



BALUCHISTAN
Balochistan Govt Bans Animal Hide Donations...
Page No 5



INTERNATIONAL
US military personnel reportedly being targeted using location data
Page No 3



NATIONAL
CM Maryam underwent 'major surgery' at Lahore...
Page No 8



SPORT

Marsh out of Pakistan ODIs, Inglis to captain Australia
Page No 7

First Digital, Print Daily of Balochistan

Editor: Asim Khan.

Rs. 10.00 Vol. VII: No. 220

Email address: dquettavoices@gmail.com
Website: www.quettavoices.com

Thursday 28, May, 2026

QUETTA VOICE

Field Marshal Asim Munir Celebrates Eid-ul-Adha with Troops in Zhob, Reaffirms Resolve Against Terrorism

ZEESHAN AHMED:

ZHOB: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, COAS & CDF, visited Zhob District, Balochistan to celebrate Eid-ul-Adha with frontline troops deployed along the Western Frontiers, the military's media wing said.

The visit commenced with Eid prayers along with special supplications for Pakistan's enduring peace, stability and prosperity and for the Shuhada, who rendered the ultimate sacrifice in defence of the motherland, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

Extending Eid greetings to officers and soldiers, the Field Marshal commended their exceptional grit, unwavering resolve, operational preparedness and steadfast vigilance amid foreign-sponsored terrorism. He paid rich tribute to the troops for their unmatched courage and sacrifices in safeguarding the nation against the menace of terrorism and hostile threats sponsored by inimical forces.

Referring to the recent cowardly terrorist incident in Quetta orchestrated by Indian-sponsored Fitna-al-Hindustani and its proxies, the Field Mar-



Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, COAS & CDF, visited Zhob District, Balochistan to celebrate Eid-ul-Adha with frontline troops deployed along the Western frontiers, the military's media wing said

shal reaffirmed that such inhuman and brutal acts cannot weaken the resolve of Pakistan Armed Forces or the nation. He emphasized that the morale and resolve of troops and the people of Pakistan remained unshaken. He reiter-

ated that the Armed Forces, in close coordination with law enforcement agencies and the people of Balochistan, would continue to pursue all facilitators, abettors and perpetrators of terrorism with full force. Upon arrival, the Field

Marshal was received by Commander Quetta Corps. The Field Marshal also laid a floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada and paid homage to the brave sons of the soil who embraced Shahadat in defence of the motherland.

President Zardari felicitates Azerbaijan leadership on Independence Day

NEWS DESK:

President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday extended felicitations to the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, the government and the people of Azerbaijan on their Independence Day.

In a message, the president said Pakistan and Azerbaijan are bound by a deep-rooted fraternal relationship that dates back to their independence, which draws its strength from a shared faith,

core national interest. President Zardari stated that the people of Pakistan rejoice in the remarkable socio-economic progress, national cohesion and prosperity achieved by Azerbaijan under the dynamic and visionary leadership of President Ilham Aliyev.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further deepening and diversifying multifaceted cooperation, particularly in the areas of bilateral trade, energy connectiv-



ity, defence collaboration and people-to-people exchanges, for the mutual benefit of both brotherly nations.

The president further conveyed his best wishes for the continued peace and prosperity of the people of Azerbaijan.

President, PM, military leadership reaffirm peace, stability on Youm-e-Takbeer

NEWS DESK:

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in their messages on Youm-e-Takbeer on Thursday, reiterated that Pakistan is a responsible and peace-loving nation that respects international laws and norms, Radio Pakistan reported.

The president in his message, said the nuclear tests conducted 28 years ago established Pakistan's deterrence capability and made the country the seventh nuclear power in the world.

He said Pakistan's nuclear capability and the preparedness of its armed forces remain a decisive deterrent against enemy aggression.

Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naved Aslam and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, on behalf of the Armed Forces of Pakistan, extended heartfelt felicitations to the proud people of

refice, unity and an unwavering commitment to the defence of the homeland.

On this day, Pakistan became the seventh nuclear nation in the world and the first Muslim state to possess a nuclear arsenal in its defence stockpile.

The team of Pakistani scientists, led by the founder of Pakistan's nuclear programme, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, and Dr Samar Mubarakmand, carried out the nuclear tests in the Ras Koh Hills in the Chagai District of



Paying tribute to the scientists, engineers and armed forces, he said their dedication, professionalism and patriotism enabled Pakistan to achieve a historic milestone.

He also acknowledged the role of the national leadership and institutions in strengthening the country's strategic capabilities.

The prime minister, in his message, said the day bears testimony to the fact that the defence of Pakistan, envisioned by Allama Muhammad Iqbal and materialised by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, remains in strong and capable hands.

Describing Youm-e-Takbeer as more than a remembrance of the nuclear tests, he said it symbolises national dignity, sac-

Pakistan on the 28th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer.

They said this defining milestone symbolises the nation's unity, resilience and unwavering commitment to safeguarding its sovereignty, territorial integrity and national honour.

The statement said Pakistan's strategic capability remains a sacred national trust and a guarantor of peace, stability, territorial integrity and credible deterrence in the region.

It said the Armed Forces of Pakistan reaffirm their unwavering resolve to defend the motherland against all threats and remain committed to ensuring the security, stability and prosperity of the nation.

Youm-e-Takbeer is being ob-

Balochistan.

These tests not only demonstrated the resolve of the Pakistani nation to safeguard Pakistan's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty, but also reflected the desire to preserve strategic balance in South Asia. By resisting mounting external pressure, the then former Prime Minister of Pakistan,

Nawaz Sharif, made the decision to test the Pakistani nukes in response to the Indian nuclear tests, thus balancing the strategic power equation in the region. Pakistan is committed to promoting an environment of peace and stability in South Asia, while preserving its capability to thwart aggression or adventurism in any form.

یوم تکبیر
28 مئی

وہ عظیم دن جب پاکستان نے ایٹمی طاقت بن کر اپنی سلامتی اور خودمختاری کو ناقابلِ شکست بنایا۔
یہ دن ہمارے قومی عزم، اتحاد اور دفاعِ وطن کے پختہ ارادے کی روشن علامت ہے۔

سلام ان سائنسدانوں اور محنتوں کو جن کی شہانہ روایت اور قربانیوں نے پاکستان کو مضبوط بنایا۔
آئیے عہد کریں کہ ہم اپنے ملک کی ترقی، استحکام اور وقار کے لیے ہمیشہ جہد کریں گے۔

پاکستان ہمیشہ زندہ باد

محکمہ تعلقات عامہ | حکومت بلوچستان

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Fiscal Federalism and the Quest for Equity in Pakistan

AGHASANAULLAH: Fiscal federalism forms the bedrock of governance in any federation, determining how financial resources are raised, shared, and spent to foster balanced development and social equity. In Pakistan, this relationship is constitutionally mediated through the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, a mechanism designed to rectify both vertical imbalances between the federal and provincial governments and horizontal disparities among the provinces themselves.

While the NFC Award represents a vital instrument for devolution and provincial autonomy, a critical examination reveals that its promise of equitable resource distribution is persistently undermined by deeper, systemic flaws in the country's fiscal governance.

The NFC Award has, over successive iterations, progressively increased the provincial share in national revenues, thereby strengthening fiscal decentralization.

This shift has the potential to improve public service delivery by bringing resources closer to the people.

However, the effectiveness of these transfers is contingent upon a healthy national fiscal environment—a condition Pakistan has rarely met.

The nation's fiscal narrative is characterized by structural weaknesses that choke the system at its source.

A chronically narrow tax base, heavy reliance on regressive indirect taxation, and inefficient revenue mobilization by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR)



mean that the total pool of resources available for distribution is perpetually insufficient.

Consequently, even a well-intentioned NFC Award framework operates within a system of scarcity, limiting its capacity to achieve genuine equity.

“Hidden Deficits” and Contingent Liabilities

Beyond revenue inadequacy, the expenditure side of the fiscal

equation presents an equally formidable challenge.

A significant portion of the federal budget is consumed by non-development expenditure, most notably debt servicing and defense. This leaves limited fiscal space for development spending, which is crucial for long-term economic growth and for addressing regional inequalities.

The paper notes

that the fiscal year 2024-25 saw a nine-year low in the consolidated budget deficit, partly due to provincial surpluses.

However, this superficial stability masks the underlying reality that the cost of servicing past debt continues to crowd out investments in the human and physical infrastructure needed to level the playing field among provinces. A major contribution of the research

is its identification of “hidden deficits” and contingent liabilities as critical yet often overlooked sources of fiscal stress. Beyond the conventional budget deficit, factors such as off-budget expenditures, subsidies to loss-making public sector enterprises, and implicit guarantees for future

Cycle of Short-Term Fixes Rather Than Long-Term Solutions

obligations create a precarious financial reality. This lack of transparency in accounting for risks—from natural calamities to the collapse of state-owned corporations—exposes the federation to unpredictable fiscal shocks.

The failure to consolidate and disclose these contingent liabilities means that the true scale of fiscal vulnerability is rarely debated in parliament or under-

stood by the public, perpetuating a cycle of short-term fixes rather than long-term solutions.

To break this cycle, the paper argues for a fundamental shift from one-dimensional, crisis-driven fiscal management to a multi-dimensional, institutionally anchored approach.

It recommends a suite of reforms that move beyond the NFC Award itself to

strengthen the entire fiscal ecosystem.

