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India's weaponization of Indus Waters is unacceptable: PM

PM reiterates offer for transparent int'l investigation into Pahalgam incident

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to work closely with Iran for peace, stability, and development in the region.

He was talking to Foreign Minister of Iran, Seyed Abbas Araghchi, who called on him in Islamabad today.

At the outset, the Prime Minister expressed his sincere condolences to the Iranian side over the tragic explosion in Bandar Abbas that had led to the loss of precious lives and injured hundreds of people.

During the warm and cordial meeting, the Prime Minister conveyed his respectful regards to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and warm wishes for President Masoud Pezeshkian.

The Prime Minister shared Pakistan's serious concerns over the prevailing tensions in South Asia, as a result of India's provocative behavior since the Pahalgam incident.

He categorically rejected any attempts to link Pakistan to the incident, without sharing any evidence.

He said Pakistan has offered that an international transparent, neutral and credible investigation be conducted to ascertain the

facts behind the Pahalgam incident.

He also stressed that India's weaponization of the Indus Waters Treaty was unacceptable and a redline for the people of Pakistan.

On the occasion, the Iranian Foreign Minister conveyed warm greetings from the Iranian leadership to the Prime Minister and reaffirmed Iran's commitment to strengthening its relations with Pakistan and also playing its part in bringing peace and stability in South Asia.

Therefor, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has urged the United Kingdom, which enjoys good relations with both Pakistan and India, to play its part in de-escalating the situation in the region.

He was talking to UK High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ms. Jane Marriott, who called on him in Islamabad today.

The Prime Minister shared Pakistan's perspective on the prevailing situation in South Asia, in the aftermath of the Pahalgam incident. While rejecting India's attempts to link Pakistan to the incident without providing any evidence, the Prime Minister reiterated his offer for a transparent, credible and neutral international investigation into the incident and invited the U.K. to join it.



Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir (right) addresses participants of the 15th National Workshop Balochistan at GHQ.

COAS vows to defeat nefarious designs of hostile elements

APP

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir, has warned that the nefarious designs of hostile elements, who seek to incite violence, spread fear, and destabilize Balochistan province, will not be allowed to succeed.

He was interacting with participants of 15th National Workshop Balochistan at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi today. The Army Chief highlighted Government's persistent focus on improving the socioeconomic profile of Balochistan, and stated that the scale and scope of ongoing and planned initiatives should serve to dispel the blatant disinformation in this regard. He said many development projects have already started bearing fruit benefiting the people of Balochistan. Appreciating the role of the civil society members in raising awareness among the people of Balochistan, especially the youth, the Army Chief emphasized their role in enabling the progress leading to prosperity.

General Syed Asim Munir underscored that for-

eign sponsored terrorism remains the gravest threat to Balochistan's security and development.

Reaffirming Pakistan's resolve, the Army Chief stated that terrorism knows no religion, sect, or ethnicity, and must be confronted with unwavering national unity. He said terrorist groups that perpetrate terror in name of Baloch identity to advance their petty insidious agenda, are a blemish on Baloch honor and patriotism.

General Syed Asim Munir emphasized that Pakistan seeks peace in the region and beyond, however, if Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity is violated, Pakistan will respond with full force to preserve its national prestige and wellbeing of its people. He said Pakistan's Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies will continue to fight menace of terrorism with the complete support of the people of Pakistan. Since 2016, the 15th National Workshop Balochistan brings together a large number of male and female parliamentarians, bureaucrats, members of civil society, youth, academia and media representatives, with maximum representation from Balochistan.

Indian actions threaten regional stability, President Zardari tells Chinese envoy

INP

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan Jiang Zaidong on Monday called on President Asif Ali Zardari here.

In the meeting, they discussed matters of bilateral importance, with a particular focus on the ongoing situation between Pakistan and India in the aftermath of the Pahalgam incident.

President Zardari expressed concern over the recent irresponsible and aggressive rhetoric by the Indian government, saying that such actions threaten regional peace and stability.

The Chinese ambassador reaffirmed the enduring and time-tested friendship between China and Pakistan, describing the relationship as one of "ironclad brothers" who have always supported each other in challenging times. He thanked President Zardari for sharing Pakistan's perspective, and emphasised that China would always support Pakistan to achieve the common desire of both countries to secure peace and stability in South Asia.

The president conveyed his deep appreciation and gratitude to the Chinese government for its consistent support.

Supreme Court reserves verdict in military trial case

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court's constitutional bench on Monday reserved its ruling on the intra-court appeal challenging the verdict that barred the trial of civilians in military courts.

The hearing on the appeal has been completed, and a short verdict is expected to be announced within this week. Justice Aminuddin Khan, who is heading the seven-member bench hearing the case, said that a brief judgment will be delivered later this week.

During the hearing, Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan said that between 3pm and 7pm on May 9, attacks

were carried out on 39 military installations. Of these, 23 were in Punjab, 8 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and one in Sindh. The entire episode of May 9 was carried out with organised planning.

While presenting arguments, the attorney general said that even if the events of May 9 were a reaction, such actions cannot be condoned. "Our country is not an ordinary one; due to its geography, we constantly face significant threats," he said.

The attorney general informed the court that disciplinary action was taken by the military over negligence in the Jinnah House attack, and three senior officers were retired without pension and benefits.

