

DAILY MIRROR

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Balochistan Assembly Condemns Kalat Terrorist Attack, Adopts Resolution

APP

QUETTA: The Balochistan Assembly unanimously passed a resolution condemning the terrorist attack in Kalat, which claimed the lives of 18 soldiers. The resolution was moved by Mir Zahoor Buledi, Minister for Planning and Development and a Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) lawmaker.

Speaking in the assembly, Mir Zahoor Buledi strongly denounced the attack, stating that terrorists, acting on foreign directives, targeted security forces in Kalat and Bostan. He vowed that the perpetrators would not escape justice.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti also addressed the house, emphasizing that national security must take precedence over politics. He condemned the violence in Kalat and Turbat, calling it an attempt to spread fear among the Baloch people. While he supported dialogue, he insisted it must occur within Pakistan's constitutional framework.

The CM said that he is ready to give an in-camera briefing to all member of the

assembly regarding the law and order situation and other issues of the province saying that we should not do anything beyond the constitution and law.

My politics is not more important than Pakistan. Everyone will have to think about the future of the country, I am ready to give a briefing to the opposition and members of the assembly regarding the peace and tranquility of the province, he noted.

Lawmaker Meena Majeed Baloch expressed deep sorrow over the loss of soldiers, reaffirming that such cowardly attacks would not weaken Pakistan's resolve.

"The entire nation stands with our security forces. We will not allow terrorists to sabotage peace in Balochistan," she said, stressing the need for intelligence-based operations.

Noor Muhammad Dumar also condemned the attack, assuring that the sacrifices of security forces would not go in vain. "We must ensure our security personnel receive all necessary support to combat terrorism effectively," he urged, calling on political parties to unite against extremism.



Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to review Law and Order situation in Balochistan, in Quetta .

Pakistan needs unity more than ever: PM

"This is not the time for politics but we have to tackle this national challenge first, then we can engage in politics." Shehbaz

APP

QUETTA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday saluted the sacrifices of the armed forces and said that Pakistan needed unity now more than ever before in its 78-year history.

His remarks came after 18 soldiers were martyred and 23 terrorists were killed in various sanitisation operations across Balochistan on Friday. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the military's media wing, said that the operations took place in the districts of Harnai and Kalat.

Speaking at a meeting in Quetta today, PM Shehbaz said: "I think today, in our 78 years, we are in need of unity the most. This is not the time for politics but we have to tackle this national

challenge first, and we can engage in politics [later]."

"In the attacks ... in which 23 khwarj were sent to hell and 18 soldiers embraced martyrdom, I feel this was the ultimate sacrifice during this new wave of terrorism,"

the prime minister said, using the state's official term for terrorists.

He said that the nation saluted "the martyrs and the ghazis (warriors)" and stood with them completely, adding that he visited the injured today at the hospital.

"They were in high spirits and they said, 'We are getting the best hospital facilities here and if we have had to sacrifice a limb, it's not an issue as we would have sacrificed our lives for the nation as well,'" he continued.

CJP Afridi welcomes transfer of judges to IHC, hails 'fair chance' for provinces

INP

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi on Monday welcomed the transfer of judges to the Islamabad High Court (IHC) amid opposition from the capital's legal fraternity, terming the move a "fair chance" for judges from other provinces.

President Asif Ali Zardari on Saturday approved the transfer of one judge each from the high courts of Lahore, Balochistan and Sindh to the IHC, despite opposition from five IHC judges. They had warned in a letter to top judges that any such move would "violate constitutional procedures and judicial norms".

The CJP's remarks come as the Islamabad Bar Council, Islamabad High Court Bar Association, and Islamabad District Bar Association observed a strike in the district courts and the IHC today to protest what they called "unconstitutional measures" undermining the judiciary and legal profession. During the oath-taking ceremony of the Press Association of the Supreme Court (PAS), CJP Afridi — while welcoming the transfer of judges — said that the IHC was not part of any.

Imran Khan pens letter to COAS Munnir to 'revise policies'

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has penned a letter to Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munnir to "revise the policies".

Speaking to media outside Adiala Jail, Imran Khan's lawyer, Faisal Chaudhry, stated that the PTI founder sent a six-point letter to the army chief as former prime minister and party leader.

Faisal Chaudhry stated that Imran Khan requested the army chief to revise the policies. The letter also includes content on the country's fraudulent elections, the 26th Constitutional Amendment, PECA law, state terrorism against PTI, the constitutional responsi-

bilities of intelligence agencies, and the national economic situation.

According to Faisal Chaudhry, the letter mentions that a gap is growing between the army and the nation,

primarily due to the establishment's policies. It further states that the establishment has sided with those who have benefited from NROs twice, leading to public resentment.