Key among these are the establishment of an independent Fiscal Council (FC) to provide unbiased analysis of fiscal policy and budget assumptions, thus reducing political discretion and enhancing evidence-based decision-making.

Furthermore, it calls for strengthening the Medium-Term Budgetary Framework by linking it to Public Service Agreements (PSAs) that tie resource allocation to measurable outcomes, ensuring that provincial transfers under the NFC Award translate into tangible improvements in education, health, and infrastructure.

In conclusion, the National Finance Commission Award is an essential but insufficient instrument for achieving fiscal equity in Pakistan. Its effectiveness is inextricably linked to the overall health of the nation's public finances.

As the research paper demonstrates, persistent issues such as a narrow tax base, unsustainable debt service, and opaque contingent liabilities undermine the very resources that the NFC Award is meant to distribute equitably.

Moving forward, the focus must broaden from negotiating provincial shares to implementing deep-rooted institutional reforms.

By enhancing revenue mobilization, ensuring fiscal transparency, and prudently managing debt and liabilities, Pakistan can create an environment where the NFC Award can fulfill its constitutional promise—fostering a resilient, balanced, and truly equitable federation.

Forced Marriage in Islam: A Clear Violation of Women's Rights and Human Dignity

By Musavir Durrani

Forced marriage remains one of the most damaging cultural practices in parts of the Muslim world today. Despite being justified in the name of honor, tradition, or family unity, Islam itself strictly forbids forcing any woman, or man, into a marriage they do not want. Islamic teachings make consent the

core of marriage, while coercion makes a marriage *batil* (invalid).

The Qur'an Clearly Forbids Forced Marriages.

Allah states in Surah An-Nisa: “O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will.”

(Qur'an 4:19) This verse was revealed to abolish the *jahliyyah* practice of controlling or forcing women into marriages.

Islam replaced oppression with dignity, choice, and responsibility.

Prophetic Example: Forced Marriages Declared Invalid

A woman once came to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)



complaining that her father had married her without her permission. The Prophet (PBUH) gave her the full right to reject or accept the marriage, proving that consent is mandatory.

Hadith References: Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith 5138.

Sahih Muslim, Hadith 1419. These narrations all confirm that the Prophet (PBUH) allowed the woman to annul her forced marriage.

One narration even states that she chose to remain married but wanted to teach women that fa-

thers have no right to force their daughters. Parents Can Advise, But They Cannot Force.

Islam highly respects parents, but marriage choice is not their right. They can guide, suggest, and advise, but they have ab-

solutely no power to force their child into marrying someone. Even if parents think they “know what is best,” they cannot override the choice of their daughter or son. The final decision always belongs to the person getting married.

Statements such as: “If you don't marry this one, who will marry you?” “You have no choice.” “Do it for family honor.” “You must obey your parents.”

These are pure emotional manipulation, and Islam does

not allow it. Emotional or Psychological Pressure is Also Haram. Forced marriage is not only when someone is physically pressured. Even emotional, mental, or family pressure

counts as force. Any *Nikkah* done under fear, pressure, or

threats is invalid (*Batil*) in Islam. This ruling is based on multiple *hadith* in which the Prophet (PBUH) annulled marriages done without consent.

Modern Forced Marriages, A New Way of Burying Women Alive. Before Islam, Arabs used to bury baby

girls alive. Today, many scholars say: “We no longer bury women in the ground, we bury their dreams on the day of their *Nikkah*.”

When a girl is forced into a marriage, pressured emotionally, or told she has no other choice, we destroy her life while she is still alive. This is the new form of burying women alive, and Islam came to end this injustice completely.

Forced marriage has no place in Islam. It is against the Qur'an, against the Sunnah, and against the dignity that Islam gives to every woman and man. Parents must love, support, and guide, but never control or force marriage decisions.

“Allah gave women this right, and no one can take it away.”

Iran supreme leader says US, Israel seek to 'bring nation to its knees'

NEWS DESK: Iranian supreme leader, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, said on Thursday that the US and Israel were seeking to destabilise the Islamic Republic in a written message read on state television.

"The enemy's blind plan, after the imposed war, the economic pressure, and the political and propaganda siege, is to create divisions and disintegration to compensate for military defeats and bring the nation to its knees," said Khamenei, who has not appeared in public since before he took office in March.

In his message, which marked the anniversary of the founding of the Islamic Republic's national legislature, he further called for unity and "cohesion" among Iranians.

Tehran condemns US strike in southern Iran, warns against ceasefire violations

Iran strongly condemned what it described as a US military strike near Bandar Abbas in southern Iran on Thursday, accusing Washington of repeatedly violating the ceasefire and threatening regional countries, according to the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Thursday.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Eastmond Baghaei said the US attack near Bandar Abbas, carried out in the early hours of Thursday, constituted a "flagrant violation" of international law and the UN Charter. Baghaei said the UN Security Council was obligated to fulfil



its legal responsibility by holding the US accountable for what he described as aggression against Iran's territorial integrity and national sovereignty.

He also accused Washington of continuously violating the ceasefire that took effect on April 8, citing attacks on commercial shipping in the Gulf region and international waters, as well as recent aerial strikes on southern Iran.

The spokesperson stressed Iran's determination to take "all necessary measures" to defend its sovereignty and

territorial integrity in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter.

Baghaei also condemned what he described as threatening rhetoric by US officials against Iran and several regional countries, while expressing solidarity with Oman.

He said threats of the "destruction" of a UN member state, such as Oman, which has played a constructive and responsible role in regional peace and diplomatic mediation efforts, represented a dangerous normalisation of "lawlessness and bully-

ing" in international relations.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps says it targeted US airbase in Kuwait

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said early on Thursday that it targeted a US airbase in Kuwait in response to an American aerial strike near Bandar Abbas Airport in southern Iran.

According to Iran's semi-official Tasnim News Agency, the IRGC said the retaliatory strike came at 4:50 am, hours after what it described as a US assault on a point

near the port city's airport using aerial projectiles.

"This response is a serious warning so that the enemy knows that aggression will not go unanswered, and if repeated, our response will be more decisive," it said.

The US military responded saying that Kuwaiti forces had "successfully intercepted" a ballistic missile.

According to Iran's official Anadolu, US forces shot down four Iranian drones that posed a threat near the Strait of Hormuz and struck an

Iranian ground control station in Bandar Abbas that was preparing to launch a fifth drone.

"These actions were measured, purely defensive, and intended to maintain the ceasefire," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The latest strikes came after US Central Command (CENTCOM) earlier this week confirmed a previous round of strikes on southern Iran targeting missile launch sites and Iranian boats allegedly attempting to lay mines. Iran condemned those

strikes as a "grave violation of the ceasefire."

Earlier, commenting on the state of the negotiations to end the war on Iran, US President Donald Trump said he is "not satisfied with it, but we will be. Either that, or we'll have to just finish the job."

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement on X condemning and denouncing "the criminal Iranian attacks that targeted the territory of the State of Kuwait with missiles and drones, in a dangerous escalation and flagrant violation of the sovereignty of the State of Kuwait, its security, and the integrity of its lands, and a direct threat to the lives of civilians and vital facilities."

EU's Kallas says Strait of Hormuz in 'strange state' between war and peace

The EU foreign policy chief said on Thursday that the Strait of Hormuz remains in a "strange state" between war and peace, and no official agreement has yet been reached between the parties, stressing that freedom of navigation is in everyone's interest. Speaking at an informal EU Foreign Ministers meeting in Limassol, the Greek Cypriot Administrator Kaja Kallas noted that the situation in the Middle East and the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war are the top agenda items.

Kallas cited expectations that the parties could reach an agreement over the strait, adding that it has not happened so far.

"I mean, Strait of Hormuz is in a strange state between war and peace," the bloc's foreign policy chief noted. "It is really in everybody's interest that the freedom of navigation is respected in the Strait of Hormuz, because everybody's paying a very high price for this," she stressed.

Three tankers reportedly attacked by the drones in Black Sea, shipping agency says

Drone attacks were reported on three tankers in the Black Sea on Thursday near Turkey's northern coast, shipping agency Tribeca said. The tanker James II, sailing under the Palau flag and in ballast, was reportedly attacked in a nearby area while doing a ship-to-ship operation. The agency also said Coastal safety boats were sent to the scene for assistance, and all crew members in the tankers were reported in good condition, the agency said.

The Turkish transport ministry was "not immediately available for comment" on the incidents due to the Muslim Eid holiday.

Russia, Afghanistan sign military cooperation deal

NEWS DESK: Russia and Afghanistan signed an agreement on military-technical cooperation during the International Security Forum in the Moscow region, as Moscow continues expanding ties with the Taliban, regional authorities in Kabul.

The agreement was signed Wednesday evening by Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei

Shoigu and Afghan Defense Minister Mohammad Yaqoob.

"Russia is important for us. Afghanistan and Russia have long-standing historical relations, and we want to continue moving in this direction. We have expanded bilateral relations," Yaqoob said.

Shoigu said Western countries should unfreeze Afghan assets and assume re-

sponsibility for rebuilding the country after two decades of military presence.

"We are convinced that Western countries should unfreeze blocked Afghan assets, fully recognize their responsibility for their 20-year occupation and bear the burden of the country's post-conflict reconstruction," he said.

The agreement

comes amid growing contacts between Moscow and the Taliban authorities.

