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Any attempt to block Pakistan's water will be considered act of war: NSC

NSC announced the closure of Wagah border crossing

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: The National Security Committee (NSC) on Thursday warned that any attempt by India to block water flow into Pakistan would be treated as an act of war.

The statement followed a high-level NSC meeting, which also approved the closure of the Wagah border crossing. The measures were announced in response to a series of steps taken by India following a deadly attack in the Pahalgam area of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Key decisions announced by NSC:

- > India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty rejected.
- > Any diversion of Pakistan's water to be treated as an act of war.
- > Wagah Border closed to all Indian land transit with immediate effect.
- > Airspace to all Indian-owned or operated flights closed.
- > 1972 Simla Agreement could be suspended.
- > SAARC visa exemption facility for Indian nationals cancelled.
- > Indian nationals in Pakistan ordered to leave within 48 hours.
- > Indian defence advisers declared persona non grata.
- > Indian High Commission staff in Islamabad limited to 30 persons.
- > All forms of trade with India suspended, including via third countries.

A statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office expressed concern over the loss of lives and termed India's subsequent measures "unilateral, unjust, politically motivated, extremely irresponsible, and devoid of legal merit." The statement said that India's response violates international norms, United Nations Security Council resolutions, and bilateral agreements.

The committee also rejected India's announcement to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), calling it a binding international accord with no clause allowing unilat-

eral suspension.

"Water is a vital national interest of Pakistan, a lifeline for its 240 million people, and its availability will be safeguarded at all costs," the statement read. "Any attempt to stop or divert Pakistan's water will be responded to with full force across the complete spectrum of national power."

The NSC also announced that all cross-border movement through Wagah will be halted, and those who entered with valid documents must return by April 30. The forum also closed Pakistan's airspace to all Indian-owned or operated flights, effective immediately.

The meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, was attended by senior officials, including Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, and top military commanders attended the session.

A day earlier, India announced the suspension of visa services for Pakistani nationals and ordered all Pakistani citizens currently in India to leave before the expiry of their visas. Pakistani diplomats in New Delhi will remain exempt, though their numbers have reportedly been reduced.

India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri addressed the media in New Delhi, outlining five major measures in what he termed a "decisive response to cross-border terrorism." Among them, the immediate suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty was the most significant.

"The Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 will be held in abeyance with immediate effect, until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism," Misri said.

On Wednesday, Pakistan's foreign ministry offered condolences over the loss of tourist lives. "We are concerned at the loss of tourists' lives in an attack in Anantnag district of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. We extend our condolences to the near ones of the deceased and wish the injured a speedy recovery," the Foreign Office said in a statement.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairing a meeting of the National Security Committee.

Govt agrees to halt construction of new canals until CCI consensus amid IWT suspension uncertainty

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: The government on Thursday announced that it was halting the contentious canals project until a consensus on the issue could be reached in the Council of Common Interests (CCI) amid opposition from many quarters in the country and uncertainty created by India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).

Chief of the Army Staff Gen Asim Munir and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz inaugurated the ambitious Cholistan project to irrigate south Punjab's lands on February 15 amid public uproar and strong reservations in Sindh. The Sindh Assembly also passed a unanimous resolution against the project in March.

The past few months have seen nationwide protests from political parties, including the ruling coalition ally PPP, and residents against the proposed project. Amid the already tense situation, India shut borders, downgraded diplomatic ties and, in an unprecedented move, unilaterally announced the suspension of the IWT a day ago

over what the Bharatiya Janata Party government and media claimed — without offering any specific or concrete evidence about their allegations against Pakistan — were "cross-border linkages" over the Pahalgam attack in occupied Kashmir.

Addressing a press conference with PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari after a meeting with the party, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the two sides considered the country's situation in detail and India's announcements related to the rivers.

"Today, we decided in the meeting between the PPP and PML-N with mutual agreement that until a decision is reached with mutual consensus in the CCI, no further canal will be constructed and the federal government has decided that there will be no further progress on canals without the consensus of opinion among provinces."

He said the CCI meeting was being called on May 2, in which the PPP and PML-N's decisions would be backed. Bilawal thanked the premier for hearing out the PPP and the nation's reservations and complaints in the detailed engagement and taking important subsequent decisions.

Ahsan Rejects Indian False Flag Tactics, Condemns IIOJK Atrocities, Water Aggression

INP

ISLAMABAD: Minister Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal here on Thursday strongly condemned the latest baseless allegations and hostile posturing by India, which are clearly designed to deflect global attention from its ongoing human rights atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), and to pursue its malicious designs against Pakistan, including on the Indus Waters Treaty.

He said, India had a known history of orchestrating false flag operations to malign Pakistan internationally.

This dangerous pattern not only undermines regional stability but also attempts to cover up its internal failures and increasing repression in Kashmir.

He made it clear that Pakistan had been the greatest victim of terrorism, having

lost over 80,000 lives and suffered billions in economic losses. Yet, we have stood resilient and emerged as a responsible state, committed to peace, counterterrorism, and regional cooperation.

Four killed, 5 injured in roadside blast in Balochistan's Kalat

NEWS DESK

QUETTA: At least four people, including two women and a child, were killed in a powerful roadside explosion in the rural Amiri area of Kalat district on Wednesday, Levies officials confirmed.

The blast also left five others seriously injured.

According to initial reports, the tragic incident occurred in the Kapoto area, where an improvised explosive device (IED) had been planted along the roadside and

detonated as a vehicle passed by. Levies personnel said the vehicle was completely destroyed in the blast due to the intensity of the explosion. Emergency responders and Levies forces rushed to the scene and shifted the injured to District Headquarters Hospital (DHQ) Kalat for immediate medical assistance. After receiving first aid, all five critically injured victims were transferred to Quetta for advanced treatment.

No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack.

Aurangzeb invites Turkish investors to invest in Pakistan

APP

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has invited Turkish investors and businessmen to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan, particularly in the dairy, cheese and livestock sectors.

He was talking to Finance Minister of Turkey Mehmet Simsek on the sidelines of the IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington.

Muhammad Aurangzeb highlighted the strong historical ties between Pakistan and Turkey, and emphasized the greater potential for enhanced trade and investment between the two countries.

He acknowledged that the current level of bilateral trade and investment remained below its potential.

The Minister also appreciated Turkish government's policy of supporting high-tech sectors to foster innovation and promote

greater value addition. Meanwhile, talking to Queen Máxima of the Netherlands, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb emphasized expanding digital access and promoting effective data sharing to accelerate financial inclusion efforts.