According to Faisal Chaudhry, the first point in the letter concerns fraudulent elections and the victory of money launderers. The second point addresses the 26th Constitutional Amendment, the rule of law, and the impact on the judiciary.

'Nation, armed forces stand together to eliminate terrorism'

APP

QUETTA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said the nation and the armed forces stand together to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country.

He made the remarks during a visit to CMH Quetta where he inquired about the health of the security personnel injured while fighting against terrorists in Kalat and other districts of Balochistan.

Interacting with the injured and declaring them heroes of the nation, the Prime Minister praised their spirit of sacrifice for the country and their unwavering commitment to protecting the homeland. He said as long as the protection of the nation is entrusted to such brave soldiers, the

enemy can never dare to look at Pakistan with an evil eye.

Shehbaz Sharif said the elements spreading terror and chaos in Balochistan are enemies of the province's progress. He said the security forces are working tirelessly to eliminate militants and safeguard the people of Balochistan. The nefarious designs of those who are enemies of peace, development and prosperity in Balochistan will never succeed.

Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar and Minister for Power Awais Leghari also accompanied the Prime Minister during the visit.

Pakistan, SFD sign \$1.61 billion agreements to boost economic cooperation

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and the Chief Executive Officer of Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), Sultan Abdulrahman Al-Marshad, witnessed the signing of two significant agreements between Pakistan and SFD, valued at \$1.61 billion.

The agreements were signed on Monday, further strengthening bilateral economic cooperation between the two nations.

The agreements include a deferred payment facility for oil imports from Saudi Arabia worth \$1.20 billion, to be paid over one year, and a concessional loan agreement for the construction of a gravity-flow water scheme at Mansehra in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, amounting to \$41 million.

The agreements were signed by Dr. Kazim Niaz, Secretary of the Economic Affairs Division, and Sultan Abdulrahman Al-Marshad, CEO of SFD, on behalf of their respective governments.

The ceremony was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, along with federal ministers and the Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan, Nawaf bin Saif Al-Malki.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed his approval of the Oil Import Financing Facility, which will allow Pakistan to receive oil on deferred payments for one year. He emphasised that this agreement will strengthen Pakistan's economic resilience by securing a stable petroleum supply while easing fiscal pressures.

Omar Ayub slams govt, announces black day protest on Feb 8

INP

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and National Assembly Opposition Leader, Omar Ayub, has lashed out at the government, accusing it of hollowing out the country and pushing it in the wrong direction.

Speaking to the media outside the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC), Ayub announced that PTI would observe February 8 as a "Black Day" with a protest planned in Swabi.

He revealed that PTI's founder Imran Khan had directed him to engage in talks with the government, where Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar represented the government's side.

Ayub further stated, "This government doesn't even have the authority to allow an open conversation with Imran Khan in Adiala Jail. The public is being kept in the dark about the real situation."

Referring to the imposition of Section 144 in Balochistan, Ayub pointed out, "Despite the restrictions, millions of people were on the streets." He also highlighted the issue of missing persons across Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan, as a major concern.

Concluding his statement, Ayub declared, "This government has hollowed out the country. They are all cowards. We will continue to speak out about our stolen mandate because Imran Khan is the heartbeat of the entire nation."

PM hails gradual reduction in inflation rate as it clocks at lowest in 9-year

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday welcomed the recording of inflation at a 9-year lowest digit of 2.4 percent in January this year and said that its gradual decline was highly encouraging.

At the beginning of 2024, the prime minister said the inflation rate was 28.73 percent, which decreased to 4.1 percent by December 2024, adding in January 2025, the inflation rate had further declined to 2.4 percent.

The prime minister further observed that a decrease in the prices of essential commodities was contributing to improving the quality of life for ordinary citizens, adding the gradual reduction in inflation was also showing positive indicators across all sectors.

"The further decrease in inflation is evidence of the government's economic policies and actions at the right track," PM Office Media Wing, in a press release in Urdu language, quoted the prime minister as saying.

Constitution holds no value in the eyes of powerful: Fazlur Rehman

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: JUI Chief Maulana Fazlur-Rehman has said that PECA Amendments Act 2025 has choked the freedom of expression in Pakistan, adding that for the powerful class the constitution has no value it can be amended as per their wishes.

Talking to media outside parliament house in Islamabad, Fazl said that PECA law was passed unilaterally as journalist community was not consulted. He said President Zardari had assured JUI that Mohsin Naqvi will talk to media and redress their concerns but later perhaps Zardari received such pressure that the President signed at once.

JUI Chief said earlier 26th Constitutional

Amendment was neutralized because of JUI pressure.

Fazl said there was not writ of the government in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and concerned department have failed to restore peace there. He said JUI feels soory when hearts about the martyrdom of Army men.