Earlier this month, speaking at a meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation council secretaries in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Shoigu said Russia had established dialogue with the Taliban and was developing a "full-fledged partnership" with the group.

Global temperatures likely to remain at record levels in 2026-2030: UN

NEWS DESK: Global average temperatures are likely to continue at or near record levels this year and for the next four years afterwards, the United Nations warned on Thursday.

The 11 hottest individual years ever recorded all happened from 2015 onwards and the UN's weather and climate agency said the trend was set to continue, with a new hottest-year "likely" before 2031.

There is a 75 per cent chance that the 2026-2030 five-year mean temperature will surpass the key threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial average, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) said.

The WMO outlook comes as western Europe swelters under a "heat dome" of warm air, breaking temperature records for May in Britain and France.

"Global average temperatures are likely to continue at or near record levels in the next five years," the agency said.

"It is likely (86pc chance) that one year between 2026 and 2030 will surpass 2024 as being the warmest year on record."

El Nino effect on 2027 "There is an El Nino predicted for the end of 2026, which increases the chances of the following year, 2027, being the next record-breaking year," said Leon Hermanson, lead author of the WMO's Global Annual-to-Decadal Update.



The last El Nino contributed to making 2023 the second-hottest year on record and 2024 the all-time high at around 1.55 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial average.

El Nino is a natural climate phenomenon that warms surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, bringing worldwide changes in winds, pressure and rainfall patterns.

It typically takes place every two to seven years and lasts around nine to 12 months.

1.3 to 1.9 degrees Celsius range. The 2015 Paris climate accords aimed to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius — and preferably below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The targets are calculated relative to the 1850-1900 average, before humanity widely began industrially burning coal, oil and gas, which emit carbon dioxide — the greenhouse gas largely responsible for climate change — annually. Global

mean near-surface temperatures during 2026-2030 are predicted to range between 1.3 and 1.9 degrees Celsius above the 1850-1900 average," the WMO update said.

The WMO said there was a 91pc chance that global average temperatures will temporarily exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial baseline for at least one year between 2026 and 2030.

Furthermore, there is a 75pc chance that the entire 2026-2030 five-year mean will exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius above the 1850-1900 average.

However, it is considered exceptionally unlikely — less than 1pc — that any single year between 2026 and 2030 will exceed 2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial baseline in the next five years.

Arctic heat warning The 1.5 degrees Celsius barrier is expected to be broken with increasing frequency. The 1.5 and 2 degrees Celsius limits in the Paris accords refer to sustained long-term warming — typically over 20 years — so tem-

US military personnel reportedly being targeted using location data

NEWS DESK: US forces deployed to war zones have been targeted using commercially available location data, according to reports filed by military officials, as an illustration of how the global surveillance economy is shaping the battlefield.

In a letter shared with Reuters by US Senator Ron Wyden — an Oregon Democrat — US Central Command (Centcom) said it had received multiple threat reports concerning adversary exploitation of commercial location data to target or surveil US personnel in theatre.

The message, sent on April 14, offered no further details, but Centcom's area of responsibility includes the Gulf, where US forces are facing off against the Iranian military over the Strait of Hormuz.

The disclosure was the first time that information that US forces had been targeted in an active war zone. Wyden and the WMO's lead centre for annual to decadal climate prediction. It compiles forecasts from 13 different institutes.

The report was produced by Britain's Met Office national weather service and the WMO's lead centre for annual to decadal climate prediction. It compiles forecasts from 13 different institutes.

The report said Arctic temperatures over the next five northern hemisphere winters (November to March) were predicted to be 2.8 degrees Celsius above average temperatures for 1991-2020 — more than triple the global temperature anomaly for the same period.

Predicted precipitation patterns for May to September from 2026 to 2030 forecast wet anomalies in the Sahel, northern Europe, Alaska and Siberia, as well as dry anomalies over the Amazon.

identify where US troops congregate and their pattern of life, which can be exploited by adversaries to target attacks such as missiles, drones and roadside bombs, as well as for counterintelligence purposes," the letter warned.

Wyden said in a statement that it was time to "start treating the adtech industry as a national security threat".

The Pentagon did not return messages seeking comment. The lawmakers said in their letter that their efforts to obtain more information from military officials about the reported targeting had been unsuccessful.

Commercial location data can be used to identify where US troops congregate and their pattern of life, which can be exploited by adversaries to target attacks such as missiles, drones and roadside bombs, as well as for counterintelligence purposes," the letter warned.

Wyden said in a statement that it was time to "start treating the adtech industry as a national security threat".

The Pentagon did not return messages seeking comment. The lawmakers said in their letter that their efforts to obtain more information from military officials about the reported targeting had been unsuccessful.

Location data trade fuels privacy concerns

Location data is widely used in digital advertising, which is a key source of revenue for many tech companies. Such data is typically collected from smartphones and other devices by apps or service providers before being sold to data brokers, who collate and resell it, sometimes via complex networks of intermediaries. Although the threat to privacy inherent in selling the details of people's day-to-day movements on the open market has long been a matter of public discussion, its potential as a national security

risk has recently drawn concern as well. As far back as 2016, one US defence contractor was able to leverage commercially available location data to track special operations forces from their bases in the United States to a sensitive staging post in Syria, according to an account first disclosed by The Wall Street Journal. More recently, journalists at Wired and two German news outlets drew on billions of coordinates collected by a data broker to expose the granular comings and goings of people stationed at or around 11 US military and intelligence sites in Germany.

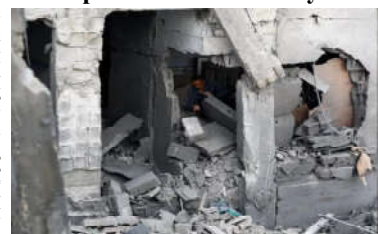
Seven Palestinians killed, 18 injured in Israeli airstrike on apartment in Gaza City

NEWS DESK: At least seven Palestinians were killed and 18 were injured in an Israeli airstrike on Wednesday that targeted an apartment in a residential building in Gaza City, according to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society.

It said its crews recovered seven bodies, including those of two children and two women, following the strike, which targeted a home near Al-Israa Tower on Omar al-Mukhtar Street.

It added that the injured were transferred to Al-Saraya Field Hospital in northern Gaza.

Eyewitnesses told Anadolu that Israeli warplanes carried out a violent airstrike targeting an apartment in the Farah residential building on Omar al-Mukhtar Street, without disclosing their identities. Hamas has not commented on the



claimed that it struck two key members of the Palestinian group Hamas in northern Gaza.

Israel's Yedioth Ahronoth daily alleged that the targets were Hamas' northern Gaza brigade commander and the deputy commander of the Gaza City brigade, without disclosing their identities. Hamas has not commented on the

Aviv is seeking to return to the "pace of the genocide war" that continued for two years.

In a statement, Hamas said Israeli airstrikes targeting a residential apartment in central Gaza City overnight, which killed 10 Palestinians, including two children and two women, and wounded dozens more.

Aviv is seeking to return to the "pace of the genocide war" that continued for two years.

In a statement, Hamas said Israeli airstrikes targeting a residential apartment in central Gaza City overnight, which killed 10 Palestinians, including two children and two women, and wounded dozens more.

Punjab issues list of 89 banned and monitored organisations ahead of Eid-ul-Azha

LAHORE (INP) The Punjab Home Department has issued a list of 89 banned and monitored organisations ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, warning citizens not to donate sacrificial animal skins

to them or their subsidiaries. According to the Punjab Home Department, sacrificial hides must not be given to any banned, monitored or affiliated organisation. The department said any kind of support to banned organisations is a crime under the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997. It warned that those supporting groups involved in terrorism or anti-state ac-

tivities would face legal action. Only registered charities allowed under the Punjab Home Department said registration with the Punjab Charity Commission is mandatory for charitable organisations operating in the province. Citizens have been advised to donate sacrificial skins only to organisations registered with the Punjab Charity Commission. The department said all

registered organisations can be verified through the QR code printed on their certificates. The Home Department said deputy commissioners will issue permits to madrassas and charitable organisations for the collection of sacrificial hides. Citizens have been asked to ensure that hides are given only to institutions holding a valid Punjab Charity Commission certificate or a permit issued by the deputy commissioner. The department said people must ensure their donations reach deserving beneficiaries instead of terrorists or extremist networks.



NAWAB SHAH: President Asif Ali Zardari meeting Deputy Speaker National Assembly Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah, provincial ministers and other dignitaries at Zardari House on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha.

Punjab facing threat of severe heatwave during Eid-ul-Adha holidays

LAHORE (INP) Punjab is facing the threat of a severe heatwave during the Eid-ul-Adha holidays, prompting PDMA to issue alerts and safety guidelines for citizens, livestock handlers, traders and district administrations.

According to PDMA Punjab, temperatures in most districts of the province are expected to remain 4 to 7°C above normal during the Eid holidays.

In Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Faisalabad, Sialkot and other districts, temperatures may reach 42°C. Southern Punjab districts, including Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Sargodha and Jhang, may experience extreme heat, with mercury possibly rising to 50°C.

Heatwave intensity may continue at night. PDMA Punjab warned that the intensity of the heatwave may continue even at night. DG Umar Javed urged the public to take precautionary measures and avoid unnecessary travel or exposure to direct sunlight, especially between 10am and 5pm. He said citizens should drink plenty of water and fluids to protect themselves from heat-related illness.