He shared the progress made on financial inclusion of Pakistani women, particularly through the implementation of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy with the support of international partners. The Finance Minister underscored that ensuring women and girls' education, financial inclusion, entrepreneurship and empowerment were among the top priorities of Pakistan.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb also met President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) Jin Lique in Washington and conveyed Pakistan's keenness to sustain the current momentum of engagement with the Bank.

Pakistan Rangers arrest Indian BSF soldier on Pakistani soil

INP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Rangers on Thursday apprehended an Indian Border Security Force (BSF) soldier who inadvertently crossed into Pakistani territory from the Ferozpur sector of Punjab, Indian media reported.

The arrested trooper has been identified as Constable P.K. Singh of the 182nd BSF Battalion. According to reports by India Today, Singh crossed the international boundary "inadvertently" during a routine movement and was subsequently detained by Pakistani forces stationed across the border.

The incident has sparked diplomatic sensitivity, visibly reflected during the daily flag-lowering ceremony at the Wagah border. In a departure from tradition, the usual public display of choreographed military gestures was significantly scaled down. Both border gates remained shut, and the customary handshake between officials of both sides was skipped. Only the flags were lowered quietly, marking a rare moment of tension in the otherwise ceremonial routine.

Indian authorities have confirmed the detention of their soldier by Pakistan, and discussions are likely to take place for his return. However, no official statement has yet been issued by the Pakistani side regarding the status or release of the BSF constable.

FO summons Indian chargé d'affaires, hands over demarche

APP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Foreign Office summoned India's chargé d'affaires, Geetika Srivastava, to deliver a formal protest over what it described as India's "aggressive and unilateral actions" following the Pahalgam incident.

According to diplomatic sources, Srivastava was handed a demarche and a formal note verbale outlining Pakistan's official response. The document included details of reciprocal measures Islamabad intends to implement.

"India's defence, air, and naval attachés have been declared persona non grata and informed of Pakistan's decision to expel them along with supporting staff," said a source.

The Indian High Commission in Islamabad has been notified that its staff strength will be reduced to 30 personnel. Pakistan also informed India that, except for Sikh pilgrims, all Indian citizens in the country must leave within 48 hours.

The Wagah border crossing will be temporarily shut, and Pakistan's airspace will be closed to all Indian commercial flights. Islamabad also flagged the possible suspension of the Simla Agreement and other bilateral treaties in retaliation for India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty.

Trade ties, including indirect trade channels with India, will also be suspended. The measures follow decisions made during a high-level National Security Committee meeting chaired by Pakistan's civilian and military leadership.

Zimbabwe Air Chief calls on CJCSC Gen Sahir

APP

RAWALPINDI: Air Marshal John Jacob Nzvede, Commander Air Force, Zimbabwe, who is on an official visit to Pakistan called on General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, NI (M), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) here Thursday at Joint Staff Headquarters.

During the meeting, both military leaders reaffirmed their dedication to strengthening bilateral cooperation in security and defense, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

The JCSC emphasized Pakistan's appreciation for its longstanding relationship with Zimbabwe, underscoring a mutual commitment to further deepening existing defence ties.

The visiting dignitary appreciated the high professional standards of Pakistan Armed Forces and their achievements and sacrifices in fight against terrorism.

Earlier, upon arrival at Joint Staff Headquarters, a smartly turned out tri-services contingent presented 'Guard of Honour' to Commander of the Air Force, Zimbabwe.

CM Bugti Terms Decisions of National Security Committee as Positive Sign for Protection of Country

APP

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Thursday termed the important and timely decisions taken in the National Security Committee meeting as a decisive step towards protecting the country's security and sovereignty.

In a message on social networking site X (formerly Twitter), Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that Pakistan has always prioritized peace, stability and regional cooperation

but India's announcement to suspend the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) is a highly provocative and irresponsible act which the entire Pakistani nation rejects.

The CM said that if India tries to stop or divert Pakistan's water under water aggression, it would further escalate bilateral tensions and this move could be considered a direct declaration of war and it to be given a befitting reply.



WASHINGTON: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb meets with Mohamed Bin Hadi Al Hussaini, Minister of State for Financial Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, on the sidelines of the IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington D.C..

Pakistan's forces fully prepared for any challenge: Ministers

Dar says Indus Waters Treaty not mentioned in demarche to Pakistani High Commission in India

APP

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, along with senior federal ministers including Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Information Minister Attaullah Tarar, unveiled a series of decisive measures in response to what Islamabad terms India's "provocative and irresponsible actions."

Speaking to reporters in Islamabad, Deputy PM Dar confirmed that Pakistan has formally suspended all types of bilateral cooperation with India, including trade, travel, and diplomatic engagements, while also taking strict action on key regional treaties and security matters.

India cannot unilaterally scrap international agreements: Dar

Highlighting the recent unilateral Indian move to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty, Dar said the treaty, brokered by the World Bank in 1960, cannot be revoked by one side alone.

"India cannot unilaterally cancel or suspend the Indus Waters Treaty. It's an internationally binding agreement. Any such attempt will be viewed as an act of aggression," Dar asserted. He warned that Pakistan has all rights under the treaty and will defend them with full force.

Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan also stressed that despite two wars between India and Pakistan, the treaty had remained intact—a testament to its importance and binding nature.

Diplomatic ties downgraded, Indian officials ordered to leave

The Deputy PM announced that Pakistan is reducing the Indian High Commission staff to 30 members, and has declared India's defence, naval, and air attachés persona non grata, ordering them to leave the country by April 30.

In a reciprocal move, Pakistan will limit its own diplomatic representation in New Delhi. Dar also confirmed that visas issued to Indian nationals—excluding Sikh pilgrims—have been cancelled. Those already in Pakistan under the SAARC visa scheme have been directed to leave within 48 hours.

Airspace closure to cost India millions daily

Further ratcheting up pressure, Pakistan has closed its airspace to all Indian airlines and aircraft, a move that is expected to cost Indian carriers millions of rupees per day due to longer routes and increased fuel consumption.

"No Indian aircraft—commercial, cargo, or private—will be allowed to pass through our airspace," Dar stated.

Information Minister Attaullah Tarar added that this action

would severely disrupt India's aviation operations and could cost it "several million dollars daily."

India accused of exporting terrorism

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif launched a scathing critique of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alleging that India is a state sponsor of terrorism.

"Modi is the only leader in the world on whom the U.S. once imposed a visa ban for terrorism," Asif noted. He also cited Kulbhushan Jadhav as a living testimony of Indian state terrorism and accused India of spreading violence not only in Pakistan but also in countries like the U.S. and Canada.

"The BLA openly advertises its relations with India, and the TTP's links to India are well documented," he claimed. Asif further questioned how the Pahalgam incident could occur despite the presence of 900,000 Indian troops in occupied Kashmir, suggesting it may be a politically motivated false flag operation.