JUI Chief said earlier JUI had strong believe that the boundaries of the country were safe and secure but it was quite otherwise. He said we had made compromise on Jammu Kashmir because of global pressure.

He was of the view that now the government was trying to strain relations with Afghanistan.

He feared that new proxy war being launched against Afghanistan. Fazl said target killing continue in tribal areas.

Punjab is progressing under Maryam's leadership: Nawaz

INP

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif lauded the services of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz.

"The situation is improving in Punjab due to the tireless efforts of Maryam Nawaz," said the PML-N president.

He expressed these views during a meeting with MPs hailing from Rawalpindi, Attock, Murree, Chakwal, Wazirabad, Hafizabad and Mandi Bahauddin districts.

The overall political situation, public issues and development projects were discussed during the meeting.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz

was also present on the occasion.

"You all are my strength. The problems of people are being resolved and Maryam Nawaz is working very hard," said the three-time prime minister.

Maryam Nawaz said that Nawaz Sharif regularly monitors the performance of Punjab government.

She said that Punjab is the only province where people can get the roti at cheapest price.

The MPs said that Maryam Nawaz has ensured merit and transparency in all her projects being initiated in Punjab.

"The tenure of Maryam Nawaz reminds us the good old days of Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif," said the MPs.



Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti He expressed these views while addressing at the floor of Balochistan Assembly.

Is there no difference between terrorists, spies, and civilians?: SC judge

Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, questions why different trials are held for attacks on Parliament and GHQ

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi has questioned whether there is any difference between those who commit terrorist acts, collaborate with enemy spies, and ordinary civilians.

His remarks came as he engaged with a lawyer during the hearing of an intra-court appeal regarding civilian trials in military courts.

He emphasised that the lawyer should make a clear distinction in their arguments, Express News reported.

The Supreme Court, under Justice Aminuddin Khan, is hearing the case with a seven-member constitutional bench.

Khawaja Ahmed Hussain, representing Justice (R) Jawad S. Khawaja, began his arguments by stating that civilians should never undergo court martial, as military court procedures do not meet the standards of a fair trial.

Khawaja argued that all five judges of the Supreme Court had not agreed on the transparency of the military court trial process. Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi responded by asking whether there is no difference between those who commit acts of terrorism, collaborate with enemy spies, and ordinary civilians. He insisted that the lawyer should make a clear dis-

inction in their arguments.

Khawaja Ahmed Hussain clarified that he was not defending terrorists or criminals. He further explained that if court martial for civilians were possible, there would have been no need for the 21st Amendment.

Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi remarked that certain crimes had been included in the Army Act through the 21st Amendment.

Khawaja Hussain argued that had the amendment to the Army Act been sufficient to allow court martial, there would have been no need for a constitutional amendment. If court martial were possible, the court would have to rule that the 21st Amendment was unnecessary. He also pointed out that Article 175 had been amended in the 21st Amendment, and there is no provision for bail until the decision is made in military courts.

Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi remarked that military courts conduct speedy trials, noting that if a decision is made within 15 days, the question of bail becomes irrelevant.

In response, Khawaja Ahmed Hussain argued that in military courts, appeals do not go to an independent forum, and defendants do not have the freedom to choose their lawyer.

Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar intervened, asking

Khawaja to limit his arguments to whether the central decision was correct or not. Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi responded by referencing the example of the Shaikh Liaquat Hussain case, noting that there was no direct conflict between the public and the army at that time. He also pointed out an incident in Karachi where a major was abducted.

Justice Jamal Khan Mando Khel raised an important point regarding the 21st Amendment, stating that political parties were excluded from its provisions. He questioned why there should be a distinction in trial jurisdiction, asking if a terrorist attack occurred on Parliament, the Supreme Court, and the GHQ, why would trials for attacks on Parliament and the Supreme Court be held in anti-terrorism courts while the GHQ attack would go to a military court? He argued that all three attacks should be treated the same.

Khawaja Ahmed Hussain urged the court not to open a door that would allow civilians to be tried in military courts. Justice Aminuddin Khan clarified that the court was not opening any door but was only deciding whether the appeal should be accepted or rejected.

Khawaja Ahmed Hussain also noted that the Ministry of Defence's lawyer had argued that under Article 184(3), the appeal was not admissible.

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Kurram fragility

JUST as the people of Kurram began to see some relief in the form of convoys laden with essentials reaching Parachinar and other parts of the district cut off from the rest of the country due to bloodshed, fresh violence on Friday showed that calm in the tribal district can be shattered very easily.

Local authorities had intervened to keep the peace after two men were injured in a firing incident. Yet even the government peacemakers came under fire, highlighting the volatile state of affairs in Kurram.

Assistant Commissioner Saeed Manan, who was trying to mediate, was shot but is, thankfully, out of danger. However, a policeman, Ashiq Hussain, later succumbed to his wounds. This is not the first time officials and security men have come under attack.