Citizens advised to take precautions. PDMA advised people to wear light-colored, loose cotton clothes and use hats or umbrellas when going outside. Children, elderly people, sick individuals and heart patients have been urged to stay indoors during extreme heat.

Citizens have also been asked to understand the symptoms of heatstroke and seek immediate medical help if needed. PDMA Punjab offering every kind of sacrifices for truth, justice, the supremacy of faith, and the defence of oppressed humanity is the true essence of Imman and servitude to Allah. The Hurriyat leaders said the Kashmiri people have been rendering unparalleled sacrifices for decades in pursuit of their fundamental right to self-determination, freedom, dignity, and justice. They said Eid-ul-Adha renews the collective pledge to continue the Kashmir freedom movement at every level until it reaches its logical conclusion.

They appealed to the Kashmiri people not to forget their brothers and sisters suffering under Indian oppression, imprisonment, and human tragedy, urging them to remember the families of martyrs, widows, orphaned children, persons with disabilities, vulnerable families, and the relatives of detained Hurriyat leaders and activists in their prayers, compassion, and practical support. Paying glowing tribute to the sacrifices and steadfastness resolve of political prisoners and pro-freedom leadership languishing in Indian jails, the Hurriyat leaders said their sacrifices would never be forgotten. They also extended Eid greetings to the people and government of Pakistan, political and religious parties, social organisations, and the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, expressing gratitude for their continued political, diplomatic, and moral support for the Kashmiri freedom movement.

The APHC leaders urged the Muslim world, international human rights organisations, and the global community to treat the Kashmir dispute not merely as a regional conflict but as a serious humanitarian, moral, and political issue, and to play an effective role in supporting the Kashmiris' right to self-determination and restoring lasting peace, justice, and human dignity in the region.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Alliance also extended Eid-ul-Adha greetings to the oppressed Kashmiri people and the entire Muslim world. In a statement, the Alliance spokesperson said Eid-ul-Adha not only teaches the sacrifice of animals, but also conveys the message of standing firm against falsehood, resisting oppression, and sacrificing everything beloved for the sake of Allah's pleasure.

He said HOJK continues to bleed under brutal Indian military oppression. He added that the occupation Indian forces are under the false impression that they can suppress the freedom movement through bullets, prisons, black laws, and state terrorism, but history bears witness that oppression always perishes and ultimately prevails.

Trusted brands enable businesses to retain customers without offering discounts: Iftikhar Ali Malik

LAHORE (INP) South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Iftikhar Ali Malik on Tuesday said trusted brands enabled businesses to retain customers without offering discounts, as buyers preferred quality and reliability over lower prices.

Talking to a delegation of Pakistan Marketing Associates and Professionals led by Ch Ejaz Ahmad Aram, he said trust had become the most valuable asset in today's highly competitive global market.

He said building a reputation through honesty, professionalism, and commitment to customer satisfaction required years of consistent effort. Once consumers developed confidence in a brand, they willingly paid the demanded price because they were assured of quality and value, he added.

Iftikhar Malik said trust-based branding not only increased sales but also strengthened the national economy by boosting exports and attracting investment. He urged Pakistani entrepreneurs and industrialists to focus on long-term credibility instead of short-term profits and advised them to invest in product quality, innovation, ethical business practices and customer service to compete effectively in international markets.

Referring to successful Pakistani brands, he said companies such as Interloop, Service Industries Limited, Guard Group and Chen One had demonstrated that customer loyalty,

on industrial cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and special economic zones. He also highlighted the role of Sindh and Karachi in trade, investment and connectivity projects involving China.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said the relationship between Islamabad and Beijing remained one of Pakistan's strongest diplomatic partnerships and noted ongoing Chinese investment in transport, energy, industrial and infrastructure projects in Sindh.

In a video message, the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan described the two countries as "all-weather strategic cooperative partners" and said the second phase of CPEC would place greater emphasis on industrialization, advanced manufacturing and economic modernization.

Bitawal said the next phase of CPEC, commonly referred to as CPEC 2.0, would focus

on industrial cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and special economic zones. He also highlighted the role of Sindh and Karachi in trade, investment and connectivity projects involving China.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said the relationship between Islamabad and Beijing remained one of Pakistan's strongest diplomatic partnerships and noted ongoing Chinese investment in transport, energy, industrial and infrastructure projects in Sindh.

In a video message, the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan described the two countries as "all-weather strategic cooperative partners" and said the second phase of CPEC would place greater emphasis on industrialization, advanced manufacturing and economic modernization.

Bitawal said the next phase of CPEC, commonly referred to as CPEC 2.0, would focus

on industrial cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and special economic zones. He also highlighted the role of Sindh and Karachi in trade, investment and connectivity projects involving China.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said the relationship between Islamabad and Beijing remained one of Pakistan's strongest diplomatic partnerships and noted ongoing Chinese investment in transport, energy, industrial and infrastructure projects in Sindh.

In a video message, the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan described the two countries as "all-weather strategic cooperative partners" and said the second phase of CPEC would place greater emphasis on industrialization, advanced manufacturing and economic modernization.

Bitawal said the next phase of CPEC, commonly referred to as CPEC 2.0, would focus

Sindh launches province-wide campaign to combat rabies

KARACHI (INP) Sindh has launched a province-wide campaign to combat rabies, as officials cautioned that more than 285,000 dog-bite cases were reported and over 22 rabies-related deaths were recorded in major hospitals across the province in 2025.

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah speaking at a meeting said the government would adopt a coordinated strategy aimed at eliminating preventable rabies deaths through public awareness, vaccination, treatment facilities, and stray dog population control.

During the briefing, the chief minister was informed that over 285,000 dog-bite cases had been reported in Sindh during 2025, while

more than 22 rabies-related deaths were recorded in major hospitals. The provincial government said stray dog vaccination and sterilisation campaigns launched under the Sindh Rabies Control Program in 2022 were now operating in 20 districts.

According to officials, more than 25,000 stray dogs have been neutered or spayed, while over 36,900 have been vaccinated through centres operating across the province.

On this occasion, Chief Minister Sindh, Murad Ali Shah, said the provincial government was determined to strengthen both preventive and treatment mechanisms to save precious human lives. "Rabies is a completely preventable disease, and no citizen

should lose their life due to lack of awareness, vaccines, or timely treatment," the chief minister said. The chief minister also paid tribute to late infectious diseases expert Dr. Naseem Salahuddin, describing her as a pioneer of rabies prevention in Pakistan whose lifelong struggle for a "Rabies-Free Pakistan" would continue to inspire future public health initiatives.

"We need humane, scientific, and sustainable measures for stray dog control instead of temporary responses," Murad Shah said.

Pakistan, China celebrate diplomatic ties with renewed commitment to CPEC 2.0

ISLAMABAD (INP) Pakistan and Chinese officials marked the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries at a ceremony in Karachi, reaffirming support for deeper economic and strategic cooperation, including the next phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The event was attended by senior political leaders, diplomats, business executives and military officials from both countries, according to a Gwadar Post's report. Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said the Pakistan-China relationship had remained resilient through regional and global challenges and described the two countries as "iron brothers."

Bitawal said the next phase of CPEC, commonly referred to as CPEC 2.0, would focus

on industrial cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and special economic zones. He also highlighted the role of Sindh and Karachi in trade, investment and connectivity projects involving China.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said the relationship between Islamabad and Beijing remained one of Pakistan's strongest diplomatic partnerships and noted ongoing Chinese investment in transport, energy, industrial and infrastructure projects in Sindh.

In a video message, the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan described the two countries as "all-weather strategic cooperative partners" and said the second phase of CPEC would place greater emphasis on industrialization, advanced manufacturing and economic modernization.

Bitawal said the next phase of CPEC, commonly referred to as CPEC 2.0, would focus

on industrial cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and special economic zones. He also highlighted the role of Sindh and Karachi in trade, investment and connectivity projects involving China.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said the relationship between Islamabad and Beijing remained one of Pakistan's strongest diplomatic partnerships and noted ongoing Chinese investment in transport, energy, industrial and infrastructure projects in Sindh.

In a video message, the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan described the two countries as "all-weather strategic cooperative partners" and said the second phase of CPEC would place greater emphasis on industrialization, advanced manufacturing and economic modernization.

Bitawal said the next phase of CPEC, commonly referred to as CPEC 2.0, would focus

on industrial cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and special economic zones. He also highlighted the role of Sindh and Karachi in trade, investment and connectivity projects involving China.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said the relationship between Islamabad and Beijing remained one of Pakistan's strongest diplomatic partnerships and noted ongoing Chinese investment in transport, energy, industrial and infrastructure projects in Sindh.

In a video message, the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan described the two countries as "all-weather strategic cooperative partners" and said the second phase of CPEC would place greater emphasis on industrialization, advanced manufacturing and economic modernization.

Bitawal said the next phase of CPEC, commonly referred to as CPEC 2.0, would focus

on industrial cooperation, technology transfer, innovation and special economic zones. He also highlighted the role of Sindh and Karachi in trade, investment and connectivity projects involving China.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said the relationship between Islamabad and Beijing remained one of Pakistan's strongest diplomatic partnerships and noted ongoing Chinese investment in transport, energy, industrial and infrastructure projects in Sindh.

