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# QUETTA VOICE

## Balochistan Issues Can Be Solved Through Political Dialogue, Says Governor

**Ali Hamza, Staff Reporter:**  
**QUETTA:** Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has said that the issues facing Balochistan can only be resolved through dialogue, mutual understanding, and democratic engagement, stressing that peace and stability are possible only under the Constitution of Pakistan.

Speaking to journalists after inaugurating a Japanese calendar exhibition in Quetta on Tuesday, the governor said lasting solutions cannot come through conflict but through meaningful negotiations and political wisdom.

"We are trying to create an environment where problems can be solved through talks and understanding," he said, adding that all discussions must remain within constitutional boundaries.

Governor Mandokhail said every nation goes through difficult phases, but challenges can be overcome with patience, unity, and collective efforts.

He expressed confidence that the people of Balochistan want peace, progress, economic opportunities, and a stable future for the province.

Governor Focused on Investment and Development in Balochistan Highlighting the province's economic potential, the governor said the government is working to provide a safe and investor-friendly environment to attract international businesses and development partners. He noted that Balochistan's rich mineral resources and strategic importance have drawn the attention of global investors, including China and Japan.



**QUETTA:** Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, former Chief Minister Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch, and the Honorary Consul General of Japan Syed Nadeem Shah inaugurate the Japanese Calendar Exhibition in Quetta.

Japan Praised for Continued Support to Pakistan and Balochistan

Governor Mandokhail also appreciated Japan's longstanding support for Pakistan, especially during humanitarian crises and natural disasters.

He acknowledged Japanese assistance in sectors such as education, healthcare, and technical training.

During the event, Syed Nadeem Shah said Japan remains committed to supporting development projects in the province.

He shared that the Japanese government has committed \$300 million to the Reko Diq copper and gold mining project.

Japanese Cultural Exhibition Draws Public Interest

The Japanese calendar exhibition in Quetta attracted a large number of visitors, with people from different backgrounds appreciating the cultural artwork and displays presented during the event.

### Pakistan to face growing health risk as international funding to health sector continues to decline: report

**NEWSDESK:**  
As international funding to Pakistan's health sector continues to decline and major foreign donors are set to completely suspend grants by 2030, the country faces serious health risks unless urgent steps are taken by the government, it emerged on Tuesday.

Foreign assistance can threaten disease control programmes, immunisation efforts, and institutional capacity across the country. Once funding stops, it may significantly affect district-level monitoring, community outreach interventions, diagnostic testing capacity, and workforce training programmes.

According to the report, global ODA flows have been declining since 2019, with a sharper decline in recent years. Total global ODA dropped from \$215 billion in 2024 to \$174.3bn in 2025—a decrease of 23 per cent—and may further decline in coming years. The report warns that reductions in global health financing can have devastating consequences worldwide. Estimates suggest aid cuts may contribute to approximately 22.6m additional deaths globally by 2030, including 5.4m children under the age of five.

Country burdened by weak health indicators

The report paints a bleak picture of Pakistan's health outcomes, describing the country as burdened by both communicable and non-communicable diseases. Tuberculosis, diabetes, cardiovascular illnesses, malaria, HIV/AIDS and child health complications continue to strain the healthcare system. Despite modest gains in life expectancy, Pakistan still lags behind regional countries on several key indicators, it said.

Life expectancy in Pakistan stands at 68 years, nearly four years below the South Asian average. Infant mortality remains among the highest in the region at 50.1 deaths per 1,000 live births—more than double the rates observed in Bangladesh and Nepal.

Low public health spending figures are also a concern. One of the report's central findings is that Pakistan continues to under-invest in public healthcare despite rising health demands. Total health expenditure amounts to only 2.9pc of GDP, far below international benchmarks and lower than the South Asian average of 4pc.



These are the findings of a report published last week, titled "Beyond Dependence: Understanding the Impact of ODA Cuts on Pakistan's Health System". The report, prepared by think tank Tabdilat, is authored by Behzad Taimur, Shahab Siddiqi and Syeda Farwa Qamar Jafri and discusses the impact of declining Official Development Assistance (ODA) on Pakistan.

ODA refers to grants and concessional loans provided by governments and international agencies to support economic development and welfare in low- and middle-income countries.

The report finds that shrink-

### PM Shehbaz, Azerbaijan's President Aliyev discuss peace efforts in Mideast: PMO

**NEWSDESK:**  
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday discussed regional developments and peace efforts regarding the Israel-Hamas conflict with Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev.

According to the PMO, the two leaders "expressed satisfaction on the positive trajectory of bilateral relations, while reiterating their shared commitment to deepening cooperation across areas of mutual interest including trade and investment, energy, and people-to-people contacts".

According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the two leaders held a phone call on Tuesday to discuss peace efforts in the region, while also reaffirming the bilateral ties between the two countries.

The two leaders exchanged greetings and reaffirmed the "strong fraternal bonds of friendship" between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. The prime minister conveyed his best wishes to President Aliyev for the success of the upcoming World Urban Forum, which will be held in Baku next week, the statement said.

He expressed confidence that under Azerbaijan's stewardship, the forum would serve as a "valuable platform for advancing the global urban development agenda". The premier also expressed his regrets that pressing commitments would make him unable to personally attend the forum, but noted that he had ensured that Pakistan would be well-represented at the event.

They also discussed regional developments of common concern, particularly the ongoing peace efforts in the Middle East, it said.

"President Aliyev expressed his deep appreciation at Pakistan's remarkably successful initiatives to bring about a ceasefire between Iran and the US. This was a clear reflection of the trust and confidence of the international community in Pakistan and its leadership," the statement highlighted.

The two leaders agreed to maintain close contact and looked forward to meeting in person later this year, according to the statement. The prime minister also reiterated his cordial invitation to President Aliyev to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at his earliest convenience.

In a separate statement on X, PM Shehbaz said that he was "pleased" to have spoken with the Azerbaijani president.

"I deeply appreciate Presi-



dent Aliyev's kind words regarding Pakistan's sincere efforts to advance peace, dialogue, and diplomacy in the region," he said.

Pakistan remains engaged in mediation efforts between the United States and Iran, even as military pressure and fears of renewed confrontation continue to shape the crisis.

While a deal for a complete end to the war is yet to happen, the hostilities have been largely ceased since the two sides agreed on a Pakistan-brokered ceasefire on April 8.

Following the ceasefire, a first round of historic direct US-Iran talks was held in Islamabad on April 11 and 12, with Pakistan playing the role of a mediator. The talks had ended without an agreement, but also without a breakdown.

With challenges in convening a second round, Islamabad has shifted back to its role as a facilitator and go-between.

In November of last year, the premier held a bilateral meeting with Aliyev at the Presidential Palace in Baku, while on a two-day official visit to Azerbaijan at the president's invitation.

At the time, he extended an invitation to Aliyev to visit Pakistan, which the PMO said was "graciously accepted".

# QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

## Purpose Over Profession

**By: Asfandyar Khan**  
In a world often driven by titles and career choices, some stories remind us that true meaning lies not in what we become—but in how we serve.

This is a story of two individuals in very different settings, connected by a single thread: purpose.

The first moment unfolded in a hospital corridor. A visitor, on the way to see a relative in the ICU, noticed a woman lying still, her breathing faint and uncertain.

The atmosphere around her felt final. Yet, hours later, everything had changed. She was alive—stabilized—because a doctor chose persistence over surrender. It was a quiet but powerful reminder of the role healthcare professionals play every day: standing between life and loss.

Days later, in a completely different environment, that same sense of purpose appeared again—this time in a rural classroom.

In a small village school, Mr. Mumtaz, a former MIS Assistant, has been redefining what it means to be an educator since 2021. Teaching in a modest setup within a supported Digital IT madrasa, he now



reaches more than 450 students, balancing multiple grade levels while also contributing to a UNICEF-supported Digital IT program.

### But beyond numbers lies a deeper impact

In 2026, for the first time in the village's history, 16 stu-

dents—10 girls and 6 boys—sat for their matriculation exams.

In a region where girls' education often faces barriers, this milestone carries par-

ticular significance. With no local high school available, students rely heavily on his guidance. He conducts practice exams at home, ensures thor-

ough preparation, and emphasizes integrity in a system where shortcuts are common.

His approach is both practical and thoughtful. Aware of

cultural sensitivities around mixed classrooms, he has introduced simple arrangements to ensure girls can continue their education without resis-

tance. Among his students are his own daughters—three of the girls appearing for exams this year.

His vision extends beyond the present. He hopes to see a high school, even a college, established in the village—an aspiration rooted in the belief that education can transform entire communities.

These two moments—one in a hospital, the other in a classroom—highlight a shared truth. Whether it is a doctor saving lives in critical moments or a teacher shaping futures over time, both reflect the same underlying force: commitment to others. In a country facing ongoing challenges in healthcare access and educational equity, such individuals represent more than personal dedication. They embody the kind of impact that drives real change at the community level.

Their stories raise a simple but important reflection: perhaps purpose is not defined by profession, but by intention. And in that realization lies something powerful—not regret for paths not taken, but clarity about how to move forward on the one we have.

## Balochistan: Qila Saifullah Hailstorm Destroys 7M Fruit Trees, 18,000 Farmers Hit

**Atta Kakar:**  
A devastating hailstorm accompanied by powerful winds has caused widespread destruction across Qila Saifullah district in Balochistan, damaging more than 7 million fruit trees and affecting nearly 18,000 farmers and landowners.

The storm struck on April 18, severely impacting one of the province's most important horticultural regions and leaving thousands of rural families facing major economic uncertainty.