Last month, the then deputy commissioner Javedullah Mehsud survived a murderous attack in Bagan, while days later militants martyred a number of security men. A 'limited' counterterrorism operation was launched thereafter, but as the latest attack shows, much more needs to be done to pacify Kurram.

Admittedly, the Kurram imbroglio is complicated, where tribal disputes over land and water have become intertwined with long-running sectarian feuds. There is also a geopolitical and security angle, as many of the Sunni militant groups active in the area are on good terms with the Afghan Taliban, while Shia militants linked to the Zainabiyoun Brigade maintain a strong presence in Kurram. Bloodletting has been continuing since last year, and matters exploded after a convoy was attacked in November. Since then, attacks and counterattacks have been frequent.

The state has made several — some would say belated — attempts to quell the violence, the most significant coming in the form of a peace deal hammered out on New Year's Day. But clearly, it will take full commitment by all state institutions, as well as the earnest cooperation of local tribes, to make the agreement work.

A grand jirga was held on Friday in Kohat to discuss the Kurram situation. At this gathering, the KP government spokesperson seemed upbeat about peace prospects. While the state's efforts to contain bloodshed are appreciable, it will take more than words to bring lasting calm to Kurram. At the Kohat Jirga, the KP spokesman said it was essential that "miscreants" involved in trouble-making be handed over to the authorities. He also said a relief package for Kurram was being finalised. Both these issues are important.

Those involved in violence must face the law, while those who have suffered during the conflict must be compensated financially. Moreover, the closure of roads in Kurram cannot be tolerated, and all thoroughfares should be made safe for travel. Efforts to engender reconciliation and forgiveness between Kurram's tribes must also continue.

By Naseer Memon

Unheard voices

SINDH has erupted with a spate of protest rallies, seminars and sit-ins against the construction of new canals on the Indus river and the allocation of large parcels of land for corporate farming. Political parties, growers' associations, and civil society forums have launched a campaign which is snowballing into a political movement. Sessions at literature festivals are focusing with concern on the dry bed of the Indus and its parched delta. The issue is making headlines in Sindhi news bulletins and newspapers. Unfortunately, these voices are falling on deaf official ears, even as matters worsen.

A meeting was held last July to brief President Asif Zardari on the Green Pakistan Initiative. According to the minutes of the meeting, he approved in principle the simultaneous execution of six strategic canals — the Kachhi, Chashma Right Bank, Raine, Greater Thal, Thar and Cholistan canals. Interestingly, the first four had already been constructed during the Musharraf era, while the fifth plan had been turned down by the Sindh government. In fact, the communiqué was meant to camouflage the controversial Cholistan canal scheme.

A Wapda document has revealed the details of this sprawling scheme that aims to irrigate over six million acres of Cholistan through the Sutlej flows. Pakistan surrendered the Sutlej to India under the Indus Waters Treaty. Thus, the river has no reliable flows except when dams on the Indian side spill over due to floods. Wapda's plan claims that the scheme will be provided water by constructing new reservoirs on the Chenab river at Mid

Ranjha and Chiniot.

The Punjab Irrigation Department obtained a water availability certificate for the Cholistan flood feeder canal from the Indus River System Authority on Jan 1, 2024. Sindh objected that Irsa did not have the mandate to issue certificates for a canal that did not have water sanction in the 1991 Water Accord. The certificate was issued for water availability during the Kharif season as the canal was shown as a flood canal. But the PC-1 document of the project mentioned it as a perennial canal. This fundamental change in the scope of the project invalidates Irsa's water availability certificate.

The Cholistan project is technically unfit and politically divisive.

Irsa's own water availability data (1999-2023) depicts a shortfall of 16.6 per cent against the allocations set by the water accord. Punjab and Sindh experienced shortages of 13.7pc and 19.4pc respectively. Climate change has exposed the Indus basin to drought vulnerability due to retreating glaciers. The waterscape is not favourable for the development of new massive canal command areas. Hence, the Cholistan project is a technically unfit and politically divisive scheme.

Allocating large tracts of land for corporate agriculture to a military-backed enterprise has fuelled controversy in Sindh.

The land belongs to the people and governments are only custodians assigned the responsibility of using this resource for the benefit of the masses. Handing over millions of acres of land to a fledgling private company with no proven track record has triggered political unrest. A stag-

gering amount of land in the province is allegedly being given over for corporate agriculture, without any contractual terms disclosed.

A sub-committee of the Sindh cabinet is contemplating the handover of 14,000 acres of land in Umerkot district for corporate farming to the Green Corporate Initiative. A letter of the mukhtiar, Umerkot, addressed to the deputy commissioner, provides details of land identified for corporate farming. According to media reports, the previous caretaker government allotted over 52,000 acres of land for corporate farming in five Sindh districts.