Abraham Accords are "unacceptable as they come into collision with our fundamental ideology": Khawaja Asif

ISLAMABAD (INP) Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said that the Abraham Accords are "unacceptable, as they come into collision with our fundamental ideology."

Talking to a private television channel, defence minister denied any progress in this respect, "neither someone has said to us," he replied, while asked about the US State Department or someone else being contacted for it. "Even our passport not carrying the name of Israel," he further said.

Khawaja Asif said the Gaza agreement is still being violated. "How could we sit with those, who are not reliable for a single day?"

Pakistan's defence minister said that President Trump has been successful because of his unconventional approach. "His all peace talks have become successful," U.S. President Donald Trump said on Monday that he asked Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt and Jordan to join the Abraham Accords on "his side to normalize relations with Israel as he tries to negotiate an agreement to end the war with Iran. Pakistan rejected the proposal. None of the other countries has so far publicly responded to Trump's demand and a positive response was unlikely when the public mistrust of Israel in these Muslim nations remains high over the scale of its military offensive in Gaza."

How could we sit with those, who are not reliable for a single day?"

Pakistan's defence minister said that President Trump has been successful because of his unconventional approach. "His all peace



MULTAN: Senate Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani is speaking to media representatives at the shrine of Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed (RA) on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha.

Eid-ul-Adha: Over 1,000 traffic officers, personnel will remain deployed on roads, key intersections

RAWALPINDI, May 26 (INP): Police have finalized a comprehensive security and traffic management plan for Eid-ul-Adha to ensure public safety, maintain a peaceful environment, and keep traffic flowing smoothly across the district during the festive holidays.

According to City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Mehmood Hamdani, more than 3,700 police officers and personnel will perform duties at Eid congregations, public places, and major highways throughout the district to ensure special security and

traffic arrangements have been made for Eid prayers at 736 mosques, 62 Imambarahs, and 60 open grounds to provide citizens with a safe and convenient environment during the auspicious occasion.

To maintain smooth traffic flow across the city, over 1,000 traffic officers and personnel will remain deployed on roads and key intersections.

In addition, 25 special checkpoints have been established to prevent one-way traffic and ensure public safety, where more than 250 officers and

officials will perform duties. Police authorities have also enhanced security at parks, public places, and recreational areas, with more than 350 personnel assigned to these locations. Meanwhile, 277 officers and jawans will perform security duties at graveyards during Eid days.

The CPO further said a special patrolling plan has been devised through police mobiles and motorcycle squads, while more than 43 special pickets have been set up across the district to strengthen security

monitoring. He added that alongside district police, the Elite Force, Ladies Police, Dolphin Force, and Muhafiz Squads will also remain on duty during Eid ul Adha, while senior police officers will personally supervise field operations to ensure effective implementation of the security plan.

According to a spokesperson for Rawalpindi Police, all available resources are being utilized to ensure foolproof security arrangements so citizens can celebrate Eid ul Adha in a peaceful and secure environment.



CHINOT: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Qaiser Ahmad Shaikh, talking to the media persons after offering Eid ul adha prayer in Chinot.

Balochistan Govt Bans Animal Hide Donations to Proscribed Groups Ahead of Eid-ul-Adha

NEWS DESK QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has imposed a ban on donating sacrificial animal hides to proscribed organizations during Eid-ul-Adha 2026. Strict legal action will be taken against violators. A high-level meeting chaired by Mir Sarfraz Bugti reviewed province-wide Eid-ul-Adha security arrangements, sanitation measures, and animal waste disposal plans. The meeting was attended by the Chief Secretary Balochistan, Inspector General of Police, District Commissioners, and the Secretary Local Government, Commissioner Quetta Division, Administrator Quetta, and the CEO of Safa Quetta. Under the Quetta Eid Cleanliness Plan, 15 designated waste collection points have been established across five city zones for the collection of sacrificial animal remains. Officials informed the meeting that approximately 4,294 tons of waste are expected to be generated across Quetta during the three days of Eid-ul-Adha. A comprehensive waste management and sanitation operation plan has been approved, with 9,500 small and heavy machines deployed for garbage collection and disposal activities. The provincial government has also decided to arrange additional machinery on rent for the disposal of animal waste in all district and divisional headquarters across Balochistan. The Eid-ul-Adha Security Plan 2026 has been finalized. Authorities expect Eid prayers to be offered at 54 major Eidgahs and mosques in Quetta. A dedicated Security Monitoring Control Room has been established to oversee law and order during the Eid holidays.



Sacrificial animal remains. Officials informed the meeting that approximately 4,294 tons of waste are expected to be generated across Quetta during the three days of Eid-ul-Adha.

A comprehensive waste management and sanitation operation plan has been approved, with 9,500 small and heavy machines deployed for garbage collection and disposal activities. The provincial government has also decided to arrange additional machinery on rent for the disposal of animal waste in all district and divisional headquarters across Balochistan. The Eid-ul-Adha Security Plan 2026 has been finalized. Authorities expect Eid prayers to be offered at 54 major Eidgahs and mosques in Quetta. A dedicated Security Monitoring Control Room has been established to oversee law and order during the Eid holidays.

Safa Quetta teams will collect sacrificial animal waste from 15 designated locations across the provincial capital. A separate Sanitation Control Room has also been activated to ensure the timely collection and disposal of animal remains throughout Eid-ul-Adha. Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti directed authorities to intensify the public awareness campaign regarding proper disposal of sacrificial

waste and maintaining cleanliness during Eid. Divisional Commissioners, DIGs, Deputy Commissioners, and DPOs have been instructed to ensure effective coordination and smooth implementation of all Eid-related arrangements. The Chief Minister directed the Inspector General of Police to ensure foolproof security at Eidgahs and mosques across the province, particularly in district headquarters. "Residents should witness a visible and positive improvement in cleanliness and civic awareness campaign in other major cities during Eid-ul-Adha," the Chief Minister stated. Assistant Commissioners have been instructed to use mosque and Eidgah loudspeakers to encourage public participation in the province-wide Eid cleanliness and sanitation campaign.

Quetta Administration Temporarily Bans Public Entry to Picnic Spots Ahead of Wrestling Event

Staff Reporter: QUETTA: The district administration of Quetta has announced a temporary ban on public access to several major picnic points and tourist destinations across the district, citing the current law and order situation and security arrangements for an upcoming event. According to an official notification issued by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Quetta, the restrictive measures have been put in place by the administration specifically in view of the scheduled wrestling event and broader security protocols in the



The temporary ban applies with immediate effect to the following popular recreational and tourist sites located on the outskirts of Quetta: Hanna Urak, Hanna Lake, and Sra Khula.

capitol city. The temporary ban applies with immediate effect to the following popular recreational and tourist sites located on the outskirts of Quetta: Hanna Urak, Hanna Lake, and Sra Khula. Administrative officials stated that the suspension of public entry is a precautionary

step aimed at maintaining peace and ensuring foolproof security ahead of the high-profile wrestling match. Law enforcement agencies have been directed to strictly implement the DC's directives. Additional security personnel and checkpoints have been stationed on the routes leading to these recreational spots to monitor movement and prevent public gatherings. Citizens, families, and tourists planning weekend excursions or routine visits to these areas are advised to suspend their travel plans and cooperate with the local administration until the security clearance is given and the restrictions are formally lifted. For the latest developments, official administrative notifications, and comprehensive local coverage on this story visit the link in the comments section below.

Provincial Minister Ali Madad Jatak Pays Tribute to Pakistan's Nuclear Achievements on Youm-e-Takbeer

QUETTA: Ali Madad Jatak, in his special message on Youm-e-Takbeer, said that May 28 marks a historic and unforgettable day in Pakistan's history when the country conducted nuclear tests and demonstrated to the world that the Pakistani nation would never compromise on its sovereignty, security, and defense. He added that due to the vision of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the determination of national leadership, the contributions of renowned scientists—

especially Abdul Qadeer Khan—and the sacrifices of the armed forces, Pakistan became the first nuclear power in the Muslim world and the seventh nuclear state globally. Ali Madad Jatak said that the nuclear tests conducted in the mountains of Chagai crushed the hostile intentions of enemies and made the country's defense invincible. He further remarked that the day serves as a source of pride, determination, and renewed national commitment for the entire nation. According to him, the people of Pakistan stand shoulder to

shoulder with the country's brave armed forces and national security institutions like a solid wall. The provincial minister emphasized that every Pakistani must move forward with unity, harmony, and patriotism for the security, stability, and development of the country. Including his message, Ali Madad Jatak said that Youm-e-Takbeer teaches the lesson that united nations can overcome every challenge, and that Pakistan will always remain a strong, dignified, and unconquerable state. P a k i s t a n Zindabad," he added.