We will go to any extent to defend our sovereignty: Tarar warns India

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has warned India against any aggression saying that "we will go to any extent to defend our sovereignty."

The minister was talking to media after a visit to the Line of Control (LoC) along with local and international media to have a first-hand knowledge of the situation in Azad Kashmir. The Ministry of Information has arranged a two-day visit to the LoC to counter Indian propaganda.

Tarar told media people that Islamabad always advocated peace and "we have repeatedly proven through our actions that

we are a peace loving nation."

Before making accusations, India should take notice of the human rights violations in its occupied Kashmir, he added.

The purpose of Tarar's initiative to take international media journalists to the LoC was to expose the false and baseless propaganda by India against Pakistan. Journalists were taken to the locations that India had falsely labeled as alleged terrorist camps.

He said that India has repeatedly made baseless accusations against Pakistan. However, today "we have presented all the facts before both international and local media. The locations that India has long claimed to be imaginary terrorist camps are, in fact, areas inhabited by ordinary civilians.

Pakistan successfully test launches Fatah series missile

APP

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan on Monday successfully conducted a training launch of the Fatah series surface-to-surface missile with a range of 120 kilometers, according to an official statement by the military's media wing.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the launch was carried out as part of the ongoing military "EX INDUS".

The objective of the training launch was to ensure the operational readiness of troops and to validate key technical parameters of the missile system, including its advanced navigation system and enhanced targeting accuracy, the ISPR said.

The launch was witnessed by senior officials from the army, as well as scientists and engineers associated with the country's strategic organisations.

Following the test, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza and Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir congratulated the participating personnel and expressed full confidence in the operational preparedness and technical capabilities of the armed forces to defend Pakistan's territorial integrity against any external threat.

This marks the second missile launch by Pakistan's military within two days, taking place amid ongoing regional tensions following recent developments in Pakistan-India relations.

Balochistan Governor calls on PM Shehbaz Sharif

APP

ISLAMABAD: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhel Monday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and discussed various matters of the province.

During the meeting, the prime minister stressed that development of Balochistan and the welfare of its people was top priority of the Federal government.

The Balochistan governor assured the prime minister of the province's full cooperation and solidarity in the wake of Indian aggression following Pahalgam incident.

Pakistan's brave armed forces ready to confront enemy: PM

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday reiterated that the entire nation stood united with the armed forces of Pakistan against any aggression from India, emphasizing that the brave armed forces were always ready to confront the



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif speaking at a podium during a press conference.

enemy. He was talking to a delegation of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) led by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari which met him here at the PM House.

The delegation included Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Naveed Qamar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti, and Senator Saleem Mandviwalla.

PM Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that while Pakistan desired peace and stability in the region, it possessed the capability to deliver a strong and effective response in defense of its sovereignty.

Described India's provocative behavior following the Pahalgam incident as deeply regrettable, the prime minister noted that Pakistan not only expressed concern over the Pahalgam incident but also called for an impartial and independent investigation.

He firmly rejected India's baseless attempts to link Pakistan to the incident without any evidence.

The prime minister criticized India's unilateral and illegal suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, calling it an act of "water aggression," which was unacceptable as water represented a red line for the people of Pakistan.

He further stated that Pakistan was actively pursuing diplomatic efforts to expose Indian aggression, and that he had met with ambassadors from several countries to present Pakistan's perspective. PM Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan will also raise this issue at the United Nations Security Council in order to expose India's true face and its nefarious designs to the world.

SBP slashes policy rate by 100bps to 11pc

INP

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Monday cut the policy rate by 100 basis points (bps), bringing it down to 11 percent.

In a statement, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided to reduce the interest rate, citing the lower-than-anticipated April inflation — largely the result of falling prices in perishable foods and energy.

April recorded a modest inflation rate of just 0.3%, mainly due to the high compari-

son base from the previous year.

This decline was driven by reduced prices of essential food items like wheat, onions, potatoes, and some pulses, along with lower electricity and fuel costs.

Since these goods hold considerable weight in the Consumer Price

Index (CPI), even slight changes in their prices can significantly impact overall inflation. The MPC reviewed the overall financial and fiscal situation, major economic indicators, data of different sectors, and major developments taken place since the announcement of the previous monetary policy.

Sarfraz Bugti lays Foundation Stone of Sui-Kashmore Road Project

APP

SUI: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Monday laid the foundation stone of the Sui-Kashmore Road, calling it milestone towards a new era of development and prosperity in the region.

Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony held in Sui, Balochistan CM Sarfraz Bugti said that "the launch of the Sui-Kashmore road would usher a new era of development, uplift of deprived area, and stability for the region".

Chief Minister said the project would significantly transform Dera Bugti and surrounding areas by improving connectivity and strengthening the local economy.

"The Sui-Kashmore Road is a journey towards development and stability. It will not

only improve transportation but also boost trade, create employment opportunities, and make access to healthcare and education easier for the people," said Bugti.

The ceremony was attended by Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Petroleum Mian Khan Bugti, Chairman District Council Dera Bugti Mir Ghulam Nabi Shambani, local government representatives, tribal elders, and a large number of local people.

Project officials briefed the Chief Minister and other dignitaries on the scope, timeline, and cost of the road, emphasizing its importance for the region's infrastructure and economy. The road is the first mega communication project in Dera Bugti, aimed at facilitating the transportation of agricultural goods to markets, thereby benefiting local farmers.