The disaster caused extensive damage to orchards, agricultural land, and seasonal crops, particularly apple, apricot, and grape farms that form the backbone of the local economy. Farmers say years of hard work and investment were wiped out within minutes as hail and strong winds tore through villages and farming areas across the district.

Local growers have described the situation as catastrophic, warning that many families may struggle to survive financially without immediate government assistance.

Agriculture remains the primary source of income for a large portion of Qila Saifullah's population, and the destruction of fruit orchards is expected to have long-term economic consequences for the region.

Residents and farming communities



have expressed frustration over delays in relief and compensation efforts.

Many affected farmers claim that official assessment and rehabilitation measures have been slow despite the scale of

destruction. Calls are growing for the provincial and federal governments to announce emergency compensation packages, interest-free agricultural loans, and recovery support for affected commu-

nities. Farmers and local representatives are also demanding restoration of damaged irrigation systems and the introduction of crop insurance mechanisms to help rural communities re-

cover from climate-related disasters. They argue that without urgent intervention, the crisis could deepen poverty and unemployment across the district.

The Qila Saifullah hailstorm has once again highlighted the vulnerability of Balochistan's agriculture sector to extreme weather events.

Experts warn that climate-related disasters, including hailstorms, droughts, and flash floods, are be-

coming increasingly frequent in the province, placing additional pressure on farmers already struggling with limited infrastructure and rising production costs.

Analysts say stronger disaster management systems, climate-resilient agricultural policies, and faster emergency response mechanisms are essential to protect rural livelihoods and ensure long-term stability in Balochistan's farming sector.

# Doha, Ankara support Pakistan's mediation efforts to end US-Israeli war on Iran: Qatari PM

**NEWS DESK:** Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani supported Pakistan's mediation efforts in ending the US-Israeli war on Iran, in a press conference with Turkey's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, according to Al Jazeera.

Sheikh Mohammed said the two countries discussed the "dire circumstances" in the Middle East because of the US-Israeli war on Iran, with the Strait of Hormuz crisis limiting "freedom of maritime movement".

Turkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan reiterated Ankara's strong support for Pakistan's mediation efforts.

The Hormuz crisis has had a "dire" impact on the world, he said, stressing that the war needs to end for this reason, among others, according to Al Jazeera.

The waterway has been "used as a weapon in this war", exacting harsh repercussions on Gulf states, specifically economic, Qatar's prime minister added.

Fidan also condemned Israel's "expansion policies" in Lebanon and Gaza, decrying the impact on civilian lives. Qatar's leader also condemned ongoing Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Gaza, saying Turkiye has emerged as a "leading partner" in these key regional issues.

Sheikh Mohammed said that Qatar would continue consulting Gulf states to restore regional peace, and that regional issues should be resolved with Iran via diplomacy. Backdoor negotiations must continue to bring about the end of the US-Israeli war on Iran, he said, according to Al Jazeera.

Iran could enrich uranium to weapons-grade, Iranian parliamentary spokesman Ebrahim Rezaei said on Tuesday that the country could



enrich uranium up to 90% purity, a level considered weapons-grade, if Iran is attacked again. "One of Iran's options in the event of another attack could be 90% enrichment. We will review it in the parliament," Rezaei, who is spokesperson for the parliamentary national security and foreign policy commission, posted on X. Last June, Trump said Iran's nuclear facilities were "obliterated" by US and Israeli strikes during a 12-day war, severely limiting Iran's capacity to enrich uranium.

The fate of around 400kg of uranium enriched to 60% remains unclear. US intelligence assessments suggest Tehran's nuclear programme will not be significantly impeded unless that highly enriched uranium (HEU) stockpile is removed or destroyed. The nuclear

issue has been a key point of contention in talks between the US and Iran to end the conflict that began in late February. Tehran wants nuclear topics discussed at a later stage, while Washington demands Iran should move its highly enriched uranium stockpile abroad and renounce domestic enrichment.

"No alternative" but to accept proposal Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said that the US had no alternative but to "accept the rights of the Iranian people as laid out in the 14-point proposal." "The longer they drag their feet, the more American taxpayers will pay for it," Earlier, Ghalibaf said the Iranian armed forces were "ready to deliver a well-deserved response to any aggression." "We are prepared for all op-

tions; they will be surprised." Israel deployed from Dome batteries, personnel to UAE during war on Iran. The US ambassador to the UN, Mike Waltz, said Israel sent from Dome missile defence batteries and Israeli troops to the United Arab Emirates to help it defend against Iranian strikes, according to Al Jazeera. Waltz first commented on Monday and was quoted by Israeli Hayom newspaper as saying, "We saw the UAE make use of the Iron Dome provided to by Israel."

US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee confirmed Waltz's comments today at an event. "I'd like to say a word of appreciation for United Arab Emirates, the first Abraham accord member," Huckabee said at the Tel Aviv Conference. "Just look at the benefits Israel just sent them Iron Dome batteries and personnel to help operate them."

Huckabee added he's "very optimistic" additional countries in the Middle East will soon join the Abraham Accords, the 2020 diplomatic recognition deal that also included Bahrain for formal relations with Israel, according to Al Jazeera. UAE won't resume full gas production until next year due to Iranian attacks. The United Arab Emirates's main gas-processing complex, which was hit in Iranian attacks

## FO terms report claiming Pakistan allowed Iranian military aircraft to park at airbase as 'misleading and sensationalised'

**NEWS DESK:** The Foreign Office (FO) on Tuesday termed a report by an American media outlet claiming that Islamabad "quietly allowed" Iranian military aircraft to park on its airfields while playing the role of a mediator in the Middle East conflict as "misleading and sensationalised".

Citing US officials, CBS News had alleged that days after US President Trump announced

the ceasefire with Iran in early April, Tehran sent military aircraft to the Nur Khan Air Base. "Among the military hardware was an Iranian Air Force KC-130, a reconnaissance and intelligence-gathering variant of the Lockheed C-130 Hercules tactical transport aircraft," the report claimed.

In a response issued on Tuesday, the FO said, "Pakistan categorically rejects the

Pakistan to facilitate the movement of diplomatic personnel, security teams and administrative staff associated with the talks process," it said. "The FO said that some aircraft and support personnel remained temporarily in Pakistan in "anticipation of subsequent rounds of engagement."

Although formal negotiations have not yet resumed, senior-level diplomatic exchanges have continued. In this context, visits by the Iranian foreign minister to Islamabad were facilitated through the existing logistical and administrative arrangements," it said. "The Iranian aircraft currently parked in Pakistan arrived during the ceasefire period and bear no linkage whatsoever to any military contingency or preservation arrangement."



## WHO chief says 'work not over' after hantavirus evacuation

**NEWS DESK:** World Health Organisation (WHO) chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Tuesday "our work is not over" to contain hantavirus after evacuations from a cruise ship hit by a deadly outbreak of the illness.

The fate of the MV Hondius sparked international alarm after three passengers died in an outbreak of the rare virus, for which no vaccines or specific treatments exist.

Yet health officials stressed that the global public health risk was low and rejected comparisons to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. "There is no sign that we are seeing the start of a larger outbreak," Tedros told a joint news conference in Madrid with Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez.

"But of course the situation could change, and given the long incubation period of the virus, it's possible we might see more cases in the coming weeks,"

More than 120 passengers and crew on the MV Hondius were flown out from Spain's Canary Islands on Sunday and Monday and countries adopted different health measures for their returning evacuees.

The WHO's guidelines, which included a 42-day quarantine and constant monitoring of high-risk contacts. But in the United States, Jay Bhattacharya, acting director of the Centers for Disease Control and Pre-

vention (CDC), said American passengers would not necessarily be quarantined. "I hope they (countries) will follow the advice and recommendations we are making," Tedros said in Madrid. "The MV Hondius presented diplomatic challenges as different countries negotiated over who would receive it and treat its passengers."

Cape Verde refused to receive the ship, which remained anchored offshore the capital Praia as three people were evacuated to Europe by air last week. Spain allowed the vessel to anchor off the Canary Islands for the evacuation of passengers and crew on Sunday and Monday, but the Atlantic archipelago's regional government fiercely opposed the measure. Defending his government's policy, Sanchez said the "world does not need more selfishness or fear here. What it needs are countries that show solidarity and want to step forward."



## New Israeli law sets military tribunal for Hamas fighters linked to October 7 attack

**NEWS DESK:** Israel's parliament passed a law late on Monday establishing a military tribunal to ensure all assailants are brought to justice under existing Israeli criminal statutes for what it describes as crimes against the Jewish people, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Proceedings will be public, with major hearings broadcast live. While defendants will attend only key hearings in person and all others by video, surviving victims will be allowed in-person access, according to the new law.

Ya'ara Mordkhai, an international law expert at Yale Law School, said the new law raised some concerns about due process, given the military court setting, as well as a risk of atrocity proceedings turning into politicised or symbolic "show trials".

Knesset member Yulia Malinowsky, one of the bill's authors, claimed that the legislation ensures a fair and lawful trial. "They will be sentenced by Israeli judges, not by the street or by what we all feel," she said.

"At the end of the day, what makes us great is our spirit, our resilience, ability to cope and withstand this immense pain." Option of capital punishment Israel's penal code includes capital punishment for some of the charges. If handed down, a death sentence

would trigger an automatic appeal on behalf of the defendant, according to the new law. The last person executed in Israel was Adolf Eichmann, an architect of the Nazi Holocaust, hanged in 1962 after being captured in Argentina by Israeli agents. Military courts in the occupied West Bank can sentence Palestinian convicts to death but have never done so. A separate law passed by Israel in March, making death by hanging a default sentence for Palestinians convicted in military courts of deadly attacks, drew criticism at home and abroad and is expected to be struck down by the Supreme Court.