Kalat Celebrates Youm-e-Takbeer with Patriotic Rallies and Ceremonies

KALAT: Like the rest of the country, Kalat celebrated Youm-e-Takbeer with great national enthusiasm and patriotic spirit. A grand rally was organized under the leadership of Munir Ahmed Durran, which started from the DC Complex and witnessed participation from heads of various government departments and a large number of citizens from Kalat. Participants of the rally carried Pakistani flags and banners expressing national pride and solidarity. Effective security arrangements were made by the police force to ensure the peaceful conduct of the rally. On the occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer, the district administra-

tion also organized a special ceremony at the District Council Hall. During the event, students delivered speeches, presented national songs, and performed skits highlighting patriotism and love for the country. The students received appreciation for their outstanding performances and passionate expression of devotion to Pakistan. Addressing the ceremony, the Deputy Commissioner Munir Ahmed Durran said that Youm-e-Takbeer teaches the nation the values of unity, solidarity, and patriotism. He added that the day reminds the country of the sacrifices, determination, and tireless efforts of Pakistan's scientists, armed forces, and political and military

leadership who made Pakistan a nuclear power and elevated the pride of the Muslim world. He further stated that the occasion should inspire the nation to renew its commitment toward the country's development, stability, and peace. He urged citizens to play their role in making Pakistan a strong, prosperous, and stable state. The Deputy Commissioner also advised the younger generation to learn about national history and dedicate themselves to serving the country through education, character, and hard work. The ceremony concluded with special prayers for the peace, progress, prosperity, and security of Pakistan.

Nasirabad Deputy Commissioner Celebrates Eid-ul-Adha with Prisoners and Patients

NASIRABAD: Zulfikar Ali Karrar set an example of compassion, humanity, and public service during Eid-ul-Adha by spending the festive occasion with prisoners in hospital patients in Nasirabad. Acting on the directives of Mir Sarfraz Bugti, the Deputy Commissioner first visited the Eidgahs and mosques to review security arrangements and other administrative measures.

He further monitored sanitation operations related to the disposal of sacrificial animal waste across the city. Bahadur Khan Khoso and Personal Secretary Manzoor Ahmed Shirazi accompanied him during the visits. The Deputy Commissioner first visited the District Jail Dera Murad Jamali, where he met inmates, listened to their concerns, and extended

Eid greetings to them. Addressing the prisoners, he said that Eid is a festival of happiness, compassion, sacrifice, and sharing the pain and hardships of others. On the occasion, he distributed biryani among the inmates, who appreciated the humanitarian gesture of the district administration. Later, Deputy Commissioner Zulfikar Ali Karrar visited the Civil Hospital

Dera Murad Jamali, where he inquired about the health of patients admitted in various wards. He also distributed sweets among patients and their attendants and conveyed Eid greetings to them. Patients and their family members praised the Deputy Commissioner's thoughtful visit and encouragement on Eid day, stating that the administration's caring

attitude brought them comfort and happiness during difficult times. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that Eid-ul-Adha teaches the values of sacrifice, compassion, love, and service to humanity, adding that including unprivileged, sick, and struggling individuals in moments of joy is a collective social responsibility.

Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail Pays Tribute to Pakistan's Nuclear Achievement on Youm-e-Takbeer

QUETTA: Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, in his message on Youm-e-Takbeer, said that the nation is reminded of the power of unity and determination when reflecting on the remarkable achievements made by Pakistan's scientists, armed forces, and political and military leadership who made Pakistan a nuclear power and elevated the pride of the Muslim world. He further stated that the occasion should inspire the nation to renew its commitment toward the country's development, stability, and peace. He urged citizens to play their role in making Pakistan a strong, prosperous, and stable state. The Deputy Commissioner also advised the younger generation to learn about national history and dedicate themselves to serving the country through education, character, and hard work. The ceremony concluded with special prayers for the peace, progress, prosperity, and security of Pakistan.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining unity and harmony among the entire nation and all provinces of Pakistan. Looking toward the future, the Governor urged the nation to renew its commitment to the country's development, prosperity, and sustainable security. He called upon every citizen to play an active role in strengthening Pakistan and contributing toward national progress and stability.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining unity and harmony among the entire nation and all provinces of Pakistan. Looking toward the future, the Governor urged the nation to renew its commitment to the country's development, prosperity, and sustainable security. He called upon every citizen to play an active role in strengthening Pakistan and contributing toward national progress and stability.

Loralai Municipal Committee Launches Extensive Eid-ul-Adha Cleanliness Operation

LORALAI: Following the vision of Mir Sarfraz Bugti and the special directives of Wali Muhammad Barseeh, a large-scale cleanliness operation is actively underway across Loralai during Eid-ul-Adha under the supervision of Tahir Khan Nasir and Muhebbullah Baloch. The staff of the Municipal Committee Loralai remained active day and night during the Eid holidays to ensure a clean, healthy, and pleasant environment for citizens. Sanitation teams carried out operations in various zones of the city and promptly removed sacrificial waste and garbage from several areas, including Al-Falah Mosque, Wakeel Ayaz Mosque, Ameer Zaman Ground, Sabzi Mandi Bakhma Mohalla, and Saleh Colony, Leves Line Girls College Road,

priority of the municipal committee. Chief Officer Muhebbullah Baloch praised the performance of sanitation workers and directed that the cleanliness drive continue uninterrupted throughout the Eid holidays to keep the city neat and beautiful. Citizens appreciated the timely efforts of the Municipal Committee and the dedication of field staff, saying that sanitation arrangements this Eid appeared far more organized and effective compared to previous years. The Municipal Committee Loralai also appealed to residents to place sacrificial waste and garbage at designated locations and cooperate with sanitation workers to help make the "Clean Loralai, Beautiful Loralai" campaign successful.

Chief Officer Muhebbullah Baloch praised the performance of sanitation workers and directed that the cleanliness drive continue uninterrupted throughout the Eid holidays to keep the city neat and beautiful. Citizens appreciated the timely efforts of the Municipal Committee and the dedication of field staff, saying that sanitation arrangements this Eid appeared far more organized and effective compared to previous years. The Municipal Committee Loralai also appealed to residents to place sacrificial waste and garbage at designated locations and cooperate with sanitation workers to help make the "Clean Loralai, Beautiful Loralai" campaign successful.

Assistant Commissioner Barkhan Conducts Surprise Visit to DHQ Hospital on Eid-ul-Adha

BARKHAN: On the special directives of Saeed ur Rehman Kakar, Ahsanuddin Kakar carried out a surprise inspection of the District Headquarters Hospital Barkhan on the first day of Eid-ul-Adha. During the visit, the Assistant Commissioner checked the attendance of doctors, paramedical staff, and other hospital employees while also inspecting different departments of the hospital. During the inspection, he took notice of the absence of several employees and expressed strong displeasure over the matter. The names of the absent staff members were noted for further action. Assistant Com-

missioner Ahsanuddin Kakar directed the District Health Officer (DHO) to immediately initiate departmental proceedings against the absent employees. He emphasized that providing timely and quality healthcare facilities to the public during the Eid holidays remains the top priority of the district administration and that no negligence or carelessness would be tolerated. He further instructed the hospital administration to keep emergency services fully operational and ensure that all medical staff perform their duties responsibly so that patients can receive immediate medical assistance in any emergency situation.

Deputy Commissioner Usta Muhammad Visits THQ Hospital to Review Eid-ul-Adha Emergency Arrangements

USTAMUHMMAD: Officials closely monitored the ongoing hospital services to ensure that quality healthcare facilities are being provided to the public without interruption during Eid-ul-Adha. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ramzan Palal also visited the THQ Hospital Usta Muhammad to review healthcare arrangements and emergency preparedness during the Eid holidays. During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner, accompanied by the DHO, inspected various departments of the hospital, particularly the emergency ward. He reviewed the medical facilities being provided to patients, availability of medicines, cleanliness conditions, and attendance of medical staff on duty.

Deputy Commissioner Usta Muhammad visited the THQ Hospital Usta Muhammad to review healthcare arrangements and emergency preparedness during the Eid holidays. During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner, accompanied by the DHO, inspected various departments of the hospital, particularly the emergency ward. He reviewed the medical facilities being provided to patients, availability of medicines, cleanliness conditions, and attendance of medical staff on duty.

He also met with the attendants of patients and sought feedback regarding the facilities available at the hospital, to which the attendants repeatedly expressed satisfaction. During the inspection, he also met with the attendants of patients and sought feedback regarding the facilities available at the hospital, to which the attendants repeatedly expressed satisfaction. During the inspection, he also met with the attendants of patients and sought feedback regarding the facilities available at the hospital, to which the attendants repeatedly expressed satisfaction.

Oil prices bounce higher after new US strikes on Iran

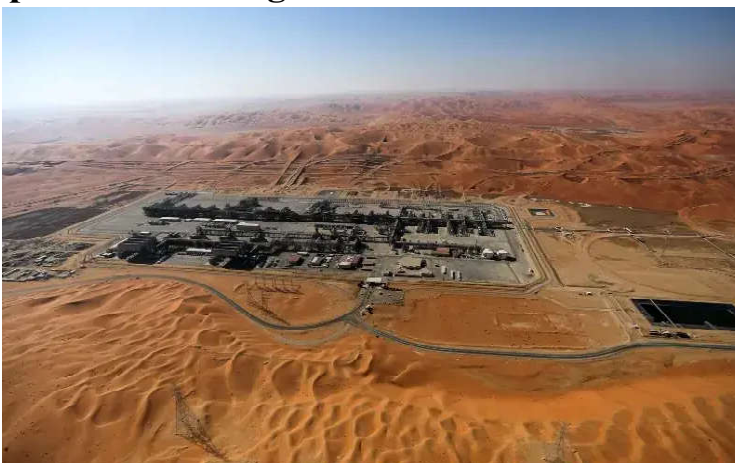
NEWS DESK: Oil prices bounced higher on Thursday while Asian stocks mostly fell, as new US strikes on Iran marked the latest test of a shaky ceasefire in the Middle East war.