SUI: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony held in Sui.

India pushing region toward war, Pakistan committed to peace: DPM Dar

'Pakistan will not take the first step, but will respond with full force if aggression is carried out by India.'

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has made it clear to the international community that Pakistan will not take the first step in any situation, but will respond with full force if aggression is carried out by India.

Speaking at Regional Dialogue 2025 organised by Institute of Regional Studies in Islamabad, Dar stated that the world is going through a difficult phase, especially the region, which is facing serious challenges. He emphasised that peace and prosperity should be the shared goal of all.

He said Pakistan has always advocated peace in the region and consistently raised its voice against aggression.

Referring to the recent incident in Pahalgam, he described it as a false flag operation aimed at diverting attention from the ongoing freedom movements within India.

He added that several Indian states are witnessing serious human rights violations and that India's actions are endangering the lives of millions in the region.

Dar also mentioned that in recent days, he has held dis-

cussions with leaders of various countries regarding the regional situation. Briefings have been provided at the Foreign Office to ambassadors of different nations and representatives of the United Nations.

Ishaq Dar stated that following India's recent restrictions, Pakistan's National Security Committee took key decisions, which were implemented immediately.

He said India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty is a serious violation of international law, adding that India does not have the unilateral authority to suspend or terminate the treaty.

Dar accused India of pushing the region toward war and said Pakistan responded in kind to India's actions while remaining committed to regional peace.

The Foreign Minister also called the Pahalgam incident a false flag operation orchestrated by India. He said global leaders had urged Pakistan to exercise restraint. While reaffirming Pakistan's firm policy of condemning all forms of terrorism, Dar questioned how a case related to the Pahalgam attack was registered within just ten minutes of the incident.

He said that the National Security Committee had decided to give a strong response to any aggression. While the regional situation is evolving, Pakistan will not take the first step under any circumstances.

However, if aggression is imposed, Pakistan will respond with full national resolve and strength.

Dar added that Pakistan had swiftly thwarted Indian Air Force's attempted adventurism and reaffirmed that the country would never allow its territory to be used against any other nation.

He urged the international community to take immediate notice of the worsening regional situation.

The Deputy Prime Minister also noted that the United Nations has passed clear resolutions on the right to self-determination in occupied territories. He said there have been serious violations of these UN Security Council resolutions in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

The Kashmir issue, he stressed, cannot be sidelined and must be resolved in accordance with UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Journalists Union Gujranwala (GUJ) organized a seminar and rally at the Union Secretariat on World Press Freedom Day



By Khawaja Farooq

GUJRANWALA: A seminar was held under the auspices of the Gujranwala Union of Journalists (GUJ) at the Union Secretariat to mark World Press Freedom Day. The seminar was presided over by GUJ President Chaudhry Yasser Ali Jatt, while Secretary Shafiqat Imran performed his duties. Raja Habib, Vice President of the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), was specially invited, along with journalist Khawaja Farooq, who joined from New York.

Prayers were offered for the forgiveness and elevated status of late senior journalists who served the field of journalism, including Ijaz Mir, Hafiz Khalil-ur-Rehman Zia, Mirza Azim, Sajid Bazmi, Adil Akram, Mian Abid, Sheikh Rizwan, Muhammad Riaz (Cameraman), Haji Mazhar (Photographer), and others.

The journalistic contributions of Gujranwala's veteran journalists—Muhammad Azam Butt, Malik Muhammad Akram, Ata-ul-Haq Bhatti, Dr. Umar Naseer, and Tariq Munir Butt—were also acknowledged and praised.

Speakers & Key Points:

Speakers, including Raja Habib, Dr. Umar Naseer, Muhammad Akram Malik, Azam Butt, Adam Pal, Khawaja Farooq, Rana Ansar,

Sheikh Nadeem, Lala Imran Amin, Hafiz Irfan, Fahad Bashir Jarrar, Raja Majid, Faisal Farooq Sagar, Abid Sialvi, Hafiz Irfan Naveed, Muhammad Shahbaz, Muhammad Faisal Mughal, Mateen Bazmi, Raja Ateeq Anwar, and others, highlighted the challenges faced by journalists today. They stated:

"In the current era, where people demand reporting aligned with their desires rather than facts, journalism has become more difficult than ever."

"PFUJ has a long history of struggle

since 1951, with journalists sacrificing their freedom and enduring imprisonment for press freedom."

"Press freedom is being stifled in Pakistan, and the PECA Act is an unjust law that we outright reject."

"GUJ has always stood by working journalists, providing them dignity and support in difficult times."

Demand for Press Club Elections:

Journalists at the seminar raised concerns about obstacles in holding Press Club elections and unanimously demanded immediate elections. Leaders, including PFUJ Vice President Raja Habib, Dr. Umar Naseer (Chairman of the Professional Journalists Group), GUJ President Chaudhry Yasser Ali, and General Secretary Shafiqat Imran, emphasized that the government is ready to allocate funds for a Media Town and Press Club in Gujranwala—but only if elections are held and a registered leadership is restored.

Condolences & Rally:

The seminar also offered condolences on the demise of Dr. Umar Naseer's mother. Later, a rally for press freedom was held, advocating for freedom of expression.