Lawmakers from both the governing coalition and the opposition authored the bill, meant to ensure all assailants are brought to justice under existing Israeli criminal statutes for what it describes as crimes against the Jewish people, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The surprise attack, led by elite "Nukhba" force fighters from the Palestinian group Hamas, killed at least 1,200 people. The fighters also took 251 hostages back to Gaza. Israel responded by launching an assault on the enclave that killed more than 72,000 Palestinians, mostly civilians, and left much of Gaza in ruins. Israel has been holding an estimated 200-300 fighters — the precise number is classified — captured in Israel during the attack who have not yet been charged.

The special military court established by the law, to be presided over by a three-judge panel in Jerusalem, could also try others captured later in Gaza and suspected of participating in the attack, or of having held or abused Israeli hostages.

The new law was backed by a wide majority 93 of the Knesset's 120 lawmakers, in a rare show of Israeli political unity.

## 'Hundreds paying intolerable price': UN condemns child death toll from Israel's West Bank operations

**NEWS DESK:** The United Nations condemned on Tuesday the toll from "escalating Israeli military operations and settler attacks in the occupied West Bank on children," saying that Palestinian children killed since the start of 2025.

"Children are paying an intolerable price for escalating military operations and settler attacks across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem," UN children's agency spokesman James Elder told reporters. "Documented incidents include children shot, stabbed, children beaten and children pepper-sprayed," Elder pointed out.

He stressed that such incidents were taking place against the backdrop of the "steady dismantling of the con-

ditions children need to survive and grow". "Homes are demolished, education is destroyed, water systems are attacked, access to healthcare is obstructed, movement is restricted," he said.

Mass displacement At the same time, there has been a dramatic spike in the number of barriers and restrictions imposed across the West Bank, meaning children in the Palestinian territory "are routinely cut off from schools, from hospitals and other essential services".

All of this has caused mass displacement, with more than 2,500 Palestinians — 1,100 of them children — displaced in just the first four months of this year in the West Bank.

"That surpasses the total displacement recorded in 2025," Elder pointed out. "Since the war in Gaza erupted in October 2023, after Hamas's attack in Israel, violence has also surged in the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since 1967 in contravention of international law."

Israeli soldiers or settlers have killed at least 1,070 Palestinians, including many militants, according to an AFP tally based on Palestinian Authority figures. Official Israeli figures, meanwhile, show that at least 46 Israelis, including soldiers and civilians, have been killed in Palestinian attacks or during Israeli military operations in the same period.



### Heavy rain, windstorms may trigger GLOFs in northern areas: PMD issues alert

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) warned that a moderate westerly wave is expected to enter the upper regions of the country, raising the risk of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), debris flows, and flash flooding in several vulnerable areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan.

According to the PMD advisory, the weather system is likely to affect Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from today and extend to Gilgit-Baltistan by tomorrow, bringing widespread rain and wind. Heavy rainstorms to upper parts of the country. Isolated heavy rainfall is also expected in mountainous catchment areas during the period.

The Met Office warned that the prevailing weather conditions could significantly increase the likelihood of GLOFs and flash floods in vulnerable regions, particularly in the northwestern districts of Chitral, Dir, Upper Hazara, Kohistan, Hoper, Ghulkin, Shishper, Ghizer, Hunza, Nagar, Ghanche, Shigar, and Astore. Residents living in glaciated valleys have been advised to avoid staying near riverbanks and stream beds during rainfall and remain alert for sudden changes in water colour or unusual sounds in local nullahs that may indicate debris movement. The PMD also advised people to move livestock and essential belongings to safer and elevated locations and maintain coordination with community-Based Disaster Risk Management Committees (CBDRMCs).

Meanwhile, disaster management authorities have been directed to ensure round-the-clock preparedness and maintain active communication with technical force persons in remote valleys.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding food security and availability of fertilisers.

### Dialogue only way forward on Kashmir, says Mehbooba

JAMMU (INP): Peoples Democratic Party President Mehbooba Mufti has stressed that there was no solution to the Jammu and Kashmir issue without talks, saying dialogue between India and Pakistan remains the only viable roadmap for peace.

Addressing a gathering in Poonch, the PDP chief said her father, late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, always maintained that "no matter what the BJP does, it would ultimately have to come to the negotiating table."

Taking a dig at the ruling party, Mehbooba said, "Cross-LoC trade and travel initiatives were launched during the PDP-Congress government to boost economic activity and reduce violence."

"We opened the Rawalakot route because we wanted trade and business to flourish. Goods would go from here, and money would come from there instead of guns. But even that route was shut," she said.

The PDP chief claimed that people of Pir Panjal and Chenab Valley suffered the most after the 2019 constitutional changes, and accused New Delhi of ignoring demands for a separate administrative division and hill district status for Mendhar. She also raised concerns over unemployment, inflation and discrimination against poor and tribal communities, including Gujjars and Bakewals.

Mehbooba urged people to stay away from drugs and contest upcoming panchayat elections. She further claimed that "for the last three months, secret talks with Pakistan have been going on quietly behind the scenes," adding that retired diplomats, retired generals, and others go to foreign countries and sit with Pakistanis for discussions despite the public rhetoric against dialogue.

### PTIMNA arrives at Parliament on bicycle to protest surge in petrol prices

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Iqbal Afridi arrived at Parliament on a bicycle after an earlier increase in petrol rates. During that protest, he carried a placard criticizing the government over inflation and fuel policies.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly on a previous occasion, Afridi accused the government of mishandling the economy and suppressing opposition voices.

He claimed that opposition lawmakers often face interruptions during speeches, alleging that microphones and television coverage are switched off when they raise key issues.

The PTI leader also questioned the government's economic decisions, including the energy policies, and demanded an explanation for the continued rise in inflation and fuel prices.

The latest increase in petrol prices has intensified political debate.

### Seminar critically examines issues of Indian foreign policy doctrine, different state narratives

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Department of International Relations of MY University, Islamabad, in collaboration with the Youth Forum for Kashmir (YFK), organized a seminar 'Operation Bunyanum Marsoos: Analyzing India's False Flag Operations and Human Rights Violations in IIOJK.'

The seminar was addressed by prominent scholars, diplomats and defence analysts. The main speakers were former AJK president Sardar Masood Khan, Prof. Dr Jameel Ahmed, Vice Chancellor of MY University, Islamabad, Ghulam Muhammad Safi, Convener of APHC-AJK, Dr Khurram Iqbal, Associate Professor, QAU, Zaman Bajwa, Executive Director of YFK, Air Vice Marshal Prof. Dr Shamim Beg, Dean, Faculty of Basic and Applied Science, MY University, Munir, Dean Faculty of Social Sciences, MY University, and Dr Waseem Khokhar, Head of Department of International Relations, MY University, Islamabad.

The seminar focused on the evolving human rights situation in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), regional security narratives, and the strategic dimensions of operation Bunyanum Marsoos to engage students, researchers, and faculty members in an informed academic discussion.

The event critically examined issues of Indian foreign policy doctrine in the context of Hindutva, different state narratives, alleged false flag operations, and their implications under international law and global diplomacy.

The seminar also commemorated the first anniversary of Operation Bunyanum Marsoos in accordance with the directives of the Higher Education Commission Pakistan, recognizing national resilience and the contributions of Pakistan's armed forces toward regional stability and national defense.

Dr. Khurram Iqbal discussed the policy doctrines of the Bharatiya Janata Party and their implications for regional politics and the Kashmir dispute.

Sardar Masood Khan elaborated on the implications of Operation Sindoore within the broader framework of regional diplomacy and international strategic discourse. He further emphasized the importance of diplomatic engagement, narrative building, and international awareness regarding the Kashmir issue.

### Leadership acumen emerged as decisive catalyst behind strategic success-A tribute to Pakistan armed forces

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): A one-day conference "Bunyanum Marsoos: One belief, one defiance, one destiny" was organized by the Institute of Dialogue, Development and Diplomatic Studies in collaboration with the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir at Jhelum Valley Campus, Hassanpora, on Tuesday.

Politicians, scholars, academics, experts, professors, media personalities, and a large gathering of university students participated in the conference.

Speakers highlighted the emergence of Pakistan as a responsible middle power that demonstrated leadership quality across political, air, land, and multi-theatre domains after India launched aggression against mainland Pakistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir in May 2025, while Pakistan responded defensively under the robust leadership of Field Marshal General Syed Asim Munir.

In his opening remarks, Uzair Ahmad Ghazali, Chairman of Pasban-e-Hurriyat Jammu Kashmir said that despite the prevailing military budget of over 92 billion US dollars compared to Pakistan's nearly 11 billion dollars, along with advanced high-tech military platforms, including Rafale fighter aircraft, the conflict established that numerical superiority and expensive technology alone do not guarantee success.

Dr Inam-ul-Haq emphasized that quality leadership, prompt decision-making under tense circumstances, institutional coordination, morale, and the strength of human resources ultimately determine battlefield outcomes.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Waleed Rasool, Director of Institute of Dialogue Development and Diplomatic Studies, remarked that India often appears victorious through cinematic narratives and propaganda-driven imagery, where fictional heroes defeat dozens alone, but real combat under drones, missiles, and battlefield pressure exposes the difference between theatrical projection and military reality.

Another speaker stated that wars are not won through propaganda but through preparation during peacetime, adding that "the sweat shed in peace saves blood during war."