The price jumps erased much of Wednesday's declines on the hopes of an imminent deal to end the conflict that has to be halted shipping through the crucial Strait of Hormuz for months.

An American official said the military had shot down four Iranian drones and struck a control centre in the southern city of Bandar Abbas.

The official, speaking to AFP on condition of anonymity, described the latest actions as "measured, purely defensive, and intended to maintain the ceasefire".

Tehran's state media said Iranian forces had fired at four ships in the strait, while Kuwait said its air defences were responding to missile and drone attacks. The developments came despite an Iranian official saying



Oil prices bounced higher on Thursday while Asian stocks mostly fell, as new US strikes on Iran marked the latest test of a shaky ceasefire in the Middle East war.

Tomato, onion and flour rates surge

NEWS DESK: After paying higher prices for sacrificial animals to fulfil a religious obligation, consumers now face another challenge in finding extra cash to buy high-demand vegetables and flour ahead of Eidul Azha.

Retailers have increased the price of onions by Rs20 per kg as demand usually rises for its extensive use in preparing Eid-related meat dishes.

Consumers are paying Rs100 per kg for good-quality onions, compared with Rs80 per kg a few days ago.

A good-quality tomato is now priced at Rs180-200 per kg, compared with Rs70-100 in the middle of this month, and Rs50-80 per kg earlier this month.

Falahi Anjuman Wholesale Vegetable Market, New Subzi Mandi, President Haji Shahjahan said the

Sindh onion crop is nearing its end, while demand is being met by crops from Punjab and Balochistan.

Wholesale prices lag retail hikes; traders blame low arrivals and transport priority for sacrificial animals.

He said retailers are fully cashing in on the high demand for onions, as the wholesale rate is no more than Rs50 per kg.

In tomatoes and onions, slow arrival from the producing areas of Sindh and Balochistan is another reason for the price hike, as transporters were more inclined to transport sacrificial animals from up country.

Prices of ginger and garlic have risen by Rs50 per 250 grams. Consumers may see a price hike in vegetables in the next one or two days due to the closure of Super High-

way Sabzi Mandi for the Eid holidays.

Vegetable exports full Exports of onion and potato, which account for a large share of total vegetable exports, have plunged sharply, having a significant negative impact on overall vegetable exports.

According to data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), overall vegetable exports during 10MFY26 stood at 504,235 tonnes (\$141 million), down 60pc in quantity and 56pc in value year on year.

All Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association Patron-in-Chief Waheed Ahmed said the closure of the Afghan border has adversely affected exports of onion and potato to CIS countries.

Arrangements have been made to send vegetable shipments via

Iran to CIS countries, but this has increased shipment times to 15-20 days, up from one week previously.

The rest of the damage to exports, he said, was caused by the US-Israel war on Iran, severely affecting exports to the Middle East and other countries. The war has led to an increase in sea freight rates by shipping companies to \$8,000 per 40 ft container, up from \$1,500 prior to the war.

Flour Consumers are also paying higher prices for various flour varieties despite the arrival of new crops in March/April.

The wheat rate is now Rs107 per kg, compared with Rs99 per kg in the first week of March. The rate for a 20 kg wheat flour bag and one kg of fine flour is Rs2,500-2,700 and Rs141-57, compared with Rs2,200-2,500 and Rs136.89 prevailing in the first week of March.

A flour miller said flour prices are rising due to higher wheat prices in the open market.

He said growers have become more aware of how to make money, as they are releasing limited wheat stocks this year, whereas they sold the grain much earlier last year and fetched low prices. The middleman is also active in the wheat trade.



Fast-Moving Consumer Goods sector faces tax strain

NEWS DESK: The withholding and advance tax system of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is creating difficulties and administrative complications for the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, particularly the food industry, said Hyderabad SITE Association of Trade and Industry Chairman Zubair Ghangra.

In a statement on Tuesday, he said that this system was practically creating unnecessary pressure on various stages of the supply chain which was affecting the pace of industrial activities.

He said that a large part of the retail market in Pakistan still consisted of unregistered shopkeepers, due to which the tax burden was mainly shifted to manufacturer,



wholesalers and distributors. As a result of this imbalance, he said, not only has the cost of doing business increased, but disproportionate pressure has been increasing on the organised and registered sector.

He said that ease of doing business was being affected and that additional pressure was being placed on low-margin items, which ultimately affected both consumers and the economy.

He added that the system was indirectly strengthening the informal economy, as unregistered market players remained outside the tax net, while the burden fell on registered entities. It was not possible to establish an effective and fair tax system without removing this imbalance.

Islamabad plans oil reserves, storage push

NEWS DESK: Pakistan plans to boost domestic storage for crude oil and refined products to increase its energy security, according to a government document that was shared with oil producers and some of the world's leading trading firms.

Despite depending on supplies through the Strait of Hormuz for up to 90 per cent of its oil and liquefied natural gas imports, Pakistan has no strategic petroleum reserves.

That has left it exposed to supply shocks provoked by the Iran war, even as its lending programme with the International Monetary Fund limits room for costly state-owned emergency stocks.

According to the document reviewed by Reuters, the energy ministry is proposing to build strategic petroleum reserves as well as commercial storage through bonded terminals, refineries and oil marketing companies. It is also pushing for more oil and gas exploration and production, upgrades to its refineries and a consolidation of its downstream sector.

Govt plans to cut reliance on Hormuz im-

ports

"Pakistan's oil security requires both emergency reserves and stronger local supply capacity," the ministry said in the document.

It shared the proposed framework with Saudi Aramco, Abu Dhabi National Oil Corp, Kuwait Petroleum Corp, QatarEnergy and PetroChina and oil trading firms Vitol and Trafigura and storage operator Vopak.

Trafigura, Vitol and Aramco declined to comment. The other companies and Pakistan's petroleum ministry did not respond to requests for comment.

Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik said last week that building reserves was "easier

said than done", especially for a country in an IMF programme with severe fiscal challenges, but added the government was trying to move quickly from planning to implementation.

Energy infrastructure Under the bonded storage plan, international suppliers and traders would be allowed to hold petroleum stocks, creating commercial inventories that could support domestic supply during emergencies.

The government could also allow companies to store fuel for re-export. The document did not spell out details such as incentives, pricing, tax, foreign exchange, offtake or ownership terms, or whether

companies would be expected to invest in storage infrastructure.

The ministry wants the bonded storage framework for suppliers to be finalised by June.

In addition to its lack of strategic reserves, the document cited constrained port infrastructure, limited ship-to-ship capacity and insufficient storage among Pakistan's vulnerabilities.

The build-up of the government's own strategic reserves would be paid for by a ring-fenced fund financed by Rs10 per litre from the existing levy on petroleum, with allocations to start on July 1. The document says that allocation would generate about \$700 million a year.



Three-year biotech policy drafted

NEWS DESK: Following a historic slump in cotton harvest, the Ministry of National Food Security and Research has drawn up a draft three-year National Agricultural Biotechnology Policy (NABP) - 2025 aimed at enhancing the production of crops while aligning local farming practices with international standards.

A few years ago, Pakistan registered an annual cotton production of just five million bales, the lowest in the past 40 years and compared to the historical average of 16 million bales, the lowest in the past 40 years and compared to the historical average of 16 million bales, the lowest in the past 40 years and compared to the historical average of 16 million bales.

Textile mills running in the country require about 16 million bales every year to produce various types of products.

Farmers endured the lowest cotton harvest during the tenure of the earlier Pakistan government (PML-N) government. Before that, the output dropped to nine million bales.

PML-N administrations are considered pro-industrialists while they seem to pay less attention to the farming community. The Special Investment Facilitation Council, an investment promotion body, in 2023

directed the food ministry to draft a biotechnology policy, which was finalised and approved in 2026.

During discussions in a cabinet meeting, its members were apprised that many countries had already prepared biotechnology policies and, therefore, it was imperative that Pakistan should also formulate a similar policy for the promotion of genetically modified crops, which would enable the country to take advantage of the opportunities arising from latest advancements in the field, while protecting against risks associated with genetic engineering.

The cabinet, after comprehensive deliberations on the matter and keeping in view the submissions made, approved the proposed National Agricultural Biotechnology Policy (NABP) - 2025.

The Ministry of National Food Security informed the forum that agricultural biotechnology was significantly transforming global farming practices, with genetically modified (GM) crops now covering nearly 3% of the world's arable land. It said that Pakistan possessed strong potential

in the field, supported by a sizeable pool of scientific expertise, an established regulatory framework and well-equipped biotechnology research centres.

After preparing an initial draft, another committee was set up under the leadership of the National Seed Development and Regulatory Authority chairperson on April 22, 2025, which comprised technical experts, to refine and improve the draft policy.

The food security ministry told the cabinet that a consultative meeting of the second committee was held on May 7, 2025, where the draft National Agricultural Biotechnology Policy (NABP) - 2025 was finalised for submission to the federal cabinet.

Subsequently, a meeting was held with provincial secretaries on June 2, 2025, chaired by the food security ministry secretary to evaluate the draft policy, following the direction which the secretary issued directives on the annual biotechnology component of the policy and to organise a consultative session with private-sector stakeholders regarding the policy implementation.

Consequently, two focused consultations were held.

market capitalisation, placing it alongside regional tech heavyweights Samsung Electronics and TSMC, as well as US chipmaker Micron.