Participants:

The event was attended by a large number of journalists, including senior media professionals, camera operators, sub-editors, reporters, and editors, such as:

Mian Ateeq Yusuf Zia (Chairman, District Press Club)

Mian Sabih-ur-Rehman (PFUJ Federal Executive Member)

Rana Naveed Gulzar (Former PFUJ General Secretary)

Faisal Mughal (President, Cameramen Association) - Mateen Bazmi (General Secretary)

And many others, including young reporters and media workers.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhel calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

High Time to Empower Youth: Rana Mashhood

APP

MULTAN: Chairman Prime Minister Youth Programme, Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, on Monday announced that the government was launching National Adolescence and Youth Policy this year for youth's growth and to develop a national cohesion.

While addressing a meeting of business community at Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), he said that significant measures for the youth under a historic policy, aimed at providing education and employment opportunities for them across Pakistan.

"We have devised a policy that offers opportunities to everyone, from students in elite universities to

children working in brick kilns," he added.

"This is the first time we are focusing on the issues of young people under age group of 10 to 15 years. During this age, children undergo mental and physical growth, for which necessary steps are being taken to know these issues," he said.

Rana Mashhood explained that this policy was designed keeping in mind the dreams and aspirations of the youth, and included strategies for the development of young people up to the age of 29.

"We have started a programme to provide better opportunities to youth across Pakistan, from Turbat to Chitral and other areas of the country," he added.

He said that the digital app launched on March 26 had already been downloaded more than 1.6 million times, with its reach surpassing 6 million, adding, "We expect it to reach 10 million, and through this, millions of young people are getting internship opportunities."

"Pakistan has stepped into the digital world, and it is essential that we make full use of it to stay in sync with the global community," he said and added that the government had proposed a budget of Rs 160 billion this year, which was significantly higher than last year's Rs 12 billion.

"This is a historic step for the digital revolution and empowering the youth, and we must all play our part to lead Pakistan toward a bright future," he added.

Chairman Senate Congratulates Nation on Successful Test of Fatah Missile

APP

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Monday congratulated the nation on the successful test of the Fatah missile by the Pakistan Armed Forces, calling it a major achievement in strengthening the country's defence capabilities.

In a statement, he lauded the Armed Forces, scientists, and engineers for their outstanding efforts, saying the successful launch reflects Pakistan's growing strength in modern defence technology.

"The successful test of the Fatah missile is proof of the exceptional technical skills and deep patriotism of our scientists and engineers," Gilani said.

He added that this achievement has given a clear message that Pakistan's defence

was in capable hands, well-equipped to meet today's security challenges.

Gilani also affirmed that Pakistan's brave Armed Forces

were fully capable of responding effectively to any aggression.

He expressed gratitude to Almighty Allah for making the country's defence strong and expressed pride in the dedication of Pakistan's scientific and defence community.

Jam Kamal Khan Chairs First Meeting of National Compliance Advisory Council

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: First meeting of the National Compliance Advisory Council (NCAC), for the National Compliance Centre (NCC), an EDF funded project under the Ministry of Commerce, was held today under the chairmanship of honorable Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan. The meeting was also graced by the Coordinator to PM, Mr. Rana Ehsaan.

NCAC is a governing body formulated for

guidance of National Compliance Centre (NCC) having representation from industry, export associations, FPCCI, international partners, HEC, official representatives of the provinces and relevant federal ministries.

The Executive Director General, MoC highlighted on the preamble of NCC. Dr. Nabeel Amin, Head of compliance NCC gave a comprehensive presentation on the progress, work plan, future roadmap and made by NCC to date and presented agenda items for approval.

Azma slams PTI for boycotting national security briefing

INP

LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has strongly criticised Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) over its decision to boycott a national security briefing, labeling it as a clear manifestation of the party's anti-state mentality.

"This boycott is just another example of PTI's enmity towards the country. What else can one expect from a group that consistently undermines national interests?" Azma said in a press release. She accused

PTI's leadership and supporters, referring to them as the party's 'tigers', of waging a continuous war against Pakistan and its institutions.

Highlighting PTI's past behaviour, Azma said, "This is the same party that never participated in security briefings during its own government,

and then appeared on media complaining — 'What should I do, go to war?' What more can be expected from them? They remain confrontational towards the state to this day."



QUETTA: A QDA worker busy in planting in middle of the road.



Four Pakistani climbers on mission to scale world's highest peaks

SPORTS DESK

GILGIT: Four Pakistani climbers have started their adventure to climb the world's seventh highest peak Dhaulagiri at 8,167 metres, the third highest Kanchenjunga, and the Everest in Nepal.

Renowned Pakistan climber Sajid Ali Sadpara completed his acclimatisation rotation on Dhaulagiri, 8,167m peak, the world's seventh highest mountain in Nepal.

Mr Sadpara had reached the base camp of the peak on April 6 and started his rotation and climbed up to the Camp 3 and descended to the base camp.

Talking to Dawn, he said he had completed the rotation at the peak and now waiting for weather to improve to start his summit push.

He said the summit push would start on May 9 considering weather forecast. He said he would attempt to climb the peak without supplement oxygen and porter support in Alpine style. Son of legendary mountaineer late Muhammad Ali Sadpara, Sajid has already summited the world's eight peaks above eight thousand metres, including the world's second highest peak, K2, Nanga Parbat, Broad Peak, Gasherbrum-I, Gasherbrum-II in Alpine style.