### Naqvi reviews Islamabad Safe City upgradation; chairs special meeting

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister for Interior Moinis Naqvi on Monday visited the Islamabad Safe City Headquarters and chaired a special high-level meeting to review progress on the project to transform Islamabad Safe City into a Capital Smart City-level advanced security system.

During the visit, the minister inspected the ongoing renovation and upgradation work at the Safe City Headquarters.

Officials briefed him on the establishment of a state-of-the-art Fusion Center and a modern Control Room. Secretary Khurram Agha, Director General Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Dr Usman Anwar, Inspector General Islamabad Police Ali Nasir Rizvi, Director General Safe City Haroon Joyia, and other senior officials.

Agencies will be integrated onto a single platform under the Safe City system.

"This project will serve as a significant milestone in providing a safer and more peaceful environment to the citizens of Islamabad," he remarked.

During the briefing, officials said that the Safe City project is being rapidly executed. All necessary equipment has been provided and installation work is underway. The digital system is expected to become operational by 30 May. The meeting was attended by Interior Secretary Khurram Agha, Director General Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Dr Usman Anwar, Inspector General Islamabad Police Ali Nasir Rizvi, Director General Safe City Haroon Joyia, and other senior officials.

### POLs distributed among affectees of Sectors F-14, F-15

ISLAMABAD (INP): On the special directions of Director General of Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA), Captain (Retd.) Zafar Iqbal, Provisional Officer Letters (POLs) were formally distributed among the affectees of Sectors F-14 and F-15 under the Land Sharing Basis, bringing relief and satisfaction to the stakeholders and further strengthening their confidence in the successful progress of the housing project.

In this regard, a dignified ceremony was organized in Sectors F-14 and F-15, Islamabad, which was attended by the Deputy Commissioner of the FGEHA, the Director Land and other relevant officials.

During the ceremony, Provisional Officer Letters were handed over to the affectees, while the officials also interacted with them and assured them that the Housing Authority was taking all possible measures to protect their rights and ensure the timely resolution of their issues.

Addressing the ceremony, the Deputy Commissioner of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority stated that Sectors F-14 and F-15 were among the most important residential projects in the federal capital.

He further said that under the directions of Federal Minister for Housing and Works Biaz Hussain Pirzada, Secretary Housing and Works Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Mahmood, and Director General FGEHA Captain (Retd.) Zafar Iqbal, the development activities in these sectors were being carried out at an accelerated pace.

He emphasized that providing affectees with their legitimate rights under the Land Sharing Basis was among the top priorities of the Housing Authority, and that the distribution of Provisional Officer Letters was an important step in this regard.

He added that practical measures were continuously being taken to resolve the issues of affectees, promote transparency, restore confidence and ensure the timely completion of development work.



PESHAWAR: Activists of All Government Employees hold protest outside Peshawar Press Club (PCC).



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb holding a meeting with a delegation representing Pakistan Textile and apparel sector.

### CISS hosts launch of book 'Marka-e-Haq' on first anniversary of Operation Bunyanum Marsoos

ISLAMABAD, May 11 (KMS): Leading strategists, military experts, diplomats and academics on Monday warned that strategic stability in South Asia was becoming increasingly fragile amid rapid technological changes, disinformation campaigns, unresolved disputes and what they described as India's attempts to normalize limited warfare under a nuclear overhang.

The remarks were made at a ceremony hosted by the Centre for International Strategic Studies (CISS), Islamabad, during the launch of the book 'Marka-e-Haq: Deterrence, Defence and Strategic Maturity in South Asia, marking the first anniversary of Operation Bunyanum Marsoos as part of the Marka-e-Haq series.

The publication brings together contributions from prominent scholars, diplomats and retired military officials, examining deterrence stability, crisis management, dialogue dynamics and evolving strategic doctrines in South Asia. Organizers described the book as a timely scholarly effort aimed at analyzing the challenges arising from Indian regional security escalation, military posturing and shifting regional security dynamics.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi, Executive Director of CISS, said South Asia's strategic environment had become increasingly volatile due to India's belligerent posture and aggressive strategic signaling.

He emphasized the importance of responsible statecraft, sustained dialogue and credible deterrence for preserving regional peace.

Introducing the book, editor Dr Zafar Khan, Executive Director of the Balochistan Think Tank Network, said the publication sought to document evolving patterns of coercion, deterrence and crisis behavior in South Asia. He noted that the book highlighted Pakistan's strategic restraint while examining risks stemming from India's unilateral actions and disinformation warfare.

Delivering the keynote address, General Zubair Mahmood Hayat (Retd.), former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, underscored the importance of strategic maturity and institutional preparedness in maintaining deterrence stability. He observed that future conflicts would increasingly involve hybrid warfare, cyber capabilities and narrative manipulation alongside conventional military means.

DGPR Balochistan Honors Loralai Photographer Mahmood Baloch for Outstanding Performance

QUETTA: Director General Public Relations (DGPR) Balochistan Askar Khan awarded a certificate of appreciation and cash prize to Mahmood Baloch, photographer of the District Information Office Loralai, in recognition of his outstanding performance, hard work, and professional dedication.



Recognition for Hard Work and Professional Commitment Speaking on the occasion, DGPR Balochistan Askar Khan said that officers and employees of the Public Relations Department who perform their duties with dedication, honesty, and sincerity would be encouraged and appreciated at every level.

He stated that such committed employees are valuable assets for any institution, and their exemplary performance serves as motivation for other staff members as well.

Zero Tolerance for Negligence The DGPR made it clear that no leniency would be shown toward negligence, carelessness, or irresponsible behavior in departmental affairs.

At the same time, he emphasized that officers and staff who demonstrate seriousness, professionalism, and responsibility in their duties would continue to receive recognition and encouragement.

Focus on Merit and Accountability Askar Khan further stated that the Public Relations Department of Balochistan is ensuring the implementation of principles based on: Performance Merit Accountability to further improve the department's overall efficiency and professional standards.

Positive Response From Department Staff Officials and employees of the Public Relations Department welcomed the initiative taken by the DGPR, Balochistan, and described it as a positive and encouraging tradition for departmental staff.

They said that recognizing hardworking employees boosts morale and motivates officials to perform their duties with greater commitment and professionalism.

The minister also instructed Chief Engineers to continuously review project progress and regularly submit progress reports for effective monitoring.

Commitment to Modern Public Infrastructure The provincial minister further said that providing modern and quality facilities to the people of Balochistan — whether related to the road sector or building sector — is the core responsibility of the Communications and Works Department.

He added that fulfilling this responsibility in the best possible manner should remain the department's ultimate objective.

Improving Municipal Services Across Balochistan Baloch highlighted the need for practical measures to make local government institutions across the province more active, efficient, and citizen-friendly.

He stressed that municipal bodies must improve essential civic services, including: Sanitation and cleanliness Drainage systems Roads and Infrastructure Street lights 'Other

development work.

He clearly stated that no compromise would be tolerated regarding the quality of development work.

He instructed them to submit detailed visit reports to ensure better supervision and faster completion of projects.

No Compromise on Quality Standards Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa underscored the importance of completing major infrastructure and mega projects within the stipulated timeframe.

He clearly stated that no compromise would be tolerated regarding the quality of development work.

Balochistan Communications Minister Reviews Progress on Ongoing Development Projects

QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Communications and Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa said that modernizing the province's infrastructure is among the top priorities of the Government of Balochistan.

He stated that the Communications and Works (C&W) Department plays a vital role in the development and prosperity of Balochistan, adding that the improvement of infrastructure and provision of public facilities largely depend on the department's effective performance.

Review Meeting on Development Projects The minister expressed these views while directed a high-level review meeting on the progress of ongoing development projects across the province.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Communications and Works Babar Khan Chief Engineers from all zones Senior departmental officers During the meeting, officials presented a detailed briefing regarding the progress of ongoing development schemes.

Call for Faster Completion of Projects Addressing the participants, Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa emphasized the need to further improve the performance and efficiency of the Communications and Works Department.

He acknowledged that work on development projects is progressing satisfactorily but stressed that the pace of implementation must be accelerated so that public facilities can be delivered on time.

Instructions for Field Visits and Monitoring The provincial minister directed all Chief Engineers to conduct regular visits to their respective zones and closely monitor development schemes.

He instructed them to submit detailed visit reports to ensure better supervision and faster completion of projects.

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Balochistan Local Government Department Reviews PSDP 2026-27 Development Projects and Municipal Performance

QUETTA: A meeting of the Provincial Committee for Development was held under the chairmanship of Secretary Local Government and Rural Development Balochistan Abdul Rauf Baloch, where ongoing development projects under PSDP 2026-27, and the overall performance of local government institutions were reviewed in detail.

The meeting was attended by senior officials of the department, including: Director General Local Government & Rural Development Technical Muhammad Latif Khattaran Chief of Section Sab-ul-Majeed Lango Executive Engineer Inqar Muhammad Section Officer Atta Muhammad Other senior officers of the department

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AIOU Regional Office Kalat Launches Online Education Initiative, Distributes Laptops to Students in Balochistan

KALAT: The Allama Iqbal Open University Regional Office Kalat has taken a major step toward strengthening digital and distance education by launching online educational classes for students across Balochistan.

At the same time, laptop distribution under the Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme has officially begun for students from nine districts of the province.

A dignified ceremony was organized at the AIOU Regional Office Kalat, where Additional Deputy Commissioner Shah Nawaz Baloch and Deputy Regional Director Hamal Baloch distributed laptops among male and female students.

Addressing the ceremony, Shah Nawaz Baloch and Hamal Baloch said that the Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme is an excellent initiative aimed at equipping young people with modern education, research opportunities, and digital skills.