The tech surge has coincided with a persistent spike in energy prices, which has threatened several major Asian economies that rely on oil shipments from the Middle East. Economists warn that central banks may have to raise interest rates if inflation worsens as a result of the war, increasing borrowing costs and potentially weighing on economic growth.

On Wednesday, "every headline pulled the market in a different direction, leaving traders with the same conclusion they have been wrestling with for weeks", said Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management. "The Strait may eventually reopen fully, but until there is something more concrete than draft frameworks and political theatre, every bar remains hostage to headline volatility, even if sub-\$100," he said.

Shanghai ticked 0.3pc lower. Taipei's main index gained more than one percent, while Tokyo was flat at the midday break. The declines came after a strong day for global stocks on

Wednesday, as investors, bullish on artificial intelligence, looked past the conflicting headlines on Iran.

In Asia, South Korean chipmaker SK hynix hit a \$1 trillion

Mike Hesson defends selection decisions as Pakistan eye World Cup build-up

NEWS DESK: Pakistan's white-ball head coach Mike Hesson on Monday defended the team management's recent selection decisions and insisted the national side was making "real good progress" in limited-overs cricket despite criticism following a turbulent few months for Pakistan cricket.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the national training camp at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium ahead of the upcoming three-match ODI series against Australia, Hesson said Pakistan's white-ball setup should not be judged through the lens of the national team's struggles in other formats.

Pakistan host Australia in Rawalpindi and Lahore from May 30 to June 4 in a series being viewed as part of the team's preparations for the 2027 ODI World Cup.

"Most of the players weren't even involved in red-ball cricket," Hesson said when asked whether



recent Test setbacks had affected morale in the ODI camp. "We've been training in Lahore for the last 10 days, played a number of warm-up games and have been very much focused on this series."

The former New Zealand coach said Pakistan had shown encouraging signs in white-ball cricket over the past year and stressed that performances in one format should not dictate perceptions in another.

"There's confidence in terms of our white-ball cricket," he said. "We've made really good progress in the last 12 months."

Hesson also responded to criticism surrounding the omission of wicket-keeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan from the ODI squad, clarifying that the move was part of a broader attempt to assess combinations ahead of the next World Cup cycle.

Pakistan recently named a 16-member squad for the Australia series led by

Shaheer Shah Afridi, with Babar Azam among several senior players returning, while Rizwan was left out.

Hesson rejected suggestions that Rizwan had been unfairly sidelined, pointing out that the wicket-keeper had already been out of Pakistan's T20 plans before his arrival as coach.

"Rizwan was still in the [Bangladesh ODI] squad," Hesson said. "But in 18 months' time we have

a World Cup, so we need to look at the options we have from a keeping point of view."

The coach revealed that the management had identified powerplay bowling and middle-order batting as two key areas requiring improvement. "Taking wickets in the powerplay is

something we haven't been particularly good at over the last 12 months," he said. "In batting, increasing the strike-rate through the middle overs is definitely an area where we need to improve."

Hesson added that Pakistan were looking to develop more seam-bowling all-rounders for overseas conditions, naming uncapped fast-bowling all-rounder Ahmed Daniyal among players being monitored closely.

The coach also confirmed that Salman Ali Agha had effectively been serving as the team's vice-captain during recent tours, although no formal public announcement had been made.

Pakistan enter the Australia series after a mixed run in ODI cricket, including a 2-1 defeat in Bangladesh earlier this year, but Hesson insisted the current rebuilding phase required patience as the management assessed younger players ahead of a demanding international cycle.

Scotland seek history on World Cup return

NEWS DESK: Scotland return to the game at a goal in World Cup for 28 years determined not to just make up the numbers as Steve Clarke's side aim to finally end generations of group-stage heartbreak.

In 12 previous attempts at major tournaments Scotland have fallen short of making the knockout stage.

However, the new format at the first ever 48-team finals offers hope that hex can be broken despite a difficult draw.

An opener against Caribbean minnows Haiti in Boston is a must-win in the eyes of the thousands of fans heading across the Atlantic with the might of African champions Morocco and five-time winners Brazil to come in Group C.

Even defeat in their final two games might not be fatal for the Scots' chances if they can put Haiti to the sword in style as eight of the 12 third-placed teams progress to the final 32.

For an experienced core that includes Liverpool's Andy Robertson, Aston Villa captain John McGinn and Napoli's Scott McTominay, this could be their one and only chance to make an impact on the World Cup.

All three have played a massive role in getting their country to three major tournaments in the past five years after

midfielder and McGinn with only five members under the age of 26.

But one of the few youngsters, Bournemouth's 20-year-old Ben Gannon-Doak, will be crucial to add much-needed pace and guile in the final third.

"My whole generation doesn't really remember it and now we get to lead our country to a World Cup. It'll be one of the proudest things I've ever done in my career," said Robertson, a Champions League and Premier League winner with Liverpool.

"We've been very fortunate to qualify for two Euros, but the World Cup is a step up from that."

The Tartan Army are dreaming that this time the players also step up and give them something to savour.



Greek swimmer cashes in with 'world record' at Enhanced Games

NEWS DESK: Greek swimmer Kristian Gkolomeev earned a \$1 million bonus for beating a world record while sprinter Fred Kerley won a weak 100 metres as the drug-friendly Enhanced Games made a hyper-bolic debut at a casino park in Las Vegas on Sunday.

Gkolomeev, who failed to make the podium in four Olympics, posted a time of 20.81 seconds in the 50 metres freestyle, 0.07 seconds faster than the official world record held by Australia's Cameron McEvoy.

The time in the final event of the Enhanced programme will not make official record books because competitors' re-

sults are considered illegal by global sporting authorities.

The Enhanced Games endorses athletes who use substances banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), while the swimmers are also allowed to wear polyurethane "super-suits" banned in 2010.

That did not stop organisers from hailing Gkolomeev's "world record" swim.

The Greek also earned a \$1 million "world record" bonus last year for a swim of 20.89 seconds in a super-suit, organisers said at the time.

Gkolomeev heaved his young son in the air and caught him as he

celebrated with his family by the Las Vegas pool, having also banked \$250,000 for winning the race.

Life-changing money.

"Great race. I had a lot of fun. This is amazing," said the Bulgarian-born 32-year-old.

"I had a mistake on the break-out and I got a little bit nervous, but then the rest of the swimming was good, so I got it."

"I'm going to say it's not bad at all," he added of the prize money.

"This is going to change my life for the good, for sure."

"It's a big help for me and my family. And yeah, I'm going to continue next year. Maybe



Marsh out of Pakistan ODIs, Inglis to captain Australia

NEWS DESK: Australia captain Mitchell Marsh has been ruled out of the one-day international series in Pakistan after picking up an ankle injury while playing in the Indian Premier League.

Josh Inglis will take over as captain after Marsh sat out Lucknow Super Giants' final game on Saturday and flew back to Australia for treatment.

Marsh joins regular 50-over captain Pat Cummins in missing the three-match series that starts on Saturday in Rawalpindi.

Cummins is playing for Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL playoffs this week.

"Marsh will remain in Perth for further assessment and treatment until further notice," said Cricket Australia late Tuesday.



"His availability for the white ball tour of Bangladesh will be determined in due course."

Third-choice captain Travis Head was not picked for the Pakistan tour because of IPL commitments, meaning fourth-choice Inglis will take the reins.

The wicketkeeper has captained Australia only once before, also against Pakistan, in Perth in November 2024.

After the ODI series in Pakistan, Australia will play three one-day internationals in Bangladesh starting on June 9 followed by three T20 internationals.

"All three ODIs are scheduled to begin at 4:30pm local time, with the toss taking place at 4pm," the press release said.

Iran says FIFA promised players will get World Cup visas

NEWS DESK: Iran's sports minister said FIFA has promised the country's men's football team will receive visas to play in the United States at the World Cup this summer despite the ongoing conflict for months, local media reported on Monday.

Iran's participation at the global spectacle has been in question for months because it is being co-hosted by the US, which along with Israel began bombing Iran on February 28, sparking a wider regional war.

"The FIFA president promised us that all our players would receive visas. There is no reason why our players should not receive visas," said minister Ahmad Donyamali, quoted by local news agency ISNA.

"I hope that all the conditions will be met so that the national team can participate in the tournament in a calm and orderly manner."



The Iranian squad will now be based in Tijuana on the Mexican border with the United States during the tournament, according to the Islamic republic's football federation.

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum on Monday said the country will allow Iran to be based there to avoid US visa restrictions.

Sports minister Donyamali said the World Cup hosts had an obligation to provide visas to all participating countries, including for players and backroom staff.

"In Mexico, the Iranian national team is expected to obtain multiple-entry visas issued by the United States," he said.

At the global football body's congress in Vancouver last month, president Gianni Infantino said Iran would play their World Cup games in the US as scheduled.

The Iran team are currently preparing in Antalya, southern Turkey, and some of the squad went to the US embassy in Ankara on Thursday to submit visa applications for the World Cup.

The tournament, jointly hosted by the US, Mexico and Canada, kicks off on June 11.

Iran have been drawn in Group G and will play their first two matches in Los Angeles.

They open their campaign against New Zealand on June 15 and will then face Belgium on June 21 before rounding off their group games against Egypt in Seattle on June 26.