Pakistan prepared to respond to any aggression

Deputy PM Dar made it clear that Pakistan's armed forces are fully alert and prepared to respond to any challenge. He added that intelligence reports confirm the presence of foreign elements with heavy equipment in Srinagar, possibly planted there by Indian agencies.

Pak Army Ready to Lesson India: Aleem Khan

APP

ISLAMABAD: President Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) and Federal Minister for Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan on Thursday said that Pakistan has given a strong and effective response to India's unilateral provocations.

He emphasized that India must not remain under any false assumptions as Pakistan's Armed Forces are always ready to lesson India and deliver a decisive blow to any aggression and if the time comes, the nation's 240 million citizens will stand united as an unbreakable wall against any threat, said a press release.

In his rebuttal, Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan underscored that India has consistently attempted to destabilize the region through conspiracies. Before leveling baseless accusations against Pakistan, the Modi Government must take a hard look at its own actions, he added.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that India's involvement in terrorist activities, both in Pakistan and other countries is no longer a secret.

Federal Minister added that the Pakistani Government has issued a strong and clear response to India's disregard for diplomatic norms and international principles.

From Khyber to Karachi, the people of Pakistan are filled with intense patriotic fervor and they will never allow any hostile force to cast a malicious eye on their homeland, he added.

Abdul Aleem Khan further stated that India's extremist policies are a deliberate attempt to divert global attention from its internal challenges.

He warned that the Modi Government must abandon its delusions, any attempt at intrusion or aggression will be met with a stern and unforgettable response from Pakistan.

Reaffirming his Party's stance, the IPP President declared full support for the Federal Government's decisions and the official statement issued today.

He assured that the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party stands shoulder to shoulder with the Armed Forces of Pakistan in the defense of the nation.



Jamate-Islami (JI) Vice Chief, Liaqat Baloch addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

BISP's Rubina Khalid reviews facilities at payment camp

INP

PESHAWAR: Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Chairperson Rubina Khalid visited the Azam Park Sheikhabad Payment Camp site here on Thursday.

She reviewed the facilities provided to deserving women and directed the staff to treat elderly women with respect and to take special care of cleanliness at the payment centres.

Rubina Khalid urged the deserving women to count and collect their assistance amount in full and not forget to take the receipt.

She clarified that the survey is completely free and in case of any deduction, they should immediately file a complaint on the BISP helpline. Later, Rubina Khalid called on the newly elected Secretary General PPP Muhammad Hamayun Khan at his residence and congratulated him on assumption of his responsibilities. Ashbar Jadoon, Shahnaz Shamsheer and other office bearers were also present on the occasion. During the meeting, they discussed organizational and political issues in the province.

CM, U.S Envoy Natalie Baker Discuss Mutual Cooperation

INP

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah met with U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker to discuss mutual cooperation between the United States and the Sindh government, emphasising climate change and its impact.

The meeting was held here at CM House and attended by U.S. Consul General Scott Oberum, Sindh Chief Secretary Asif Haider Shah, Principal Secretary Agha Wasif and other senior officials.

Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and Natalie Baker exchanged views on various bilateral matters, including agricultural development and the use of modern farming technologies. They also explored collaboration in education, healthcare, and investment, with both sides underscoring the need for joint measures to address environmental challenges.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa in a meeting with Provincial Live & Stock Minister Sardar Faisal Khan Jamali.

Senate body receives briefing on private medical colleges' fee

APP

ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee on National Health Services Regulations and Coordination on Thursday received briefing on fee structure of private medical colleges.

The meeting chaired by Amir Waliuddin received briefing from Federal Minister for National Health Services Mustafa Kamal on the fee structure of private medical colleges. The committee was informed that a special committee was formed under the leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister to determine the fees. The committee, under the Deputy Prime Minister's supervision, recommended the fee structure for private medical colleges, said Mustafa Kamal.

The committee has decided to set the fee for private medical colleges at up to 1.8 million rupees, according to Mustafa Kamal.

New Avenues of Collaboration Open for Youth and Women Empowerment: CDF, EPIC Pakistan, and Kasb-e-Kamal Join Hands

PRESS RELEASE

Lahore: Chief Executive Officer of Communication Development Foundation (CDF), Ms. Maryam Khan, along with Consultant Sheikh Iftikhar Rasool and Communication Manager Arfa Arbi, held a significant meeting with Ms. Saima Asif, CEO of EPIC Pakistan, and Ms. Neelofar Sikandar, CEO of Kasb-e-Kamal.

During the meeting, CDF and EPIC Pakistan expressed a mutual desire to collaborate on youth and women empowerment initiatives,

both in IT and non-IT sectors. The organizations agreed to work together on joint projects and activities aimed at uplifting young individuals and empowering women.

Additionally, a detailed discussion took place with Ms. Neelofar Sikandar of Kasb-e-Kamal regarding the empowerment of women engaged in agriculture.

The conversation emphasized the need to organize their work in a structured way, collect and analyze data related to their contributions, and enhance their skills and productivity using modern technology.



The parties agreed to create more development opportunities for women working in the agricultural sector across various districts of Punjab and to raise awareness about new agricultural technologies to improve their livelihood.

Indus treaty suspension nothing but 'water terrorism': Rashid

INP

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed has condemned India's move to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty, calling it an act of "water terrorism."

In a statement posted on social media, Sheikh Rashid termed India's allegations against Pakistan over the Pahalgam incident as baseless, and said that blocking water is equivalent to declaring war. He emphasised that India cannot unilaterally

suspend a bilateral agreement.

He further stated that the atrocities being committed against Kashmiris in India cannot be ignored, and warned that the people of Pakistan know well how to defend every inch of their land. He asserted that

India will receive a fitting response when the time comes. It should be noted that India has announced the immediate suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty in what is being widely condemned as an act of "hydro-political aggression" against Pakistan.



Tandoor Association Leaders, Raza Muhammad Khilji, Naem Khan Khilji and others addressing a press conference, at Quetta press club.



Multan Sultans likely to opt for fresh bidding

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: HBL Pakistan Super League franchise Multan Sultans is expected to opt for fresh bidding instead of retaining the franchise under the existing policy of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), which requires a 25 per cent increase on the original purchase price.

Sultans, who joined the league in 2018 — two years after the PSL's inception — were sold for \$6.5 million annually on an eight-year agreement, the highest among all franchises. In contrast, the original five franchises were sold at comparatively lower annual prices and for a 10-year term.

Under the current PCB policy, franchise owners can retain their teams by paying a 25 per cent increment on the original annual fee. This would mean Multan Sultans' ownership would require an annual payment exceeding \$7.9 million, while franchises like Karachi Kings would pay roughly \$3.25 million annually — based on their original \$2.6 million valuation over 10 years.