Some documents are believed to indicate that large parcels of land in the coastal belt, the riverine areas, the Viran forest, the Gorakh Hills, the Nara canal area, and the Darawat dam area are also under consideration or at different stages of transfer. Political parties and growers' associations are upset over such obscure deals involving precious land. The PPP is getting flak for its dubious role. Though publicly, the party opposes new canals and land allotment, its top leadership and the provincial government are still seen by many as not being averse to them.

The aim of producing more cereals and cash crops can be achieved without stoking new controversies. The potential of the presently cultivated land and flowing water is grossly under-harnessed.

Pakistan can easily double its agricultural produce by minimising water losses and improving farm management. But this requires a big shift in the governance of the water and agriculture sectors by our ruling establishment.

By Abbas Nasir

Incendiary Gaza plan

ISRAEL'S Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to face war crimes charges, will be feted next Tuesday at the White House by its latest occupant US President Donald Trump whose reiteration of his stance on the forced displacement of Gaza Palestinians to Egypt and Jordan has caused considerable anxiety to the two US allies.

President Trump told reporters on board Air Force One a week ago that "Gaza's 1.5 million" (more like 2m minus the at least 50,000 who have perished in the 15 months of genocide by the Israeli Occupation Forces) population could be relocated to Egypt and Jordan 'permanently' or for a time because the destruction in Gaza has created a mess and needed a 'clean out', as he put it.

As Egypt and Jordan were responding to Trump's outrageous suggestion, the White House issued Trump's warmly worded invitation to Netanyahu, facing ICC arrest warrants for war crimes charges over his Gaza military campaign that many organisations and experts call a genocide: "Dear Prime Minister, I would like to formally invite you to the White House next week. I look forward to discussing how we can bring peace to Israel and its neighbours, and efforts to counter our shared adversaries. It will be my honour to host you as my first foreign leader in my second term."

While Netanyahu would likely endorse the Trump plan and also be pushing for an all-out attack on Iran, Egypt and Jordan, two staunch US allies, voiced their serious opposition to the Trump plan and said the displacement of the Gazans was not a solution and would create more problems. Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi angrily suggested if Gazans have to be moved let it be to the (Israeli-occupied) Negev desert.

"What was inescapable is that there is almost nothing left of Gaza."

Late on Thursday, Trump was asked for his reaction to what his two Arab allies

and Israel's neighbours were saying and he retorted: "They'll do it ... we do a lot for them." It was difficult to say whether his words were more of an expression of reality or his glum face.

Apart from Trump, White House envoy Steve Witkoff, told Axios.com in an interview at the end of his trip to the Middle East just before this weekend that rebuilding Gaza could take between 10 and 15 years: "What was inescapable is that there is almost nothing left of Gaza." "There is nothing left standing. Many unexploded ordnances. It is not safe to walk there. It is very dangerous. I wouldn't have known this without going there and inspecting," he said. It has also emerged now that Witkoff met Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Saudi Arabia on his earlier visit to the region two weeks ago, when the ceasefire deal was announced.

While property tycoons/ developers Trump and Witkoff may have their own assessment of the potential value of the Gaza real estate to their main ally Israel, they seemed a little short on an understanding of the regional dynamics.

Trump is keen to expand the Abraham Accords to Saudi Arabia as soon as possible because he believes that the kingdom may hold the key to Israel's recognition in the Islamic world and further the 'normalisation' process. In such an event, trust Pakistan to come under immense pressure too. But for this to happen, the Saudis would have to change their stance on making normalisation conditional to a two-state solution. Equally, Egypt and Jordan are both wary of accepting the Gaza Palestinians in such large numbers for fear of destabilisation of their own governments. So far, the two have kept domestic sentiment under the lid via brutal force but such a movement of angry and politicised Palestinians in large numbers could potentially loosen, even uproot, their delicate hold on power.

Israel has tried brutality on the Palestinians but that hasn't doused the fire for liberty within them; in fact, it

seems to burn ever so strongly. How are Egypt and Jordan more likely than Israel to succeed when the Arab street seems overwhelmingly pro-Palestine?

And how will the Palestinians react themselves? Israel's military campaign which, apart from targeting innocent civilians and healthcare workers among other professionals, has destroyed some 80 per cent of homes, schools, hospitals, universities, libraries and even more significantly the utilities infrastructure, as the Gazans returning to the north of the Strip are witnessing. But Israel's scorched earth policy has not broken their will.

