IHC judges transferred

NEWS DESK: The present government has secured another victory on the judicial front by succeeding in transferring three outspoken judges of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to different provincial high courts.

The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP), by majority, approved the transfer of Justice Mobsin Akhtar Kayani to the Lahore High Court (LHC), Justice Babar Sattar to the Peshawar High Court (PHC), and Justice Saman Riffat Intiaz to the Sindh High Court (SHC).

The JCP secretary convened the meeting on Tuesday after Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi declined to summon it.

It is learnt that the JCP approved the transfer of Justice Kayani and Justice Intiaz by a majority of 11 to 4.

However, the transfer of Justice Sattar was approved by 10 to 5.

Interestingly, PHC Chief Justice Syed Muhammad Atiqullah Shah opposed Justice Sattar's transfer because it would affect the seniority of some PHC judges.

It is learnt that the JCP's judicial members/Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) Chief Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Hasan Azhar Raza,

Justice Aamer Farooq, and IHC Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar voted in favour of the transfers.

The three IHC judges were signatories to a famous letter writ-

ten to the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) seeking guidance on alleged interference by agencies in judicial functions.

Since former CJP Qazi Faez Isah's tenure, judges associated with that letter have allegedly faced pressure through various means.

After the 26th Constitutional Amendment, the present government succeeded in its first plan last February by transferring three judges from different high courts to the IHC.

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Pakistan's weekly oil bill reached \$800m amid Middle East war: PM Shehbaz

NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that the country's weekly oil bill has reached \$800 million due to the ongoing oil crisis arising from the Middle East conflict.

"Global fuel prices have skyrocketed over the past two months as shipping through the Strait of Hormuz remains paralysed since the US and Israel launched joint strikes on Iran on February 28."

Addressing a meeting of the federal cabinet today, PM Shehbaz commended the efforts of Petroleum Minister Ali Feroz Malik for tackling the fuel crisis resulting from the Iran war, stating that the situation now appeared "satisfactory."

On that note, the prime minister remarked that fuel prices in the global markets had risen sharply, noting that "our weekly pre-war oil bill was around \$300m, and

and three others were injured when Afghan Taliban forces carried out unprovoked shelling on locals in a border area of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's Bajaur district, according to state media. The incident marked a renewed episode of cross-border aggression after a gap of over a month, following Operation Ghazab Lili Haq, launched in response to earlier unprovoked hostility from the Afghan side.

Operation Ghazab Lili Haq was launched around the end of February following renewed clashes along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border after Afghan Taliban forces fired on multiple locations, prompting swift military retaliation by Pakistan.

The neighbouring countries were engaged in escalating hostilities along the frontier since then. The clashes intensi-

fied after Afghanistan launched a border offensive in response to Pakistani air strikes targeting terrorist positions and abated during a temporary ceasefire on the occasion of Eidul Fitr.

The escalation in tensions between the two countries followed a series of tit-for-tat actions over the past year. Pakistan earlier carried out air strikes targeting camps of the TTP and Islamic State Khurasan Province inside Afghanistan after a wave of attacks in Pakistan, including a suicide bombing in Islamabad.

Islamabad has long maintained that TTP leaders operate from Afghan territory, an allegation that Kabul has repeatedly denied.

Tensions also surged after a series of explosions in Kabul on October 9 last year. Taliban forces subsequently targeted areas along Pakistan's border, prompting Islamabad to respond with cross-border shelling. The exchange caused casualties and infrastructure damage on both sides and led to the suspension of trade after border crossings were closed on October 12, 2020.

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what the executive is doing right now? playing with independent judiciary and not even attempting to hide the farce.

"In Saman Riffat Intiaz, a judge who was given a diverse addition to the federal court, is being sent back to her province of birth without any reasons being given."

"In Babar Sattar, a judge who does not want to be transferred is being sent to a court whose chief does not want him. No reasons are being provided," Jafari said, adding that superior court judges are signing off on these transfers and not giving any reasons.

"Without an independent judiciary, one cannot have a functioning democracy or a functioning economy. Our politicians, as usual, will learn the lesson as it is too late? when they need these judges they have sent off to the provinces," he adds.

Meanwhile, it is learnt that during the meeting, members who had requisitioned the proposals for transferring Justice Arbab Tahir from the IHC to the Balochistan High Court, and Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro from the IHC to the SHC withdrew the proposals.

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