Given the substantial financial implications, Sultans' management appears inclined towards rebidding, though the move carries the risk of losing the franchise to a higher bidder.

A spokesperson for the franchise told Dawn that owner Ali Tareen remained committed to the team and dismissed reports suggesting he intended to part ways following the ongoing PSL season.

"Ali Tareen has not said he is walking away from Multan Sultans," the spokesperson stated. "We do have the option to renew at a 25 per cent increase, but that would mean operating at a financial loss."

Ali, through the spokesperson, indicated his preference to re-enter the bidding process in the hope of securing a valuation more in line with that of the Karachi Kings.

"My strategy is to exercise our right to exit the current agreement and bid again — ideally at a more realistic valuation," Ali said.

While Usman flourished, Sultans captain Mohammad Rizwan had struggled to a run-a-ball 36 at the other end, and his agonising stay at the crease was ended by Shadab in the 14th over, which had also seen Usman hit a six and a four.

He also saw Bracewell perish at the other end thanks to pacer Riley Meredith in the 16th before Jason Holder bounced Ifikhar out. Usman then faltered himself, getting run out in the 19th over after adding 60 off 44 (four fours and as many sixes).

Kamran Ghulam smacked pacer Salman for six in the last over — Sultans' first boundary in 16 balls — and swept for another four as Multan got to a total that proved to be too less at the end.



Player of the match Andries Gous.

United juggernaut rolls on with thumping win over Sultans

SPORTS DESK

MULTAN: Just a day after Multan Sultans finally found themselves in the driving seat, Islamabad United came in their way.

And the most clinical side in the ongoing HBL Pakistan Super League edition so far, did what it has done all season; win matches. On Wednesday night here at the Multan Cricket Stadium, United registered their fifth victory in as many games.

Sultans, who got their only win on Tuesday — a 33-run drubbing of Lahore Qalandars — meanwhile, saw their play-off hopes dwindle further after the seven-wicket loss against the holders.

United opener Andries Gous (80 off 45, six fours and five sixes) came forward with his best show this season, with the American batter hitting his maiden PSL half-century to help his team easily chase down 169 with 17 balls to spare.

He thrived on a tricky surface for batting after Sahibzada Farhan departed following a 22 off 14 (three fours and a six) — with Ubaid Shah getting the batter of the right-hander with a fast bouncer — before Gous and the incoming Colin Munro boosted the side to 69-1 in the powerplay.

The pair brought up its 50-run partnership off 31 balls after Munro slog-swept leg-spinner Usama Mir for a huge six over square leg in the seventh over.

Usama came in Gous' radar in the ninth, as the United States batter smashed the lanky bowler past long-off for four before slogging him over deep midwicket.

After United had reached 105-1 by the 10th over — which had seen Munro (45 off 28, five fours and two sixes) and spinner Ifikhar Ahmed get involved in a heated exchange — the former New Zealand batter holed com-

patriot off-break bowler Michael Bracewell to Ifikhar at long-on.

But losing his partner after an 81-run partnership off 48 balls didn't affect Gous. The right-hander avenged Ifikhar with a hit past long-off for four more before launching the spinner over long-on to bring up his 50 in 29 balls.

With United in no hurry, Mohammad Nawaz, who had just arrived, took his time before sweeping Usama through fine-leg for his first boundary and took on the bowler again in the 16th over again, this time for six over long-on.

Gous lifted pacer Chris Jordan before clubbing Ubaid through the on-side for sixes to finish off the match.

Earlier, Multan struggled to get going after winning the toss and opting to bat first. They were kept under check throughout the innings by the United bowlers, who ensured things stayed tight at least at one end, despite a decent show of sorts by Usman Khan.

Multan scampered their way to 48-0 in the powerplay, but lost in-form

opener Yasir Khan in the seventh over with the batter looking dangerous in his knock of 29 off 17 (two fours and as many sixes), which ended with spinner Nawaz taking his wicket.

United got a chance to double up on their advantage when first-drop Usman skied his first attempt to clear the fence, only for Saad Masood to let the balls slip through his hands and across the boundary.

Usman celebrated his reprieve in the next over with a powerful hit off United captain Shadab Khan's leg-spin over long-off for six as Sultans reached 78-1 at halfway stage. He further punished United with a six off Imad Wasim and three boundaries off Salman Irshad as Sultans crossed the 100-run mark in the 12th over.

Australia's Gout on track for Worlds debut at 17

SPORTS DESK

MELBOURNE: Teen sprinter Gout Gout has been confirmed on Australia's team for the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo in September.

The 17-year-old son of South Sudanese immigrants will run in the 200 metres after clocking a wind-assisted 19.84 seconds in Perth this month to win his first national title.

The Queensland's rapid rise has raised comparisons with Jamaican great Usain Bolt and made him the poster boy for Australian track and field, seven years before the country hosts the Brisbane Olympics in 2032.

"I'm super excited to be picked to run the 200 in Tokyo at the World Championships," Gout said in an Australian Athletics statement on Wednesday.

"That's what we've been aiming for. I'm looking forward to September and seeing what I can do against the best of the best."

Gout headlines a talented young contingent on the Australian team which includes 18-year-old Cameron Myers, who took the 1,500 national title in Perth and ran the fastest-ever mile indoors among under-20 athletes (3:47.48) at the Millrose Games in New York in February.

Former high jump world champion Eleanor Patterson, who took bronze at the Paris Olympics, was also named on Wednesday among the first tranche of athletes confirmed for the team.

Patterson will bid for a sixth medal in major championships, having taken indoor silver at Nanjing in March behind compatriot Nicola Olyslagers.

Peter Bol, who ran fourth in the 800 at the Tokyo Olympics, will return to the Japanese capital in good form after taking the national record (1:43.79) at the Perth championships.



Queensland's Gout Gout celebrates after winning the Men's 200m final.

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Pahalgam attack

IN the aftermath of Tuesday's militant attack on tourists in India-held Kashmir's Pahalgam area, South Asia once again stands on a knife's edge.

Displaying a knee-jerk reaction to the tragedy, in which over 25 people were killed, the Indian foreign secretary has highlighted the alleged "cross-border linkages of the terrorist attack", dragging Pakistan into this deplorable episode. New Delhi has responded by suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, which has survived wars and periods of tension, further downgrading diplomatic relations, and closing the Attari border crossing. Pakistan, which had initially expressed concern and condolences over the attack, will calibrate its response today, as the prime minister has convened a meeting of the National Security Committee to review the situation.