There is no water, shelter, electricity or sewerage facility. The UN agency UNRWA, which is said to meet some 70pc of the food needs of Gaza, has been told to pack up by Israel but it insists on continuing its sterling work. The colonial, Zionist-supremacist state seems hell-bent on obliterating Gaza as a Palestinian enclave, which is how it has existed since the Nakba. But, despite the seeming impossibility of creating even the most basic conditions for human habitation, many of those returning to the north of the Strip thus far have expressed a resolve to live or die on their land. There have been clips on social media showing them kneeling and kissing the soil where it is possible, and the rubble elsewhere, in the only homeland they have known. Israel's Greater Israel map publicly presented by Netanyahu sees the apartheid state expanding from the river to the sea. Whether the world, and more significantly the regional powers, will stand by and watch the Palestinians being slaughtered and then expelled from the ever-shrinking spaces in their own homeland, or try to say enough, isn't clear. The one thing that could influence the 'war-averse' transactional president is Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's offer of a \$600 billion investment in the US. Whether Saudi Arabia is prepared to link any such move to a resolution of the Palestine dispute is another matter that will become apparent.

DAILY MIRROR

Judges appointed to keep Imran Khan imprisoned: Aleema

Aleema Khan claimed the 26th Amendment was meant to appoint judges favoring the government

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Aleema Khan, sister of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman Imran Khan, has claimed that judges are being appointed to the judiciary with the sole purpose of keeping Imran Khan in jail. Speaking to the media outside Adiala Jail, she conveyed Imran Khan's message, stating that recent developments clearly indicate a deliberate effort to imprison the PTI founder and dismantle the party. Aleema Khan asserted that for the past three years, various plots have been orchestrated with the primary objective of ensuring that Imran Khan remains imprisoned and that PTI is eliminated. "His government was overthrown, people were subjected to oppression, and the May 9 incident was staged as a false flag operation. Over 100,000 raids were conducted on homes. On February 8, people's votes were stolen, and cor-

rupt individuals were placed in the assembly," she alleged. She also pointed to the 26th Amendment, claiming it was introduced to bring in judges who would serve the government's interests. "Our judiciary has capable judges who can deliver justice, but they need those who will hand out sentences and keep Imran Khan in jail," she said. Aleema further referred to the £190 million case ruling, claiming that it was decided to ensure that high court judges uphold the conviction during the appeal process, dragging the legal proceedings for another two to three years. She alleged that Supreme Court judges were now strategically appointed to ensure Imran Khan remained in jail. Additionally, she criticised the Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), stating that it was introduced to suppress social media. "A law has been enacted today that allows authorities to imprison anyone who speaks out on social media," she remarked.

She concluded by stating that the rule of law has been severely compromised, leaving little hope for justice through the courts. Meanwhile, Imran Khan has written a letter to Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir, 'criticising the establishment's policies' and calling for a review of its national security and governance approach. The letter, sent from Adiala Jail, highlights Imran's concerns over what he describes as a growing disconnect between the military and the public, Express News reported. According to PTI lawyer Faisal Fareed Chaudhry, who disclosed the letter's contents to journalists, Imran emphasised that the fight against terrorism can only succeed if the nation stands united behind the armed forces. Imran argued that the 'establishment is backing those who have twice benefited from the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO), a reference to past political settlements that allowed leaders to evade corruption charges.



Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif exchanging views with a delegation of Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) led by Sultan Bin Abdul Rehman Al Marshad, CEO of SFD during meeting held in Islamabad.

Ahsan calls for bridging gaps between regulations, practices to ensure food safety

APP
ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Monday stressed the need for a collaborative effort among government departments, agencies and the private sector to identify and bridge gaps in food safety regulations and practices. He made this call while speaking at a workshop on Food Control System Assessment for Pakistan, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning. Pakistani cuisine recipes

Romina advocates for ambitious climate, financial resilience strategies for vulnerable nations

APP
ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam has emphasized the need for climate prosperity through bold economic and financial resilience strategies to attract investments and resources that will advance the realization of climate and development goals. In a meeting with the high-level delegation of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) of the Vulnerable Twenty (V20) group led by Sara Jane Ahmed, Managing Director on Monday, Alam highlighted the significant challenges faced by climate-vulnerable countries, including the lack of a collective voice in global processes often dominated by wealthy nations. She underscored the persistent representation deficit that these countries encounter, along with the exacerbated financial instability caused by climate vulnerabilities. The Climate Vulnerable Forum delegation visited the ministry of climate change to conduct a meeting to engage in-country consultations for the development of Pakistan's Climate Prosperity Plan, a low-carbon, long-term, national

investment strategy. Pakistani cuisine recipes "The reality for climate-vulnerable nations is harsh. These countries are not only dealing with the immediate impacts of climate change but also face a continuous struggle for recognition and resources in global negotiations," said Ms. Alam. "To address this, we must push for ambitious, inclusive strategies that ensure financial resilience and attract the resources needed to achieve our climate and development goals." Additional Secretaries Zulfiqar Younus and Hamad Shamimi and other high officials of Climate Ministry also attended the meeting. The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) is a key international coalition of 70 countries representing 1.75 billion people across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Pacific. The forum works to amplify the voices of nations most affected by climate change, and its headquarters is located in Accra, Ghana. Alam reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to fostering regional collaboration, specifically focusing on measures to mitigate climate risks and secure financial resilience.