KARACHI Kings batter Irfan Khan Niazi plays a shot as Lahore Qalandars wicket-keeper Sam Billings looks on during the Pakistan Super League match at the Gaddafi Stadium.

Irfan's late heroics stun Qalandars as Kings take thriller

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: In a pulsating encounter at Gaddafi Stadium here on Sunday night, Karachi Kings chased down a revised target of 168 in 14.3 overs to defeat Lahore Qalandars by four wickets in a rain-affected HBL Pakistan Super League match reduced to 15 overs per side.

Irfan Khan's explosive 48 not out off 21 balls, studded with five sixes, turned the game on its head, steering Kings to a dramatic victory with three balls to spare.

The match, a high-stakes affair with playoff implications, was interrupted by a 36-minute rain delay, but the intensity never waned.

Qalandars, batting first, posted a formidable 160-8, powered by Mohammad Naeem and Fakhar Zaman scintillating show. Kara-chi's chase, initially rocked by early wickets, was resurrected by Irfan's fearless strokeplay.

Kings got off to a flying start, with David Warner taking on Asif Afridi's left-arm spin for two sixes and two fours — all through the on-side — in the second over.

They had doubled the score by the end of the third when Harris Rauf announced his arrival with a fast and furious delivery to see Warner (24 off 13, two fours and two sixes) play into his stumps.

Warner's opening partner Tim Seifert (24 off 10, four fours and a six) followed his captain back to the pavilion in the fifth over to hand Asif his first wicket as the scoreboard read 58-2 at the end of the five-over powerplay.

Kings were deeper into problems when Vince holed out Rishad Hossain to Sikandar Raza, who took a brilliant low catch at deep midwicket.

But Saad Baig and Irfan — new on the crease at that point — counterattacked with confidence, the former dancing down to Rishad's leg-spin to club hum through

the cover for four before lifting the bowler over his head for a graceful six as Kings reached the 100-run mark by the end of the ninth over.

The introduction of med-ium pacer Daryl Mitchell in the next over, however, saw the right-arter trap Saad (25 off 15, three fours and a six) lbw before Harris returned to get Khushdil caught at deep point by Raza to leave Karachi needing 52 off 22 with five wickets down.

But Irfan turned it around for Kings when Qalandars captain Shah-een Shah Afridi came in to bowl the 13th over, lofting straight, hooking and pulling the pacer for three sixes before clearing square leg off Harris in the next over, which also saw Mohammad Nabi hit a six and a four. With seven runs to win in the last over, Mitchell struck on the first ball to get Nabi, but Irfan, fittingly, lifted a full toss to see it sailing over long-off to get Kings over the line. Earlier, after being put in to bat first, Qalandars were benefited by impactful knocks by openers Naeem and Fakhar before Abbas Afridi led Karachi's impressive response with the ball.

Naeem hit a swashbuckling 65 off 27, bludgeoning six fours and five sixes, while Fakhar played more of an anchor in his 33-ball 51, which was laced by four fours and three sixes.

After some audacious hits had seen the pair put up 90 on the board by penultimate ball of the eighth over, rain stopped play for more than an hour, with Kings coming back as a better bowling team to break Qalandars' flow of runs, with Abbas taking 4-27.

Naeem — who was dropped at 11 when Aamer Jamal spilled a sitter after the batter had skied a Hasan Ali bouncer in the second over — utilised the field restrictions and his immense power by smacking four fours and as many sixes to reach his half century off only 22 balls in the period.

Ledecky, Walsh break own world records

SPORTS DESK

FORT LAUDERDALE: Katie Ledecky broke her long-standing world record in the 800m freestyle and Gretchen Walsh lowered her 100m butterfly world mark twice in one day as the Tyr Pro Swim meeting in Fort Lauderdale, Florida concluded.

Ledecky shattered her own 800 metres freestyle world record in eight minutes 41.2 seconds finding her best form heading into the world championships.

Ledecky bettered her previous mark of 8:04.79 set nearly a decade ago at the Rio Games that many thought would outlast her career and she pounded her fists on the water in an emotional celebration after seeing her time.

Jillian Cox was second, 19.46sec back on 8:23.58, Claire Weinstein was third in 8:26.06.

It was the sixth time that Ledecky had set a new mark in the event. She took the record from Rebecca Adlington in 2013. The record-breaking swim capped an extraordinary series of performances for the 28-year-old, the most decorated female Olympic swimmer, who posted her second-fastest 400m freestyle time on Thursday — her best in nine years and the second-fastest 1500m freestyle time in history on Wednesday.

The hot streak is a welcome sign for the nine-time Olympic gold medalist Ledecky ahead of the world championships that run from July 11-Aug 3 in Singapore.

Earlier, Walsh became the first woman to break 55 seconds in the 100m butterfly, winning final in a jaw-dropping world record of 54.60sec.

That came hours after she lowered her own world record with a swim of 55.09sec in the preliminaries, improving on the 55.18 she set at the US Olympic trials in Indianapolis last June. Torri Huske was a distant second as she finished in 56.59 seconds.

France's Leon Marchand, who starred at the Paris Olympics with four individual gold medals, departed Fort Lauderdale without a victory.

The 22-year-old closed his campaign with a runner-up finish to Shaine Casas in the 200m individual medley — one of his gold medal events in Paris.