The assault has been claimed by 'The Resistance Front', a hitherto unknown entity; media reports have quoted the outfit as claiming the attack to protest against demographic changes in the disputed region. This is probably the biggest attack targeting civilians in IHK in 25 years. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has termed the assault as a possible "false flag operation". No cause can justify the targeting of innocent non-combatants, and the incident must be roundly condemned.

However, India must also look inwards and review its brutal rule in held Kashmir, which has bred immense discontent. And when all peaceful avenues for a just resolution to the Kashmir dispute are blocked, it is not surprising that some inside the occupied territory take up guns to express their anger. Ever since doing away with the disputed region's limited autonomy in August 2019, the BJP-led government has pretended that 'all is well' in IHK. That is not the case. Even voices within India are questioning the government's claims of having established calm. For example, India's opposition leader, Rahul Gandhi, has asked the rulers to move beyond "hollow claims" of peace in occupied Kashmir.

Genuine peace can only come to Kashmir — and the rest of South Asia — when this nearly eight-decade-old dispute is resolved as per the wishes of the Kashmiris, with buy-in from Pakistan and India. If the Hindu nationalist government in New Delhi thinks it can stamp out all peaceful calls for freedom and justice through brute force and intimidation, then there will be no end to blood-soaked episodes.

The tragic events in Pahalgam should serve as a wake-up call for India's rulers: if they want peace in IHK, and peace between Pakistan and India, then sincere efforts must be made to resolve the Kashmir question at the negotiating table, involving the Kashmiris as well as Pakistan.

By F.S. Aijazuddin

Cool escapes

MOUNTAINS measure time in millennia. The sight of Nanga Parbat's peak from the plane as we neared Gilgit reminded me that PIA's aircraft and I had grown older: the Himalayas had not.

On an earlier trip to the northern areas years ago, I had missed a detour to Fairy Meadows. Guidebooks persuaded me that what lies above is "a lovely high plateau with level upon level of meadows and direct view of Nanga Parbat's north side". The climb had been described as "the second most dangerous journey in the world". (The first must be the perilous path to the prime ministership of Pakistan.)

The expedition up to Fairy Meadows took about four hours — two in a rattling jeep over stone-strewn hairpin bends, and then another two straddled on a hairy horse reluctant to plod the narrow, hazardous track of rocks and mud.

The reality of Fairy Meadows today is a soggy uneven field, ringed by an urban sprawl of middle-class hotels, designed for domestic tourists. Perversely, it is to discourage them that locals make the approach so daunting. Locals could improve the road but refuse to, as that would jeopardise the livelihood of over 100 taxi drivers and horse-owners.

The scenery is bliss until one reaches barriers and bureaucracy.

The journey down followed a path edged by precipices. A prayer muttered before and after each life-threatening turning is helpful.

The drive from Gilgit to Hunza is life-affirming. En route, a view of Rakaposhi marred by a highflying cyclist on a wire. Hunza is as one remembers it — crowded certainly, but still

soft, silent, serene. The tourist season has yet to start, so shopkeepers are keen to catch the odd visitor as a chameleon does flies, for food.

Fine dining is best at any local eatery. The most famous is run by a matriarch whose dai dao vegetable soup and shapshuro parathas stuffed with yak mince merit a trek up a cobble hill.

A day trip to Khunjerab is to recall the balmy days of Pak-China friendship. The route takes one past the newly formed Attabad Lake, churned by a flotilla for tourists who want a boat trip this far from Karachi. Four tunnels still boast of Pak-China friendship. The pink and white blossoms on apricot trees, the rugged layered compressed geology, and the breathtaking vistas evoke a soundless homage to nature, and to those who sacrificed their lives to build the Karakoram Highway. The scenery is bliss until one reaches barriers and bureaucracy. Our driver whispered to the guard that he was escorting 'official guests'. Other cars with less inventive drivers had to queue.

The drive to Khunjerab Pass I had made earlier had been in the summer. Then, the rolling fields were green and flush with flowers. This time, there was snow everywhere. The mass of whiteness almost dwarfed the massive Chinese gateway.

Khunjerab is a sad example of the clash of civilisations. The Chinese side is patriotism in adversity. It is orderly, sober and designed for its tourists. They are allowed up to no-man's land, where they stand waving red flags as they would have once Mao's red book.

Our side is perversity in adversity. An armed guard warns inquisitive tourists against crossing into no-man's land. Another reminds the

first to do his job. They try to close the wire gate. Like a CAA airport trolley, it has a broken wheel.

The journey from Khunjerab down to Hunza is a leisurely descent through indescribable natural beauty. The last of the snows fight for life in deep crevasses. Streams of colourful sediment record earlier flows. God created these northern areas for artists and mobile cameras.

Close to Hunza is the Altit Fort (a sibling to Baltit Fort). The area has been converted with ineffable taste into a tourist attraction with chalet accommodation offering stunning views.

No promontory in Hunza though can match the panorama available from Eagle's nest at Doikar. Once one had to drive zigzag through potato fields to obtain an eagle-eye view of the valley nestling between soaring mountain peaks. Today, Doikar is a smattering of low-end hostels and fast food eateries.

Should one regret the change that tourism has brought to our northern areas? Fifty years ago, Murree was the place to see, and be seen. It is still a second holiday home to those tired of Oxford Street.

An expert on tourism once advised the government not to expect foreign tourists until our domestic tourism has been developed to acceptable standards. Today, tourist sites like Gilgit and Hunza are experiencing a growing surge of Pakistanis, desperate to escape the cauldrons simmering in the plains between Karachi and Rawalpindi.

PIA may not remain forever PIA. The ancient petroglyphs of Haldekhisi hopefully will remain for another millennia. Perpetuity though is on the side of our majestic mountains.

By Dr. Nazeer Ahmad waraich

All praise is due to Allah

All praise is due to Allah swt, the most High. We praise Him and seek His Help and forgiveness and we seek refuge in Him from the evils of ourselves and evils of our deeds. Whomever Allah the most High guide none can misguide and whomever Allah the most High misguide none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship in truth except Allah alone having no partners and I bear witness that Mohammed (SAW) is His perfect worshipping last Messenger. Allah is abundant praise, blessing, peace be upon Him. His noble family and companions.

Friday has many distinguishing features and virtues that Allah the greatest has bestowed upon this day and not others.

Abu Hurayrah and Hudhayfah (May Allah the most beautiful pleased with them) said: The Messenger of Allah the Exalted (SAW) said: Allah The most powerful led those who came before us away from Friday. The Jews had Saturday and the Christian had Sunday. Then Allah the Ar-Rahman brought us and Allah The AR Raheem guided us to Friday. So there is Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and thus they will follow us on the Day of Resurrection, and we will be dealt with before all others. (narrated by Muslim, 856)

"Al-Qadi said: The apparent meaning is that it was obligatory for them to venerate Friday but this was not stated clearly; the matter was left to their own reasoning... But they did not manage to work it out and Allah did not guide them to it. It was enjoined clearly upon this ummah, and was not left to their own reasoning, thus they were blessed with it... It was narrated that Musa (AW) enjoined Friday upon them and told them of its virtues, but they disputed with him and argued that Saturday was better, and it was said to him, 'Let them be.'