They appreciated the Government of Pakistan and higher authorities for connecting the younger generation with technology through this revolutionary program.

The speakers emphasized that the modern era is driven by knowledge, research, and information technology, and nations that empower their youth with advanced education and digital tools achieve greater development and progress.

They described students as the nation's valuable asset and the bright future of the country.

The laptop scheme, they said, is not only intended to support education but also to help students become self-reliant, skilled, and confident individuals.

Officials expressed hope that students would fully utilize this opportunity to enhance their abilities and contribute positively to the country's development and reputation.

During the event, it was announced that 26 students from nine districts of Balochistan received laptops under the scheme.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Shah Nawaz Baloch further stated that the youth of Balochistan are highly talented and can achieve remarkable success in every field if provided with proper opportunities and resources.

He added that under the leadership of Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan and Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti, the provincial government is taking serious measures for youth welfare, education, and development, and the laptop scheme is part of that vision.

The speakers also advised students to use the laptops for constructive and educational purposes, focusing on learning and research instead of unnecessary social media activities.

Availability of medicines, medical equipment, and staff at the dispensary so that personnel do not face any difficulties regarding medical treatment.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, personnel welcomed the establishment of the modern dispensary and thanked the leadership of the Balochistan Constabulary for the initiative.

Quetta Commissioner Chairs Divisional Task Force Meeting on Polio Eradication and Vaccination Coverage

QUETTA: A Divisional Task Force meeting on the overall performance of anti-polio campaigns and vaccination coverage was held under the chairmanship of Shalzhai Khan Kakar in Quetta.

The meeting was attended by Provincial Coordinator EOC Inam-ul-Haq, Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehruallah Badini, District Health Officers (DHOs), officials

directed authorities to take strict action against absent and defaulting vaccinators. He instructed DHOs to immediately activate non-functional health centers and further strengthen monitoring during anti-polio campaigns.

The commissioner also directed partner organizations to ensure accountability for absentee vaccinators and emphasized strict implementation of security and monitoring plans during vaccination drives.

He ordered officials to focus particularly on zero-dose children and default vaccinators.

He instructed health officials and partner organizations to continue regular visits to health centers and to take immediate action against inactive facilities and absent staff members.

Shalzhai Khan Kakar stressed the importance of improving routine immunization coverage and accelerating vaccination activities.

Addressing the meeting, Commissioner Shalzhai Khan Kakar spreading into the Quetta Block is considered highly sensitive in terms of Polio virus transmission.

Since January 2025, around 64 environmental samples were collected, of which 31 tested positive for the virus. Population movement was identified as one of the major reasons behind virus transmission, while it was also revealed that the virus is

enhanced monitoring systems and better team coverage have helped achieve campaign targets, and officials stressed the need to continue effective measures in upcoming campaigns.

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## Remittances expose Gulf dependency

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan has received nearly \$34 billion in remittances so far this fiscal year, largely from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The heavy reliance on Gulf countries is increasingly being viewed as a major economic vulnerability amid rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

Concerns are also mounting against the backdrop of reports about the UAE withdrawing its \$3 billion support facility from Pakistan and expelling some Pakistanis.

According to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), remittances stood at \$3.54 billion in April 2025, up 1% compared with the same month last year, although down 8% from March levels.

Total remittances during the first 10 months of FY26 reached \$33.86 billion, reflecting an increase of 8.5% year-on-year.

However, the composition of these inflows is raising alarm among analysts.

Data showed that Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries together contributed more than \$18 billion during 10MFY26, accounting for well over

half of Pakistan's total remittance inflows. Saudi Arabia alone contributed \$7.93 billion, while inflows from the UAE stood at \$7 billion.

The concentration of inflows from a single region exposes Pakistan to significant external shocks, particularly at a time when geopolitical uncertainty in the Gulf has intensified following escalating regional tensions and fears of broader conflict.

"The external account outlook remains fickle as FY26 approaches closure," said Waqas Ghani Kukawadia, Head of Research at JS Global.

"With crude oil prices elevated and import momentum likely to persist, the current account faces material pressure that domestic production cannot offset."

In this context, remittances have transitioned from a supporting buffer to an essential stabiliser.

Should inflows weaken, particularly from the GCC region where concentration risk is acute, the external account could slide into deficit again."

Pakistan has historically relied on overseas workers, particularly in Saudi Arabia and



the UAE, to support its balance of payments position.

Remittances often help offset a large portion of the country's trade deficit, which has widened again this fiscal year amid recovering industrial activity and higher energy imports.

Analysts noted that while elevated oil prices can temporarily support Gulf economies and sustain labour demand, prolonged conflict or economic disruptions in the region could create uncertainty for migrant employment and remittance flows.

The vulnerability becomes more pronounced as Pakistan's external financing cushion remains thin.

Kukawadia noted that foreign exchange reserve targets had already been revised downward by about \$1 billion, increasing the country's dependency

on external financing and remittance stability.

"The margin for error is thin," he warned. Brokerage houses said remittances remain one of the few consistently stable components of Pakistan's external sector at a time when exports continue to struggle with structural competitiveness issues.

Topline Securities, in a research note, projected FY26 remittances at about \$41 billion, up

7% from FY25 levels of approximately \$38 billion.

The brokerage attributed the latest annual increase partly to festive-related inflows and the continued formalisation of transfer channels.

Still, analysts cautioned that Pakistan's long-term reliance on labour exports instead of expanding productive capacity reflects deeper structural weaknesses

within the economy.

Human capital exports are increasingly compensating for the underperformance of merchandise exports. This model may provide temporary balance of payments relief, but some economists argue that it also increases Pakistan's exposure to labour market shifts and immigration policies in host countries.

The risks are particularly relevant as Gulf countries accelerate labour nationalisation programmes aimed at increasing local employment. Measures such as Saudisation and Emiratisation have already reshaped hiring trends in several sectors.

At the same time, economists pointed out that Pakistan has made limited progress in diversifying its remittance base despite some improvement in inflows from Europe and North America.

Remittances from European Union countries fell 18% year-on-year during 10MFY26 to \$4.35 billion, while inflows from the UK increased 8% to \$5.17 billion.

Analysts said those trends indicate growing migration diversification, particularly among

skilled workers moving towards Europe, Canada and Australia.

Meanwhile, Pakistan recorded its highest-ever monthly gross inflows under the Roshan Digital Account (RDA), reaching \$321 million in April 2026, compared with the six-month average of \$239 million and the long-term average of \$187 million since inception in September 2020, according to Topline.

Net inflows (gross inflow less funds repatriated) under the RDA clocked in at \$293 million in April 2026, versus the last six-month average of \$214 million and an average of \$157 million since its launch.

Furthermore, the rupee gained 0.01% against the US dollar in the interbank market on Monday, closing at Rs278.67, up Rs0.03 from Friday's close of Rs278.70.

Gold prices dropped from Rs5,300 to Rs4,888.36 per tola, while 107gram gold fell Rs4,544 to Rs4,18,691, according to the All-Pakistan Gems and Jewellers Sarafa Association (APGJSA). Internationally, gold decreased by \$53 to \$4,660 per ounce.

Silver prices remained unchanged at Rs8,513 per tola.

## Remittances increase to \$33.8bn despite war

**NEWS DESK:** Despite 73 days of conflict and heightened uncertainty in the Gulf, remittance inflows continued to rise, recording an 8.5 per cent increase during the first 10 months of FY26.

Remittances from across the Middle East increased and accounted for 53pc, or \$18.2 billion, of the total inflows of \$33.85bn during July-April 2025-26.

It was also noteworthy that remittances rose by \$10bn within two years — from \$23.85bn in the first 10 months of FY24 to \$33.86bn in FY26.

According to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), workers' remittances stood at \$3.5bn in April, an increase of 11.4pc year-on-year but declined by 7.6pc month-on-month.

Inflows fell 7.6pc month-on-month in April. Earlier, financial experts had expressed

concerns about possible disruptions caused by the Gulf conflict. However, those fears proved unfounded, as most Pakistanis working in the Middle East did not return home despite the war.

Although the conflict engulfed the region, the fragile ceasefire between Iran and the United States remains uncertain and the situation continues to be volatile.

Higher remittance inflows helped the country repay external loans and enabled the SBP to strengthen foreign exchange reserves despite outflows of about \$5bn over a one-month period.

Currency dealers said the SBP had been purchasing dollars from the interbank market on a large scale, pushing reserves to around \$16bn. After the inflow of \$1.2

tranche from the IMF, the SBP is expected to raise reserves close to the target of \$18bn by the end of June 2026.

During the last three and a half years, the SBP purchased \$27bn from the interbank market. Financial experts said that during FY26, up to May, the central bank had bought about \$4.5bn from the market, although some bankers estimated the amount to be significantly higher.

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL) has rejected bids for two spot liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargoes, which demanded higher rates and could force consumers to pay an additional \$22 million for one LNG cargo.

At a briefing, the Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum was informed that an LNG cargo was expected to arrive at Karachi Port on Tuesday.

Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik told the committee that due to the absence of a lasting ceasefire in the US-Iran conflict and related import constraints, the government was compelled to prioritise critical sectors. It was appraised that gas supply had been diverted to urea production units to avert a fertiliser crisis, particularly after constraints to di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) imports.

Pakistan is expected to save \$22 million to \$50 million from two LNG cargoes through comparatively lower-cost arrangements from Qatar.

A meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum deliberated on matters relating to the national stock position of petroleum products, gas supply to producing areas, PMDC board of governors' selection criteria, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) pricing concerns, and suspension of compressed natural gas (CNG) supply in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

The committee ob-

served that the increase in petroleum prices last month, despite the availability of stocks, appeared to have financially benefited Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs). The minister sought details of the formula used to determine fuel prices. Members also expressed serious concern over prolonged gas outages in Balochistan and questioned the uneven supply situation.

The committee urged authorities to conduct a comprehensive audit of OMCs to determine the extent of financial gains from existing stocks following the price hike. It was informed that joint stock taking mechanism involving Ogra, FIA, Intelligence Bureau, and other relevant agencies had been established to monitor stocks on a fortnightly basis. Commit-

tee chairman gave directives that all stock-taking reports be submitted to the Senate panel.

The committee questioned the petrol-lemping mechanism, and the chairman sought details of the formula used to determine fuel prices. Members also expressed serious concern over prolonged gas outages in Balochistan and questioned the uneven supply situation.

The committee took strong notice of rising LPG prices as well as the significant gap between officially notified rates and actual market prices. The chairman directed Ogra and relevant authorities to take strict action against overpricing and submit a detailed report.

The issue of non-provision of gas connections to the residents of gas-producing

areas was also discussed. Members highlighted that despite the prime minister's directives and Supreme Court decisions, affected communities were still deprived of gas connections. Officials attributed the delay to non-availability of funds. The committee resolved to take up the matter with relevant stakeholders.

The Senate panel took notice of varying charges imposed by Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC) on coal mining contractors at different sites in Balochistan. The chairman questioned the rationale behind price difference and observed that PMDC and coal mining contractors were interdependent stakeholders. He announced that all stakeholders to resolve the issue amicably.

## Gas firm rejects costly spot LNG bids

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL) has rejected bids for two spot liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargoes, which demanded higher rates and could force consumers to pay an additional \$22 million for one LNG cargo.

At a briefing, the Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum was informed that an LNG cargo was expected to arrive at Karachi Port on Tuesday.

Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik told the committee that due to the absence of a lasting ceasefire in the US-Iran conflict and related import constraints, the government was compelled to prioritise critical sectors. It was appraised that gas supply had been diverted to urea production units to avert a fertiliser crisis, particularly after constraints to di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) imports.

Pakistan is expected to save \$22 million to \$50 million from two LNG cargoes through comparatively lower-cost arrangements from Qatar.

A meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum deliberated on matters relating to the national stock position of petroleum products, gas supply to producing areas, PMDC board of governors' selection criteria, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) pricing concerns, and suspension of compressed natural gas (CNG) supply in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

The committee ob-

served that the increase in petroleum prices last month, despite the availability of stocks, appeared to have financially benefited Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs). The minister sought details of the formula used to determine fuel prices. Members also expressed serious concern over prolonged gas outages in Balochistan and questioned the uneven supply situation.

The committee urged authorities to conduct a comprehensive audit of OMCs to determine the extent of financial gains from existing stocks following the price hike. It was informed that joint stock taking mechanism involving Ogra, FIA, Intelligence Bureau, and other relevant agencies had been established to monitor stocks on a fortnightly basis. Commit-

tee chairman gave directives that all stock-taking reports be submitted to the Senate panel.

The committee questioned the petrol-lemping mechanism, and the chairman sought details of the formula used to determine fuel prices. Members also expressed serious concern over prolonged gas outages in Balochistan and questioned the uneven supply situation.

The committee took strong notice of rising LPG prices as well as the significant gap between officially notified rates and actual market prices. The chairman directed Ogra and relevant authorities to take strict action against overpricing and submit a detailed report.

The issue of non-provision of gas connections to the residents of gas-producing

## Govt dusts off oil refining policy as Hormuz disruptions bite

**NEWS DESK:** The oil disruption in the wake of the US-Iran war has compelled the government to dust off its petroleum refining policy, which was passed almost three years ago but could not be enforced due to flawed negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The government has now assured the refining sector of corrective measures in the upcoming budget to revive \$6 billion in investments for refining upgrades and expansion. Pakistan is losing up to \$2bn in annual foreign exchange due to expensive petroleum product imports instead of crude.

The refining policy returned into the limelight after Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, at a recent meeting, assured the management of the refineries that the government was serious about removing hurdles to implementing both greenfield and brownfield refining policies and a loss of \$1bn per month on oil imports amid the war.



The minister said the matter would be addressed during the upcoming IMF visit for corrective policy action in the budget for the financial year 2026-27.

A follow-up meeting between the representatives of the refineries was held at the petroleum division on Monday, where they were asked to submit their updated positions without delay.

Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik conceded that "despite the issuance of both refining policies in 2023, progress on implementation has remained

stalled". He said removing bottlenecks was crucial to moving forward, adding that the government considered local refineries as critical national assets for an uninterrupted fuel supply and energy security.

"The ongoing regional situation arising from the US-Iran conflict has further highlighted the urgency of reducing reliance on external supply chains and ensuring maximum domestic refining flexibility/capability," he said.

On the other hand, the refineries have linked the investment

revival to four major enabling guarantees. They want a stability clause in the refining policy during the three to five years of the implementation phase.

They have proposed the diversion of foreign exchange proceeds of furnace oil exports towards the upgradation of refining projects, besides wanting clearly defined force majeure clauses to ensure that there are no more delays. The refineries also want the sales tax-related losses via the inland freight equalisation margin (IFEM).

## Late mango crop hits export prospects

**NEWS DESK:** The mango season has entered markets later than usual, with an estimated 20 per cent drop in production. Exporters also fear that regional tensions, border closures and rising freight costs could severely affect overseas shipments this year.

Industry stakeholders say unusual weather patterns damaged flowering during the crop's early stages, reducing expected national output to around 1.5 million tonnes, down from nearly 1.8 million tonnes last year.

The cultivation area has remained almost unchanged at about 160,000 hectares. The season has also been delayed due to cooler and wetter weather during March and April. Harvesting for the local market, which normally begins in late April, did not begin until the first week of May this year. Export programmes are now expected to start in June instead of around May 20.

Early-producing Sindh districts, including Mirpurkhas, Tando Allahyar and Hyderabad, are reporting average yields. However, major late-season mango belts in



Punjab, such as Rahim Yar Khan, Multan, Muzaffargarh and Shujabad, are experiencing noticeably lower production.

Freight costs threaten shipments to the local market, which normally begins in late April, did not begin until the first week of May this year. Export programmes are now expected to start in June instead of around May 20.

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National Fruit Pakistan. Trade routes to Afghanistan remain disrupted for prolonged border closures, while tensions in the Gulf region and disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz have increased shipping costs and reduced vessel availability.

He says air cargo operations have also become uncertain, as Pakistan largely depends on Middle Eastern airlines for mango exports to Europe and the United Kingdom.

"Reduced flight frequency and limited cargo space are complicating export planning for exporters," he says.

# I'll never forget this day, says Barca's Flick after La Liga triumph

**NEWS DESK:** Hours after the death of his father, Barcelona coach Hansi Flick led the Catalan giants to a second straight La Liga title with a Clasico win over rivals Real Madrid on Sunday and said it was a day he would "never" forget.

Flick's Barca side earned a 2-0 win over Los Blancos and the coach said he was grateful to his team for their support and commitment.

Barcelona turned the Clasico into a coronation at a roaring Camp Nou to claim their 29th La Liga title.

Flick's side moved to an unassailable 91 points, 14 clear of second-placed Real with three games remaining.

The triumph capped a dominant campaign in which they lost only four league matches. Villarreal are third on 69 points.

Real arrived needing victory to keep their water-tight title hopes alive but Marcus Rashford crushed those aspirations just nine minutes into the game.

Antonio Rudiger fouled Ferran Torres just outside the box and Rashford bent a superb free kick into Thibaut Courtois' top-left corner, giving Barcelona the early lead and sending the home crowd into raptures.

"I'm proud, I'll never forget this day. Never. I'm happy about this (triumph) and the atmosphere in this stadium is unbelievable," Flick told reporters.

The German coach said his mother called him in the morning to tell him that his father had died. "This morning, my mum called me and she said that my father passed away. And so I thought about (whether) I should hide



around as well, and the club."

Flick, who was tossed into the air by his players in celebration at full-time, said he had "never" felt so much love in a stadium as on this day.

The coach said his team were still hoping to match the record of 100 points in a La Liga season in their final three

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club," added Flick.

Real coach Alvaro Arbeloa said his club needs to work together better as a unit rather than as a collection of individuals.

"We need to collectively take a step forward, to have a much clearer idea of what it is we want to do," Arbeloa told reporters.

"To put the collective before the individual, because, beyond talent, we always need to have a clear idea, and for me this is the start."

"Above all, we have to learn that we dropped a lot of points against teams and in games where we shouldn't have."

Real were missing Eder Militao, Dani Carvajal, Ferland Mendy, Arda Guler and Rodrigo due to injuries.

Federico Valverde also missed out after suffering a midweek changing-room fight with team-mate Aurelien Tchouameni, with both players fined 500,000 euros over the incident.

Kylian Mbappe did not travel because of a leg muscle injury, forcing Arbeloa to start Vinicius Jr alongside academy striker Gonzalo, with Jude Bellingham and Brahim Diaz pushing forward in support.

After signing Mbappe in the summer

of 2024, Real have lacked balance. Real's top goalscorer Mbappe was unable to play against Barcelona because of a thigh injury. The France captain drew criticism after going on holiday to Sardinia during his recovery process.

"I would have liked that he was 100 percent and that he was able to play, that's what I would have liked," said Arbeloa.

Earlier on Sunday, Umar Sadiq's second-half goal helped Valencia win 1-0 at Athletic Bilbao.