GRETCHEN WALSH OF THE US IN ACTION DURING THE 100M BUTTERFLY FINAL AT THE FORT LAUDERDALE AQUATIC CENTER.

TENDER NOTICE

The Bolan Medical College invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. **TSE-242505699121** Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA. **GOB.T/Fee Rs.1000/-**

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Electrical & Electronic items (Total Item(s) Count: 9)	2%
2	ICT Equipment (Network, surveillance devices, storage devices, Office Equipment) (Total Item(s) Count: 9)	

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 4,500,000 in Previous 03 Years Turn over of at least 4,500,000 PKR in 03 Subsequent Previous Years Presence in Active Tax Payer List Sales Tax Certificate The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan JV is not permissible Submission of the required Bid Security in case Bid Security is not found as required during financial evaluation the bidding firm shall be declared as in-eligible and non-responsive Submission of the required Bidding document Fee ISO 9001:2015 Work Methodology On Company Letter Head. Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) C-6 and above renewed up to June 2025 Bidders must have Office in Balochistan **Procedure of Procurement:** Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed 1,000 PKR **Issuance of tender Documents:** From the date of publication of NIT to 19 May, 2025 during office hours on working days **Last Date of bid submission:** The Tenders must be submitted latest by 19 May, 2025 till 12:00 PM. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 01:00 PM **Address:** abdullahsafi1965@gmail.com Phone no: 3323812066 Email: abdullahsafi1965@gmail.com

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Points to ponder

OR the people of Pakistan to successfully confront the multiple crises the country faces, it is important to honestly acknowledge what ails us. That is what the HRCP's State of Human Rights in 2024 report seeks to do by highlighting the major rights violations and anti-democratic trends that affected Pakistan in the past year. As the report notes, democracy, federalism, the rule of law and the judiciary's independence were all "under heavy strain" in 2024. It can be argued that these and all other crises are interlinked, as a lack of political legitimacy and concord following last year's general elections have exacerbated the existing problems. The report also underlines the fact that militancy shot up last year, with KP and Balochistan the worst affected. The report lists at least 24 deaths caused by vigilante mobs, with some linked to blasphemy allegations. The number of alleged police encounters in Sindh and Punjab alone — close to 5,000 — reiterates the need for urgent police reform and accountability. Crimes against women and children are detailed, while the report also mentions the impact of extreme weather events. It succinctly sums up the major challenges confronting Pakistan thus: "political engineering, economic precarity, religious extremism, gendered violence and ecological collapse".

Instead of alleging that this document — and other reports like it — besmirch the country's fair name, as many amongst the ruling elite usually do, there is a need to calmly consider the points raised by such studies. The fact is that without addressing the numerous problems — chief among which are the rapid erosion of rights and the growing authoritarian tendencies of the rulers — the country faces, it will be next to impossible to deliver social and economic justice to the people of Pakistan. The country cannot prosper unless the masses are guaranteed full constitutional protections, and the state uses compassion as a compass instead of trying to be 'hard'. The HRCP report rightly urges state institutions and political parties "to place human rights at the heart of public policy". And for those who claim to know all about patriotism, they should remember what Mohammad Ali Jinnah has said regarding fundamental rights: "We fought for Pakistan because there was a danger of the denial of these human rights in this Subcontinent." Therefore, the ongoing struggle for basic rights is very much a national duty.

Protesting doctors

THE stand-off between the Punjab government and protesting doctors and nurses has now entered a critical point, with serious implications for patient care. Over two dozen have been dismissed and several others penalised after striking healthcare workers shut down OPDs across the province for nearly a month. Punjab's actions are clearly intended to break the momentum of a dangerous situation: over half a million patients — most of them poor — were reportedly turned away during the last 10 days alone. This is a failure of both sides: the state, for not engaging meaningfully with the protesters earlier, and the doctors, for abandoning their professional duty in pursuit of their demands. The doctors' objections stem from recent reforms that outsource administrative powers — for example, over salaries, transfers, and pensions — from the health department to newly empowered boards of management. While public servants have the right to voice workplace grievances, resorting to strikes that block care for vulnerable patients is ethically indefensible.

At the same time, the state's approach must be questioned. The use of police to forcibly clear protest camps, arrest scores of healthcare professionals and even reportedly terminate the postgraduate training of some doctors will only lead to more indignation. Pakistan already suffers from a healthcare vacuum. With just one doctor for over 1,200 patients, it can scarcely afford to shed skilled personnel, especially in public hospitals that serve the poor. However, it is equally important to underline that no doctor — no matter how justified their complaints — has the right to deny treatment to those in need. The right to protest must never come at the cost of patient welfare. The way forward lies in balancing accountability and negotiation. The government must resist the temptation to punish en masse, and instead, engage with the healthcare professionals. The protesting doctors must uphold their Hippocratic Oath — even while agitating for their rights. It is not a zero-sum game.

By Dr Murad Ali

Why India's treaty hubris could backfire

Following the Modi-led regime's announcement that India was unilaterally abrogating the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in reaction to the Pahalgam incident, several op-eds have reviewed New Delhi's move and its legality.

Signed on September 19, 1960, in Karachi, Pakistan's capital at the time, the treaty is basically an elaborate water-sharing mechanism between the two countries. It allocates control of the eastern rivers — Ravi, Beas and Sutlej — to India and grants Pakistan rights over the western rivers — Indus, Jhelum and Chenab. Fortunately, the treaty survived the wars of 1965 and 1971, the Kargil conflict, and numerous regimes in both countries. Due to this, the World Bank, being the guarantor of this pact, has continually showcased it as a rare success in international water diplomacy.