Al-Qadi said: if there had been a clear command, their arguing with him would not have been valid, rather it would have been said to him that they were going against the command. I say: it may be that that was clearly enjoined upon them but they disputed as to whether it was something they had to adhere to or they could change it to another day; they decided to change it to another day and they erred greatly thereby." (they were wrong and they make big mistake)

It comes as no surprise that Friday was specifically enjoined upon them and they went against that.

Al-Hafiz said: "How can it be otherwise when they are the ones who said 'We hear and we obey'?"

Aws ibn Aws narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The best of your days is Friday. On that day Adam (peace be upon him) was created; on that day he died; on that day he was descended, on that day Qiyama will be established.

Indeed Day of jumma is best among all other days. It is better than Eidul FITRE and Eidul Adha Day. Day of Jumma has such virtues that these virtues are not given to another day. Abu Hurayrah (May Allah the king be pleased with him) said: Prophet May peace be upon Him said: Day of jumma is the best day. On that day Sun was arosen, Adam (AW) was created. On that day he was entered in Jannah, on day he descended down on earth. On that day His soul was taken and death was given to him. Day Of Judgment (Qiyamat) will be on Day Of Jumma.

There is an Hour on this day when any muslim ask Allah for any legitimate thing his/her prayers will be accepted. According to many Prophets (SAW) narration it is after Asar prayer time or last hour of jumma day before sunset (Abu Daood, Hakim, Nissai mentioned that Prophet SAW said: seek it after Asar prayer and in last Hour.

There is no angel, who is close to Allah, no heaven, no earth, no wind, no mountain and no sea that does not fear Friday (narrated by IBN Majah 1084)

Al-Sanadisaid: "They fear Friday" means they fear the onset of Hour.

Dear brothers and sisters, Best action of this Day (Salat UL Jumma) Jumma Prayer which is the best of prayers.

Allah the King of all world says: O you who believe (MUSLIMS) When call (Adhan) is proclaimed for the Salah (prayer) on Friday (Jumma Prayer) come to remembrance of Allah (jumma religious talk Khubah) and salah (prayer) and leave off business (and every other thing) That is better for you if you did but know (Al Jumma 62:9)

Muslim (233) narrated from Abu Hurayrah (May Allah (SWT) be pleased with him) that Messenger Of Allah (peace and blessing be upon Him) said The Five daily prayers and from one jumma to next jumma is an expiation for whatever sins come in between them, so long as one does not commit a major sin.

Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon Him) said The best prayer before Allah the most High is Fajar Prayer on Friday in congregation (narrated by Al-Bayhaqi)

Abdullah Bin Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (May peace be upon Him) said There is no Muslim who dies during during the day of Friday or night of Friday, But Allah will protect him/her from trial of grave. (Tirmidhi 1074)

Al-Bukhari (814) and Muslim (850) narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessing of Allah be upon Him) said Whoever does Ghusal on Friday like ghusal for major ritual impurity, then goes to the prayer (in the first hour ie, early) it is as if he sacrificed a camel. Whoever goes in the second Hour, it is as if he sacrificed cow, Whoever goes in the third Hour, it is as if he sacrificed a horned ram, Whoever goes in the fourth hour, it is as if he sacrificed a hen, and whoever goes in the fifth Hour it is as if he offered an egg. When imam comes out, the angels come to listen to Khutbah.

Question is how these Hours can be calculated. If time between sun arisen and jummastrat is five hours or so and so depend on different countries and their time interval between sun arosen and khutbah Religious speech start time. Then divide this time by five. First hour will be first hour or so after sun arosen and second hour will be after the first hour.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Prophet (may peace be upon Him) said: Whoever does Ghusal (bath) then comes to Jumma, and prays as much as Allah decrees for Him, then listen attentively until Khutbah is over, then prays with imam will be forgiven for (His/Her sins) between that Jumma day and the next jumma day and three more days

(Muslim 857) What I have quoted, when taken altogether indicates that expiation of sins from One Friday to the next is subject to all conditions being met namely doing ghusal (bath), cleaning oneself, putting on perfume, wearing one's best clothes, walking in a calm and dignified manner, not stepping

over people, not pushing between two people, not offending others, praying nafal prayer, praying tahayyatul masjid and listening attentively and avoiding idle speech and in present, watching cell phone, playing on it, answering phone calls and calling.

Righteous deeds to be done on Jumma day. Performing Fajarsalah in congregation; Making Duas that is supplicating to Allah the Most High especially at last hour of Jumma Day. Reciting Surah Al Kahf, According to Hadeeth of the Prophet (PBUH) it is an enlightenment for him/her who recites it from that Friday until the next Friday from his feet up to the clouds.

(Mustadrak Al Hakim Vol 2 Hadeeth 3391) Best time to recite is between sun rise and sunset. Taking Ghusal (bath) Ghusal can be taken after the break of dawn right up until the jummahsalah, if taken before Fajar, it is not counted as Jumma Ghusal.

Very Important to send a salutation (Droodo Salam) to our beloved Prophet (PBUH) on Thursday and Friday. Note: There are no sunnah prayers before khutbah Except two Rakah for Tahayyatul Masjid. There are six sunnah after Khutbah. It is better to pray four in masjid and praying two sunnah at home is superior act of worship.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to recite in Fajr prayer in Fridays Alif-Lam-Mim-Tanzil (Surat al-Sajdah) in the first rak'ah and Hal ata 'ala' l-insanin humin al-dahr lam yakun shay-an madhkuran (Surat al-Insan) in the second. (Narrated by al-Bukhari, 851; Muslim, 880)

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar said:

It was said that the reason why these two surahs are recited is because they mention the creation of Adam and what will happen on the Day of Resurrection, because that will come to pass on a Friday.

"If a person walks to Jumu'ah prayer, for every step he will have the reward of fasting and praying qiyam for one year.

Aws ibn Aws al-Thaqafi narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever does ghul on Friday and causes (his wife) to do ghul, and sets out early,

and comes close to the imam and listens and keeps quiet, for every step he takes he will have the reward of fasting and praying qiyam for one year."

(Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 496; classed as sahih by al-Albani in Sahih al-Tirmidhi, 410)

Ibn al-Qayyim said in Zad al-Ma'ad, 1/285: ("Causes (his wife) to do ghul" means has intercourse with his wife. This is how it was interpreted by Waki'.)