Los Che are not safe yet but moved five points clear of the drop zone with 42 points with three matches remaining.

Half of the clubs in La Liga are still sweating on surviving one of the tightest relegation scraps in recent times.

While bottom club Real Oviedo are all but down and out, Levante in 19th spot and 10th-placed Osasuna are separated by six points ahead of a round of crucial midweek fixtures.

Historically, the survival line in La Liga falls in the high 30s, with 40 points generally enough to stay up. However, 40 points looks unlikely to be enough in what is the most intense relegation battle amongst Europe's top leagues.

## Scheffler-McIlroy rivalry sparks admiration

**NEWS DESK:** Rory McIlroy and Scottie Scheffler, who together have won four of the past five major titles, have impressed each other with their mental focus and golfing skills.

As world number one Scheffler and second-ranked McIlroy prepared to face a world-class field at Aronimink in the 108th PGA Championship starting Thursday, they examined each other's most formidable strengths.

Scheffler captured last year's PGA Championship at Quail Hollow and British Open at Royal Portrush while

McIlroy took the green jacket at the Masters last month and last year.

McIlroy finds consistency among his greatest weapons.

"He has played consistently excellent golf for I would say ever since he got his first win back at the start of 2022, and he hasn't really dropped off since then," McIlroy said.

"It has been four years of really excellent, consistent golf. You look at his game, and you would have said a few years ago that the putting was a weakness, but you wouldn't say that

now.

"And you look at all the other aspects of his game and you don't see a weakness, from a physical standpoint, from a mental standpoint."

Scheffler has run-ner-up finishes in his past three starts but has shaken off weak efforts quickly, McIlroy noted.

"He seems like he has a good mindset of last week's done, I'll move on to this week," McIlroy said. "Forget about whatever happened. He operates in the present so well, and that's one of his super strengths."

McIlroy impresses Scheffler in multiple ways as well.

"When you look at just his game, his ability to drive the ball is the best I've seen, not only with his speed but how accurate he is as well," Scheffler said of McIlroy.

"He's able to take out certain things on some golf courses that not many players can do. He does it in a way where he hits a lot of fairways as well."

Scheffler also admires how long McIlroy, who won his first major at the 2011 US Open, has played at a top level.

"Another thing is his longevity. Hard to have an understanding of what it takes to remain at the top for as long as he has," Scheffler said.

"Rory is one of those guys that checks the box each week. He's a guy I always see in the gym, the practice facility."

"Players will have a greater appreciation when you see somebody like Rory who has had success over so many years. When you look at when he won his first major championship to now it has been 15 years."

"That's pretty difficult to do, so for him to still be at the top of the game for this long is quite impressive."

## Tottenham relegation fears deepen

**NEWS DESK:** Tottenham Hotspur wasted a golden chance to ease their Premier League relegation fears as Dominic Calvert-Lewin's penalty earned Leeds United a 1-1 draw in North London on Monday.

A first home win in the league since December would have put Spurs four points clear of 18th-placed West Ham United with two games left and in sight of salvation after a woeful season.

It looked on the cards when Mathys Tel struck with a stunning effort early in the second half, curling a right-footed shot into the top corner to raise the roof in the stadium.

But Tel's night took a turn for the worse as he conceded the penalty that Calvert-Lewin thumped home in the 74th minute.

As Tottenham's nerves frayed, Leeds could have won it in stoppage time but Sean Longstaff's strike was superbly diverted onto the underside of the bar by goalkeeper Antonin Kinsky.

The result left 17th-placed Spurs on 38 points with West Ham on 36 after 36 games. Tottenham's next game is away at bogey club and fierce rivals Chelsea

on May 19, two days after West Ham go to Newcastle United on May 17.

Roberto De Zerbi has taken eight points from his first five games in charge of Tottenham, but is yet to solve the club's home form and their fate may now rest on beating Everton in north London on the last day of the season.

"We made too many mistakes," he said.

"I think we deserved to win anyway but maybe the pressure, the crucial game, the crucial part of the season, we suffered too much."

It will be tough until the end of the season, until the last game."

After a 15-game winless league run plummeted Tottenham towards a first relegation since 1977,

successful away wins under De Zerbi changed the mood.

West Ham's dramatic 1-0 defeat by Arsenal on Sunday had also given Tottenham the opportunity to establish a safety buffer ahead of their daunting trip to Chelsea.

But it was never going to be that straightforward, especially for a Spurs side who had won only two of their 17 home league matches this season.

NERVOUS OCCASION

**TOTTENHAM**

The nerves were everywhere in the opening stages.

Tel's panicky clearance across his own area needed a flying clearance by Kevin Danso and Kinsky somehow clawed a header by former Spurs leader Lee Rodon off the line.

Tottenham responded with Richardson snuffing one good chance straight at keeper Karl Darlow and Pallina then lifted a shot over the bar.

The hosts had a huge scare on the stroke of halftime as Destiny Udogie dragged down Calvert-Lewin.



## Jake Paul acknowledges cloudy future

**NEWS DESK:** Jake Paul expressed a desire to continue fighting while acknowledging his fighting career could be done in a recent interview.

Paul, 29, is still recovering after Anthony Joshua broke his jaw during their December fight, Paul's first loss in seven "fights."

"We'll see what my doctors say," Paul said on the Ariel Helwani Show. "I'll be able to get a more accurate timeframe, or can I even fight again? That is definitely in the realm and possibilities of things (that I can't). (The jaw) does feel a lot better as weeks and time goes by, but I definitely need to get 'cleared first to be able to spar."

"Most definitely (my fighting future is in doubt)," he added. "It just depends on how the bone heals. Then, also, there's a tooth missing (in the back). I'm pretty sure I'm going to have to get an implanted tooth of some sort. I'm not sure how much time that's



going to add to things, but we just have to see and figure out what the smartest thing is for me."

An actor and social media celebrity, Paul began fighting in 2018 and is 12-2 with seven knockouts as a professional. His "most notable fight was against Mike Tyson in November 2024 in Texas, where Paul won the eight-round bout by unanimous decision. Paul also co-founded

Most Valuable Promotions, which hosts the Ronda Rousey vs. Gina Carano MMA fight Saturday on Netflix.

Paul hadn't been knocked out until Joshua did so in the sixth round last December in Miami. Paul hopes that won't be his last appearance in the ring.

"Those (doubts) have come up, but I'm not done," Paul said. "I can just feel it in my

spirit and my soul, and my heart that I have more fights left and unfinished business in my mind," Paul said. "Injuries are a part of any sport. I think potentially this could be a good outcome. You could tear an ACL and be out, and keep on tearing it and tearing it again. It's just a part of any sport, and I definitely don't think I'm done and want to keep on fighting."

## Pak coaches introduced to modern badminton training methods

**NEWS DESK:** A coaching seminar organized by Razi Sports Academy concluded at Shalimar Club, where badminton coaches and physical education teachers from across the country received modern training aimed at improving coaching standards in Pakistan.

Around 40 male and female badminton coaches and physical education teachers participated in the seminar. It was the first time in Pakistan that participants were trained through a state feeding machine, introducing them to advanced coaching methods and modern training techniques.

International badminton coach Raziuddin Ahmad trained the participants on international requirements of badminton, contemporary techniques and high-performance training methods. He especially encouraged young male and female coaches to adopt modern ap-



proaches for grooming children at school level.

During the seminar, certificates were distributed to participating coaches and physical education teachers by the chief guests including Syed Rizwan Masbudi, Saqib Rafiq, Chaudhry Nadeem Manzoor, Muhammad Naqem Chaudhry and Rizwan Chaudhry.

Experts from different fields also addressed the seminar. Dr. Muhammad Safdar Ali

spoke on physical fitness, while Dr. Ghulam Shabbir Anjum delivered a lecture on nutrition. Malik Khalid Zameer provided awareness regarding anti-doping measures in sports.

Pakistan's renowned international Davis Cup player Inam-ul-Haq also shared his experiences and highlighted the challenges faced by athletes during international competitions and strategies to overcome them.

Speaking on the occasion, Raziuddin Ahmad said that Razi Sports Academy planned to organize training camps across the country and ensure the provision of shuttles at school-level campuses to promote badminton among young players. He also stated that the academy would play an active role in identifying and grooming talented players for national and international competitions.

## PM extends conservation, austerity steps till June 13

ISLAMABAD: With no end in sight to the conflict in the Middle East, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday ordered that a countrywide austerity drive be extended until June 13.

Meanwhile, with rumours of a possible 28th Constitutional Amendment swirling, the premier and his team also met with President Asif Ali Zardari and his aides on Monday, even as both houses of parliament were in session.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, and Senator Saleem Mandvivala were also present at the meeting. A source privy to developments told Dawn that if enacted, the 28th Amendment would entail "a complete roll-back of the 18th Amendment", which



was introduced by the PPP-led government in 2010. It is feared that this piece of legislation may envisage the return of subjects such as health, population, education, and mines & minerals from the provinces to the Centre, and lead to the re-introduction of

the concurrent list. Meets President Zardari as rumours swirl of possible move to roll back 18th Amendment. Insiders say that President Zardari is not in favour of a fresh amendment, and wants to delay the issue at least until the

announcement of the forthcoming federal budget, expected on June 8. National Assembly officials said that once budget debate begins, no further legislation can be introduced until the process has ended.

However, an official readout issued by the Presidency did not make any mention of this proposed legislative package, simply saying that President Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz discussed overall situation of the country, matters related to Afghanistan and evolving situation in the region.

The meeting paid tribute to the martyrs of Marka-i-Haq, applauded the professional capabilities of the armed forces, and reaffirmed the unwavering commitment to national defence.