Before deliberating on the legal, diplomatic and geopolitical implications of India's one-sided approach, I asked a simple question of ChatGPT: Can India unilaterally suspend the Indus Waters Treaty? I received this response: "No, India cannot unilaterally suspend the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) without following the provisions outlined in the agreement". It further stated: "The treaty includes a dispute resolution mechanism and stipulates that any changes or suspension of the treaty would require mutual agreement or, in some cases, be subject to third-party arbitration. In practice, unilaterally suspending or abrogating the treaty would be a highly complex and politically sensitive move, potentially leading to significant diplomatic and legal consequences. Any such action would likely escalate tensions between India and Pakistan and could have broader international implications". Quoted words, no tampering, no editing. After thoroughly reading the 85-page treaty document, this is what any sane and unbiased person would assert about the Indian stance of unilaterally suspending the treaty.

From a legal perspective, the devil is in the details. The treaty document does not include any explicit abrogation clause. Article XII states (3): "The provisions of this treaty may from time to time be modified by a duly ratified treaty concluded for that purpose between the two govern-

ments". The same article further adds that (4): "The provisions of this treaty, or the provisions of this treaty as modified under the provisions of Paragraph (3), shall continue in force until terminated by a duly ratified treaty concluded for that purpose between the two governments".

In the whole treaty, the word 'terminate' is used only once in the above context. Hence, as per Article XII, any attempt at unilateral withdrawal is legally void and internationally untenable. The pact has made it clear that the only legally permissible options are continuation, amendment or termination through mutual consent of both governments. This is a critical legal reality that there is no space for unilateralism. Thus, any Indian assertion or action at unilateral exit from the treaty directly violates the principles of international law.

The reality is that the Modi regime has been finding excuses to revoke the IWT for quite some time. Hence, this is not the first time the treaty has come under political fire. In 2016, following the Uri attack, Prime Minister Modi stated that "Blood and water cannot flow together." Similar threats have been issued by other Indian political leaders from time to time. Pakistan, being a lower riparian country, has been regularly threatened with water aggression. To punish Pakistan, there are voices in India calling for the construction of storage facilities on the western rivers — Indus, Jhelum and Chenab — to choke Pakistan's water supply. While New Delhi has cultivated such intentions, it lacks the necessary storage infrastructure on these rivers. Experts have warned that India will face two fundamental challenges even if it tries to build such facilities.

First, the steep terrain of the Himalayas makes it nearly impossible to divert water from these rivers to the Indian mainland. Second, the Kashmir Valley, through which these rivers flow, has surplus water for agriculture, requiring lift irrigation — water that must be raised using pumps. So even if India builds dams, what would it do with the excess water? Critics argue that rather than securing a strategic edge, India could create new vulnerabilities, as such critical infrastructure in an environmentally sensitive and geopolitically conflict zone would enhance India's burden.

From a diplomatic point of view, India's unilateral decision legitimises the very kind of water weaponisation that New Delhi has long opposed. Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan, with whom India shares essential river systems, could certainly interpret this as a sign of India's policy to act unilaterally whenever it deems necessary. Given this, future regional negotiations, particularly with Nepal over the Koshi and Gandak rivers and Bangladesh over the Ganga and Teesta, would be marred by a huge trust deficit. So, diplomatically, India would certainly be a loser in the long run.

In addition, New Delhi willfully opens dangerous geopolitical avenues with Beijing. China, being the upper riparian of the Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra), could cite the same logic in any future confrontation with India. Undoubtedly, China has proven expertise and resources to build hydropower infrastructure in the most difficult terrains. In the long run, China could devise a similar rationale, citing climate change and population factors to potentially cut or redirect water flows to northeast India. This is also why New Delhi must not act unilaterally in sheer hubris. Such a move has massive legal, diplomatic, and geopolitical implications for India and the region in the long run. Sanity must prevail, but unfortunately, New Delhi has been behaving with extreme arrogance. During the last several years, the US-India strategic bonhomie has steadily deepened, also mainly due to increasing Sino-US acrimony and trade war. Several developments such as the 2016 Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), the 2018 Communications Compatibility and Security Arrangement (COMCASA), the 2019 Industrial Security Agreement (ISA) and the 2020 Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) have led to a closer strategic cooperation between the US and India, having implications for China and Pakistan. The rejuvenation of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or Quad, comprising Australia, India, Japan and the US in the Indo-Pacific and close security cooperation between India and the US at the India-Israel-UAE-United States (I2-U2) forum, now labelled as the Middle Eastern Quad are some of the steps demonstrating.

By Muhammad Ahmed Mustafa Qayyum

The crypto clock is ticking

They say the law moves slowly, but the world doesn't wait. Pakistan's slow adaptation to emerging technologies has contributed to delayed progress, often leaving the country behind in a rapidly evolving digital world.

But the tide is turning. The uncharted legal terrain of cryptocurrency and digital assets — tools not of tomorrow, but of today — is now at the forefront. With increasing crypto wealth and the surge of trading influencers on digital platforms, a fast, digital and unpredictable financial era has already arrived.

The question now is: can Pakistan embrace innovation through timely reform, or continue with a cautious, restrictive approach?