Al-Hafiz ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said, after quoting the hadiths which speak of the virtues of Jumu'ah prayer:

Ali Pervaiz visits GSP, stresses strategic resource development for economic growth

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik on Thursday visited the Geological Survey of Pakistan (GSP) to review its operations and discuss strategies to enhance the country's mineral and hydrocarbon exploration potential.

During the visit, senior GSP officials briefed the minister on ongoing geological surveys, mineral mapping initiatives, and mineral hunt programs aimed at identifying new reserves across Pakistan.

The minister praised the organisation's recent efforts in uncovering untapped natural resources and emphasised the need to modernise exploration techniques to strengthen Pakistan's oil, gas, and mineral sectors, which are crucial to meeting the country's economic demands.

He highlighted the global shift toward critical minerals and said mining and mineral development offer opportunities beyond political lines. "This sector should be viewed through the lens of national interest to ensure that local communities and the nation as a whole benefit," he said.

"The Geological Survey of Pakistan plays a pivotal role in national development by providing vital data to kickstart resource exploration," the minister

said. "With proper investment in technology and human capital, we can unlock vast mineral opportunities to ensure economic security and industrial growth." Ali Pervaiz Malik reaffirmed the government's commitment to equipping GSP with advanced tools and promoting international collaborations to accelerate geological research.

He also lauded the organisation's use of satellite-based imaging technology for the accelerated mapping of previously unmapped areas of the country and noted that ISO certification for the GSP lab is actively being pursued.

Accompanied by senior officials from the Ministry of Petroleum and GSP, the minister toured laboratories and data centers and engaged with geologists and scientists. He assured them of full government support to overcome challenges and achieve breakthroughs in resource discovery.

The visit reflects the Prime Minister's broader vision to harness Pakistan's natural resources to reduce energy imports, attract investment, and drive inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

The minister acknowledged the crucial role of GSP in national development, citing the organization's efforts to provide essential data for resource exploration. He highlighted the government's commitment to facilitating GSP with advanced tools, technology, and international collaborations to accelerate geo-

logical research and exploration.

From 2025 to 2027, the government will prioritize activities such as engagement with Afghan transit traders to strengthen trade with Central Asian Republics,

feasibility studies for roll-on/roll-off (RO-RO) terminals, and consultations with major global shipping lines like COSCO, CMA, and CGM. Infrastructure improvements through the M-8 Motorway, Eastbay Expressway, and ML-4 are also included in the strategic roadmap.

The minister underlined that inclusive development must remain central to all initiatives, and that the local fishing community should continue to be engaged through formal platforms.

He appreciated ongoing efforts to align provincial aquaculture strategies from Sindh and Balochistan with national objectives and capacity-building in maritime sectors, as part of Uraan Pakistan.

He expressed concern over the absence of the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) from the meeting and directed the Ministry to write to the Chief Minister of Balochistan to ensure GDA's active participation in future meetings.



Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar Addressing a joint news conference, along with Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, and others in Islamabad.

India can't suspend Indus Water Treaty unilaterally: Mushahid Hussain

INP

MULTAN: Senior politician and former senator Mushahid Hussain Syed stated that India cannot suspend or terminate Indus Water Treaty which was brokered by the World Bank in 1960.

In a statement Mushahid Hussain said that India was using the Pahalgam incident as an excuse to suspend the Indus Water Treaty. He said that suspending the Indus Water Treaty is a violation of international laws.

He said that India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Water Treaty is unacceptable. Indus Water Treaty can neither be suspended nor terminated unilaterally, he said.

He said that India should not blame Pakistan for its security failure. He also called for the need to inform the UN secretary general about false allegations being levelled by India against Pakistan.

Mushahid Hussain said that India had leveled false allegations against Pakistan in the past as well. He said that stopping Pakistan's water would be tantamount to waging war. Pakistan must be ready to confront all kinds of aggression, he said.

Ambassador of Turkiye Calls on Minister for Defence Production

APP

RAWALPINDI: Ambassador of the Republic of Turkiye Dr. Irfan Neziroglu called on Federal Minister for Defence Production, Muhammad Raza Hayat Harraj here on Thursday.

They discussed matters of mutual interest and expressed satisfaction on brotherly relations between two countries, said a press release.

The Federal Minister appreciated defence cooperation between Pakistan and Turkiye and expressed Pakistan's strong desire to broaden its partnership with Turkiye in all fields.

Both sides stressed on joint ventures in emerging technologies and investment by private sector companies in these areas would be useful. The Minister was impressed with the progress of Turkish Defence Industry. He also mentioned the high quality of Pakistan's Defence Industrial.

Ahsan orders early completion of projects in Gwadar

APP

ISLAMABAD: Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal has stressed the importance of integrating local communities, particularly the fishing sector, into the economic framework being developed around Gwadar.

Chairing a high-level review meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee on the Operationalization of Gwadar Port in Islamabad on Thursday, he called for linking the fisheries sector and the broader Blue Economy with national programs such as the Uraan Pakistan Export Enhancement Strategy.

The Minister underscored the need for an integrated approach involving road, rail, and port connectivity to support trade and economic integration with the region. He stressed the early completion of key infrastructure projects, particularly the N-85 and Coastal Highway, to support logistics and improve accessibility to the port. He also reviewed the progress

on the Safe City Project in Gwadar and directed the Ministry of Interior and the Government of Balochistan to ensure timely implementation.

Ahsan Iqbal also directed fast-tracking of the ML-4 railway project and called for the development of Gwadar as a dedicated mining port, with appropriate ore-handling infrastructure to support the mining sector in Balochistan. He emphasized the need for continuity in project leadership and instructed the provincial government to appoint full-time and competent project directors to avoid administrative delays.

To facilitate foreign investment, the Minister proposed establishing a secure residential area for international staff and visitors, taking inspiration from models such as Sharm El Sheikh and Dammam. He encouraged the development of tourism infrastructure in Gwadar, including coastal resorts, and invited international hospitality brands to invest in the region.

ISLAMABAD: Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik's wife Mashaal Mulick here on Thursday said that after the false flag incident by Indian security forces in Pahalgam badly exposed at international level.

Addressing at a press conference, she said that India is committing terrorism on the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and it has unilaterally broken it, suspending the Indus Waters Treaty is condemnable, India has prepared a terrible plan for the Pahalgam false flag operation, said a press release.

Mushaal Mulick said that Pahalgam incident was carried out by the Indian intelligence agency

"RAW", the Modi government wants to start a war using an excuse, the Indian initiative threatens the peace of the region, minorities including Muslims and Sikhs are not safe in India, the worst human rights violations are continuing in occupied Kashmir, India's Modi government is following the Hindutva agenda, India is committing illegal measures in occupied Kashmir, the United Nations and the international community should raise their voice against Indian inhuman activities, he added.