Rule of law and governance-driven approach termed vital for restructuring Pak-Afghan ties

ONLINE
ISLAMABAD: Restructuring Pakistan-Afghanistan relations require a departure from short-term policy fixes toward a comprehensive, strategic, and governance-driven approach. Since the erosion of the rule of law and the spread of divisive rhetoric fuel mistrust and instability, this approach must prioritize mutual recognition of sovereignty, the rejection of polarizing narratives, the restoration of the rule of law, public ownership in law enforcement, and institutional integrity. The views were reflected during a discussion followed by the keynote speech of Ambassador (r) Asif Durrani, Pakistan's former special representative on Afghanistan, in a roundtable on "Geopolitical Imperatives: Redefining Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations in a Post-Taliban Era," held at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The session was addressed by Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, Brigadier (r) Said Nazir, defense analyst, Noor-ul-Ain Naseem, policy advisor, GIZ, Dr Farhat Taj, associate professor, University of Tromsø,

Norway, Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, Ambassador (r) Ayaz Wazir, Dr Lutfur Rehman, an expert on FATIA affairs, and other academics, former officials and policy experts. Ambassador (r) Asif Durrani highlighted that geopolitical challenges in Pak-Afghan relations, such as the complex tribal dynamics, cross-border trade issues, and refugee management, cannot be managed through conventional diplomacy or a garrison approach. Instead, a governance-driven approach rooted in mutual recognition of sovereignty and an inclusive understanding of regional complexities is needed for lasting stability in all dimensions of this bilateral relationship. He identified the erosion of the rule of law, amplified by the war economy of the 1990s that disrupted centuries-old trade and communal ties, as a key destabilizing factor in Pak-Afghan relations. He cautioned that governance failures, corruption, and mismanagement in areas like refugee policies, border security, and transit trade have further deepened lawlessness, making institutional restructuring imperative.

Achakzai accepts Aliya Hamza's request to join PTI's Punjab-wide protests

INP
ISLAMABAD: Pashtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) chief Mahmood Khan Achakzai has accepted the request of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Punjab's chief organizer Aliya Hamza to join PTI protests across various districts in Punjab. According to details, a PTI delegation headed by Aliya Hamza met Mahmood Khan Achakzai, who is also head of the 'grand alliance of opposition parties', in Islamabad and discussed various political issues including consultation on opposition protests in Punjab. Sources said that Mahmood Khan Achakzai will participate in all the protest demonstrations in Punjab after February 8. He will organise anti-government demonstrations in Punjab from the platform of the 'grand alliance of opposition parties'. Aliya Hamza also conveyed the message of the PTI founder to Mahmood Khan Achakzai. Achakzai praised the efforts of Aliya Hamza and advised her to continue working for the protection of the constitution.

President Zardari embarks on state visit to China from Feb 4-8

INP
ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari is scheduled to undertake a state visit to China from February 4-8 (Tuesday to Saturday), 2025, at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, with the aim to further bolster the Iron Brothers Bond between the two countries. During the visit, President Asif Zardari will hold detailed meetings with Chinese leadership, including President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang and other high-ranking Chinese officials in Beijing. The discussions will encompass the full spectrum of Pakistan-China relations, with a particular focus on economic and trade cooperation; counter-terrorism and security collaboration; the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and future connectivity initiatives, according to a curtain-raiser issued by the Foreign Office in Islamabad on Monday. The two sides will also exchange views on the unfolding global and regional geopolitical landscape, and bilateral cooperation at multilateral fora.

Chairman Senate Gilani seeks stronger Pakistan-US ties for trade and regional peace