The president said despite difficult geographical and regional

situation, tensions in the Middle East and disruption of supply chains, maximum relief should be provided to the people. President Zardari directed that possible measures be taken to reduce inflationary pressures, ensure availability of essential goods and provide relief to the common man.

Austerity measures "The prime minister, on consideration of the recommendations of the committee for monitoring and implementation of fuel conservation and additional austerity measures, has been pleased to extend the applicability of the following additional austerity measures up till 13th June, 2026 with immediate effect," said a Cabinet Division notification issued on Monday.

The measures extended include a 50 per cent reduction in fuel allowances for official vehicles, with exemptions for opera-

tional vehicles such as ambulances and public buses. Other steps included grouping 60pc of official vehicles and a complete ban on foreign visits by ministers and government officials, excluding those deemed essential to the country's interests, as specified previously.

"Other additional austerity and fuel conservation measures, as notified from time to time vide this Division's notifications of even number, shall continue to remain in force over the periods specified in the respective notifications," the notification read.

"Measures in the case of which no period or end date has been specified, shall remain applicable till further orders," it added.

Among the previously announced austerity measures, the working week for all government offices was reduced to four days from Monday to Thursday.

## Blast in KP's Lakki Marwat claims 9 lives, injures 33

NEWS DESK: At least nine people, including two traffic policemen, were martyred while 33 others were injured on Tuesday in a blast in the Serar Naurang tehsil of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lakki Marwat district, police said.

Initially, Lakki Marwat district police officer's spokesperson Qudratullah Khan, in a statement, said that seven people, including two traffic cops, were killed while 23 others were injured.

He identified the martyred police officials as Adil Jan and Rahatullah.

Separately, Lakki Marwat Deputy Inspector General of Police Sajjad Khan said that both the deceased were traffic police officials.

A statement issued by the KP chief minister's office also stated that the officials were traffic policemen. Subsequently, Lakki Marwat Deputy Commissioner Hameedullah Khan issued a statement saying that at least nine people were martyred.

He said that, as per initial reports, terrorists

had planted explosives in a rickshaw. An incident report issued by the THQ Hospital confirmed that nine people were killed in the incident, as well as the names of the traffic police officials. According to the report, 33 injured and brought to the hospital, out of which five were referred to Bannu.

Meanwhile, Lakki Marwat DC also visited the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital in Serar Naurang where the injured were receiving medical attention and directed the administration to provide them with the best available facilities.

He added that the critically injured had been referred to the District Headquarters Hospitals in Bannu and Peshawar.

Videos circulating on social media platforms showed several shops and three-wheelers damaged in the blast. The police official said that a large police contingent, led by the Naurang Circle deputy superintendent of police, reached the site of the blast.

The team cordoned off the area and col-

lected evidence. In an earlier statement, Rescue 1122 spokesperson Shahdab Khan had confirmed the blast, stating that ambulances and teams had been dispatched to the site of the incident.

He had requested the public to cooperate with rescue agencies and avoid the blast site.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed grief at the incident, reiterating the country's resolve towards "eradicating the scourge of terrorism," state-broadcaster PTV reported.

He said that all relevant institutions were working towards eradicating terrorism with "unwavering resolve," and directed an inquiry into the blast.

The premier, in his statement, lauded the "sacrifices made by law enforcement agencies and prayed for the swift recovery of the injured," as per PTV.

KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi also took notice of the incident and sought a report from the KP Inspector general of police, as per a statement.

## IHC issues notices to CDA in appeals by flat owners, BoP over One Constitution Avenue lease

NEWS DESK: A division bench of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday issued notices to the Capital Development Authority (CDA) on intra-court appeals filed by apartment owners of One Constitution Avenue and Bank of Punjab (BoP) and sought a response in an order concerning lease cancellation and third-party rights.

The bench, comprising Justice Muhammad Azam Khan and Justice Raja Inaam Amin Minhas, heard arguments from appellants' counsel, Advocate Iamur Aslam, who requested the court to restrain disciplinary or coercive action until the recommendations of a committee, recently formed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, are finalised and approved by the cabinet.

On May 1, the premier constituted a high-level committee to review the issue involving One Constitution Avenue and halted authorities from taking any action.

The court adjourned further hearing on the intra-court appeals, observing that the decision on the stay

application would be issued later. The case stems from an April 30, 2026, judgment of a single-member bench of the IHC, headed by the Chief Justice Muhammad Saifur Dagar, which dismissed a petition filed by builder M/s BNP (Private) Limited and upheld the CDA's decision to cancel the lease of the 13.5-acre commercial-residential project over alleged multi-billion-rupee payment defaults.

The single bench had also ruled that third-party sub-lessees and

purchasers would "sink or sail" with BNP, effectively linking their rights with those of the original lessee. The ruling has now been challenged before the divisional bench by several apartment owners as well as the BoP.

According to the appeals, the BoP has a direct stake in the matter as BNP had obtained financing from the bank and subsequently paid amounts to the CDA. Court documents state that the bank had secured around 25,420 square feet on sub-

leased observations relating to third-party rights. He argued that the earlier judgment itself had expressed the expectation that the CDA and affected third parties would arrive at an acceptable solution, but the CDA was now avoiding that course.

The lawyer informed the bench that before a certified copy of the judgment could even be received, CDA officials entered the building and allegedly broke locks. A press release issued by the CDA after the cancellation of the lease was also submitted before the court.

The counsel informed the bench that since 2023, a committee comprising residents had been managing the building's daily affairs in coordination with the CDA. He said the project consisted of two towers with around 240 apartments and that the CDA had raised no objections during construction.

Counsel further submitted that many overseas Pakistanis had invested their life savings in the project and maintained that apartment owners had no connection with BNP.



## The Diplomat highlights how Pakistan's global profile shifted after India conflict

NEWS DESK: A year after the Pakistan-India military confrontation triggered by the Pahalgalam attack in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir on April 22, 2025, Pakistan's international profile underwent a notable shift, according to The Diplomat.

Following the attack, which New Delhi had blamed on Pakistan and Islamabad repeatedly refuted the allegation, India launched Operation Sindoor on the night of May 6-7, claiming to target militant training sites in the country in an 88-hour military operation. Pakistan responded with Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoor, which escalated tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbours and triggered global concern.

While India subsequently diplomatically isolated Pakistan over allegations of cross-border militancy, the report noted that Islamabad's global standing had since seen an unexpected recalibration.

In recent months, Pakistan has received international attention for its involvement in mediation



efforts between Iran and the United States amid the Middle East crisis. The report stated that Islamabad had hosted indirect engagement between the two sides on April 11-12, with The Economist describing Pakistan as a "defiant hand of global power politics" in April 2026.

The publication suggested that Pakistan's renewed diplomatic relevance had been shaped partly by shifting global priorities, including reduced international focus on post-9/11 terrorism dynamics

and competing crises such as the Russian-Ukrainian war and instability in the Middle East. It noted that although Pakistan had long faced allegations of hosting militant groups to operate within its territory, international response to India's accusations following the Pahalgalam attack had been comparatively muted, reflecting changing geopolitical priorities.

The Diplomat further noted that the aftermath of Operation Sindoor also contrib-

uted to internal political consolidation in Pakistan, strengthening the position of Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir.

Following the conflict, he was elevated to Field Marshal in May 2025 and later appointed Chief of Defence Forces in December 2025 under a constitutional amendment aimed at unifying military command. The report further stated that Pakistan's engagement with the United States had improved under the current administration, with

Islamabad credited for facilitating diplomatic outreach during ceasefire discussions in West Asia. Pakistan was also included in international diplomatic initiatives related to Gaza stabilisation efforts.

Relations between Pakistan and the United States were further influenced by growing strategic interests, including critical minerals and regional security cooperation, according to the report.

The Diplomat underscored that Pakistan continued to face significant domestic challenges, including political instability, economic pressure, and security threats.

It noted ongoing tensions between civilian institutions and the military, restrictions on political dissent, and the imprisonment of former Prime Minister Imran Khan since 2023. The report added that while Pakistan had secured continued financial support from the International Monetary Fund, economic vulnerability remained, particularly amid regional instability and challenges in resource-rich regions such as Balochistan.



## Petroleum levy crosses Rs1.2tr in nine months

NEWS DESK: The government collected more than Rs1.2 trillion from consumers in petroleum levy during the first nine months of the current fiscal year, while over Rs35 billion was recovered under the Climate Support Levy (CSL), according to official documents.

The documents further revealed that electricity consumers across the country paid more than Rs1.9 trillion in taxes over the last three years through power distribution companies (DISCOs).

According to the records, the government collected Rs145 billion in petroleum levy in July 2025, Rs115 billion in

August, Rs111 billion in September, Rs145 billion in October, Rs151 billion in November, Rs157 billion in December, Rs124 billion in January, 2026, Rs120 billion in February and Rs137 billion in March.

Officials also disclosed that Rs55 billion had so far been collected from consumers under the CSL on petroleum products.

Separately, official records of DISCOs revealed that electricity consumers paid more

than Rs1.9 trillion in taxes during the last three fiscal years.

During fiscal year 2022-23, consumers paid Rs507 billion in taxes, while the amount rose to Rs698 billion in fiscal 2023-24 and over Rs700 billion last fiscal year.

Among distribution companies, Lahore Electric Supply Company (Lesco) recorded the highest collection, recovering more than Rs532 billion over the three-year period. Multan Electric

Power Company (Mepco) followed with Rs323 billion, and Faisalabad Electric Supply Company with Rs307 billion.