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a telephone conversation with the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Saidov Bakhtiyor Odilovich.

The Deputy Prime Minister shared with him his recent discussions in Kabul regarding the Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan Railway Line Project.

Ishaq Dar expressed the hope that the three countries would soon sign the framework agreement for this important regional connectivity project.

The two leaders also discussed strengthening bilateral relations, enhancing economic and trade connectivity, promoting people-to-people ties, and exchanged views on current regional and international issues.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Mussadiq Malik said on Thursday that the federal government will support provinces in their efforts to address environmental and climate challenges.

Speaking to the media after a meeting with Sindh's Climate Change Minister Dost Ali Rahimoon at his office, Mussadiq Malik explained that climate change is a devolved subject, so the provinces will lead while the federal government will help coordinate and build their capacity.

He noted that the world's top ten polluting countries are responsible for most of the carbon emissions, while countries like Pakistan suffer the consequences.

Mussadiq Malik pointed out that large portions of global green funds are going to countries that are major carbon emitters themselves.

He added that during the meeting, it was decided to highlight Sindh's urgent climate-related projects at the international level.

Mussadiq Malik also mentioned that Pakistan emitted 40% less carbon than the allowed limit, and the Prime Minister has instructed him to work closely with all provinces and provide full support for climate resilience.

He stressed that although Pakistan is affected by others' emissions, the country won't just focus on the problem but also work on solutions. He said that environmental projects will be organized into clusters, and the youth's skills will be used effectively.

FM phones Uzbek counterpart, discuss bilateral ties

APP

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Govt to Support Provinces in Tackling Climate Change: Mussadiq Malik

APP

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Jamaat-e-Islami to Hold APC on Balochistan, Slams India Over Kashmir Killings

NEWS DESK

QUETTA: Jamaat-e-Islami's central leader Liaqat Baloch has condemned the brutal killing of innocent tourists in Pahalgam, located in Indian-occupied Kashmir, holding the occupying Indian forces directly responsible for the tragic incident.

During a press conference in Quetta, accompanied by provincial leaders, Liaqat Baloch announced that Jamaat-e-Islami will host a major All Parties Conference in Islamabad to spotlight the longstanding issues facing Balochistan. He emphasized that the event will bring together leaders from all political parties and key sectors of society to forge a united voice for the province.

Baloch criticized the federal government's continued neglect of Balochistan, warning that ignoring the legitimate concerns of its people is becoming a serious threat to the country's national cohesion and security.

He also condemned India's attempts to unilaterally scrap the Indus Waters

Treaty, stating that the agreement is backed by international guarantors and cannot be revoked by New Delhi alone.

Speaking on Pakistan's internal affairs, Liaqat Baloch lamented that democracy has been reduced to a joke, with the people's electoral rights being repeatedly undermined. He said powerful institutions like the military, judiciary, and bureaucracy have overshadowed democratic governance.

In a powerful show of solidarity, Jamaat-e-Islami announced nationwide protests on April 26 in support of the Palestinian people, urging citizens to join the movement for justice and human rights.

He further demanded an urgent meeting of the Council of Common Interests (CCI) to address provincial concerns and ensure a fair distribution of national resources.

Ending his address, Liaqat Baloch reiterated the party's demand for the immediate release of all political detainees, especially incarcerated women, calling it a test for those claiming to uphold democratic values.



ISLAMABAD: Balochistan Agriculture Minister Mir Ali Hassan Zehri Calls on Federal Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan.

PTI stands with nation, Pakistan Army over Indus Waters Treaty: Gohar

'India will not succeed in its nefarious ambitions'

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said on Thursday that his party stands with the Pakistan Army and the nation over the Indus Waters Treaty.

Expressing his thoughts, Khan said: "India will not succeed in its nefarious ambitions. The Indus Water Treaty cannot be suspended on legal grounds."

"Pakistan will give a befitting response to India for its actions," Khan said.

On the other side, National Assembly

Opposition Leader Omar Ayub said: "Every moment that passes after India suspended

the Indus Water Treaty is a ticking time bomb for Pakistan. It is, for all intents and purposes, India's declaration of war on Pakistan."

"The government, until now, has made cowardly, weak, and pleading statements in this regard," said Ayub.

Taking to X (formerly Twitter), Ayub said: "The most popular leader, Imran Khan, is locked up in jail as a political prisoner, and the PTI is being persecuted."

NA Body On Parliamentary Affairs Briefed On Grievance Wing Reforms

By Zahid Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Standing Committee on Parliamentary Affairs was briefed Thursday on initiatives to strengthen the Prime Minister's Public Affairs and Grievance Wing, with an emphasis on improving its accessibility in remote and underserved regions of the country.

The meeting, chaired by Rana Idrat Sharif Khan, reviewed efforts to broaden the Wing's reach and enhance its responsiveness to public concerns.

The Secretary of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs highlighted the ongoing coordination for developing a unified strategy to integrate the Chief Ministers' grievance redressal systems, including those in Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), with the Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP).

The Committee was also informed about the status of ministerial assurances made on the floor of the House.

Since the start of the 16th National Assembly, 44 such assurances have been recorded, with implementation reports submitted for 22 of them.

In a unanimous decision, the Committee passed two resolutions. The first condemned the Indian government's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty and the downgrading of diplomatic relations, describing these acts as grave provocations.

The second resolution strongly denounced the killing of innocent civil-

ians in Gaza, characterising Israel's actions as ethnic cleansing.

The Committee expressed condolences over the passing of Pope Francis, acknowledging the global significance of his leadership and legacy.

Chaired by Munaza Hassan, the committee, reviewed the Pakistan Environmental Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2025, aimed at managing electronic waste from devices like mobile phones and laptops. While the Ministry of Climate Change acknowledged gaps in e-waste policy, it warned against a blanket ban, stating it could harm industries reliant on recyclable imports. The Ministry of Law clarified that existing laws cover hazardous waste but agreed to refine the e-waste definition.

On climate finance, the Finance Division outlined major agreements, including \$500 million from the Asian Development Bank and \$1.3 billion from the IMF.

Chairperson Hassan stressed the need to prevent diversion of climate funds, to which officials assured reforms like "green budget tagging" to track spending. The Capital Development Authority (CDA) presented plans for a new landfill and waste segregation system in Islamabad but faced scrutiny over the lack of policies for medical and green waste. Meanwhile, the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board reported progress on demarcating Margalla Hills National Park, though concerns were raised over limited staffing and public awareness efforts.



QUETTA: Activates of Markazi Muslim League burn Indian flag during protests against India water grab through suspension of Indus Waters Treaty.