ONLINE
ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has said that Pakistan relations with the United States constituted an important element of its foreign policy and that we have a longstanding and broad-based relationship with the US. He said that we are desirous to deepened and broaden this relationship and to continue working closely with the US to promote regional and international peace and stability. US Embassy's Minister Counselor for political affairs Zach Harkenrider called on Chairman Senate on Tuesday in Islamabad and exchanged views on matters of bilateral significance. Chairman Senate also congratulated the US President Donald Trump on his victory in the elections and said that we are desirous of working closely with the new Trump administration to foster peaceful and secure future that respects the sovereignty and aspirations of all nations. Chairman Senate observed that our bilateral relationship is on the upward trajectory and it is important to maintain the current positive momentum. The Chairman Senate also expressed the desire to working with US on diverse areas including climate change, mitigation and adaptation, energy transition, water management, climate smart agriculture biodiversity and waste management. He said that US investment in different sectors would be more productive for Pakistani economy and will help in sustainable economic development. He, however, underscored the need to further increase the trade volume between the two countries. He also encouraged US companies to explore new areas for investment in Pakistan. We are desirous of diversifying our bilateral trade relationship with the US, Chairman Senate said. The Chairman Senate also acknowledged the importance of high level visit and recalled that during his tenure as Prime Minister from 2008-2012 fruitful discussions took place. He said that there is need to further expedite parliamentary and high level exchanges and promote people to people contacts. Chairman Senate informed that during the recent past he was able to witness the signing ceremony of an event in which Punjab and California were declared sister states. During the meeting Chairman Senate also expressed deep sorrow over the recent air craft crashes in the US acknowledging the tragic loss of lives and extending condolences to the families affected. Chairman Senate emphasized Pakistan role in regional peace including efforts to facilitate stability in Afghanistan and support ongoing dialogue for peace and security in South Asia. Highlighting the importance of regional peace, the Chairman Senate observed that peace in the region would have a lasting impact on global peace and stability. Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani observed that we are focusing on peaceful development and doing our best to avoid getting into a conflict or bloc politics.



Muslim League (PML-N) President, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Punjab Chief Minister in a meeting with members of Punjab Assembly in Lahore

Sindh Cabinet approves Agri Income Tax Bill, but warns of price spiral

INP
KARACHI: Tough times for the Sindh farmers indeed as the provincial cabinet, which met with Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah in the chair on Monday, approved the Agriculture Income Tax Bill, 2025 under which new taxes would be levied on the income of farmers, leading to fears that the prices of wheat, vegetables and rice would go up further. Giving a clarification, the chief minister said that the bill would not apply to the livestock sector. That the Sindh Revenue Board, and not the Board of Revenue, would collect these taxes. Similarly, they added, adjustments would be made in the event of any loss caused to crops by a natural disaster, while the farmers concealing their agricultural lands would also be fined. Sources informed that 20 per cent tax would be levied on small companies, while 28 per cent on big ones. If the agricultural income would be between Rs150 million and Rs200 million, one per cent tax would be levied; two per cent tax if the income is between Rs200 million and Rs250 million; three per cent tax if the income was between Rs250 million and Rs300 million; four per cent tax if the income was between Rs300 million and Rs350 million; six per cent tax if the income was between Rs350 million and Rs400 million; eight per cent tax if the income was between Rs400 million and Rs500 million and 10 per cent tax if the income exceeded Rs500 million, sources elaborated.

President Trump Appoints Tammy Bruce as State Department Spokesperson, Garnering Widespread Approval

By Khawaja Farooq
WASHINGTON: In a strategic move that underscores his commitment to effective communication and experienced leadership, President Donald Trump has appointed Tammy Bruce as the new spokesperson for the U.S. Department of State. Bruce, a seasoned political analyst and longtime Fox News contributor, brings a wealth of experience and a fresh perspective to the role. President Trump announced the appointment on his social media platform, TRUTH Social, stating, "It is my great honor to announce that Tammy Bruce will be joining our incredible nominee for United States Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, as spokesperson for the U.S. Department of State." He praised Bruce as "a highly respected political analyst who understood the power and importance of 'MAGA' early on." Bruce's diverse background includes serving as president of the Los Angeles chapter of the National Organization for Women in the 1990s, before transitioning to a prominent role in conservative media. Her unique journey from liberal activism to conservative commentary has equipped her with a broad understanding of the political spectrum, making her an ideal choice for this pivotal position. Supporters of the appointment highlight Bruce's articulate communication style and her ability to convey complex policy issues to the public effectively. Her extensive media experience is expected to enhance the State Department's public engagement and foster a clearer understanding of U.S. foreign policy initiatives. This appointment reflects President Trump's ongoing strategy of incorporating seasoned media professionals into key administrative roles, recognizing the importance of effective communication in governance. Bruce's proven track record in media and her deep understanding of both domestic and international issues are anticipated to serve the State Department well as it navigates the complexities of global diplomacy.



Tribal Leaders from Khilji Community, Nawab Salman Khilji, Naem Khan Khilji, Noor Khan Khilji and others addressing a press conference, at Quetta press club

With its vast agricultural potential, the minister said Pakistan has the ability to generate substantial value through the export of agricultural and food products. However, he stressed that for Pakistan to fully capitalize on this potential, it was essential to understand and comply with global food safety certifications, regulations, and standards. The minister expressed confidence that the deliberations from the workshop would result in a clear roadmap, and the forthcoming report would provide a structured path forward.