Surprisingly, with nearly 15 to 20 million users, Pakistan ranks among the top countries in crypto adoption. Yet, it still operates in a legal grey zone. There is no clear regulatory roadmap, no guardrails for innovation and no shield for investors. In contrast, Nigeria offers a case worth watching: once firm on a crypto ban, it has now shifted toward structured regulation. Pakistan could take a cue before the gap between innovation and policy becomes too wide to bridge.

In 2018, Pakistan's central bank issued a circular barring financial institutions from dealing in cryptocurrencies, declaring them risky and unofficial. Despite the ban, crypto adoption grew — driven by the rupee devaluation, freelancing and a young digital population. In 2020, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) released a position paper exploring regulatory strategies for digital assets, initiating public discourse on the issue.

More recently, in March 2025, Pakistan announced plans to implement a comprehensive legal framework surrounding cryptocurrency to attract global investment. Consequently, the Pakistan Crypto

Council was formed, spearheaded by investor Bilal bin Saqib, known for his involvement in Web3 initiatives, who called for regulatory clarity and pro-business laws. He highlighted Pakistan's low costs and startup potential, and the government began consulting regulatory models from countries such as the UAE, Nigeria and Türkiye. In support of this shift, Senator Afnan Ullah Khan introduced the Virtual Assets Bill 2025, proposing legal recognition for digital assets, a Digital Rupee backed by the Pakistani currency, and creating Virtual Asset Zones for blockchain innovation under regulatory supervision.

Despite these promising developments and ongoing policy discussions, Pakistan still lacks any enforceable cryptocurrency regulation. The regulatory landscape remains governed only by advisory efforts and non-formal law. The critical questions are whether Pakistan should embrace crypto regulation to support its economy or whether an outright ban would be a safer route. If the very essence of cryptocurrency is decentralisation, can it even be effectively regulated? And if so, how can the government frame regulations that manage risk and unlock economic opportunity?

Nigeria's experience with cryptocurrency illustrates how regulation can be more effective than restriction. In February 2021, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) issued a directive prohibiting banks from facilitating crypto transactions, citing risks such as money laundering and financial instability. However, this led to unintended consequences — crypto trading simply shifted to peer-to-peer (P2P) platforms, where individuals buy and sell digital currencies directly, without relying on traditional financial institutions. This made oversight even more challenging.

Realising the limitations of an outright ban, Nigeria reevaluated its approach. In October 2021, it launched the eNaira,

Africa's first central bank digital currency, offering a secure digital alternative. In May 2022, Nigeria's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) introduced a regulatory framework that included licensing requirements for crypto exchanges, approval procedures for token offerings, and rules for the custody of digital assets.

A tax policy was also established: a 10 per cent capital gains tax on crypto profits, income tax on earnings from mining or payments received in crypto, and a 7.5 per cent Value-Added Tax (VAT) on crypto service fees. Finally, in December 2023, the CBN lifted its ban and permitted banks to engage with licensed crypto firms under strict guidelines.

This shift from an outright crypto ban to a regulated framework brought tangible economic benefits. According to the Central Bank of Nigeria, integrating blockchain and digital currencies may contribute up to \$29 billion to the country's GDP over the next decade. Between July 2022 and June 2023, Nigeria saw a 9.0 per cent increase in crypto transaction volume, reaching \$56.7 billion. Investor confidence also surged and Nigeria's fintech sector witnessed a dramatic rise in funding, growing from \$53 million in 2017 to over \$1.5 billion in 2022.

By choosing regulation over prohibition, Nigeria improved financial oversight, reduced crypto-related fraud and created legal income opportunities for its citizens through trading, mining, and blockchain-related ventures.

Cryptocurrency is no longer a distant possibility but a present-day reality. Pakistan now stands at a critical policy crossroads.

With timely and decisive regulation, the country can pave the way for digital transformation, economic inclusion and global competitiveness, positioning itself as a serious contender in the evolving world of crypto and blockchain.

DAILY MIRROR

NA reaffirms commitment to protect country's sovereignty

By Zahid Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly today adopted a unanimous resolution, emphasizing that the people of Pakistan remain committed to peace, but will never allow anyone to transgress the country's sovereignty, security and interest.

The resolution was moved by Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry today.

The resolution said Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It emphasized that killing of innocent civilians is contrary to the values upheld by Pakistan.

The House rejected all frivolous and baseless attempts to link Pakistan with the Pahalgam attack on 22nd April 2025 in India Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

It condemned the orchestrated and malafide campaign by the Indian

Government to malign Pakistan which follows a familiar pattern of exploiting the issue of terrorism for a narrow political goal.

The resolution also condemned India's unlawful and unilateral declaration to hold the

Indus Water Treaty in abeyance in blatant violation of the Treaty which clearly amounts to an act of war.

The House warned that Pakistan remains fully capable and prepared to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity against any aggression including war terrorism or military provocation as clearly demonstrated by its robust and valiant response to India's reckless action in February 2019. It further warned that any misadventure by India will be met with a firm, swift and decisive response.

The resolution demanded that India should be held accountable for its involvement in different acts of terrorism and targeted association on the soil of other countries, including Pakistan.

It reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering, moral, political and diplomatic support to the commitment of the Kashmiri people's just struggle for realization of their inalienable right to self-determination.

The House also held discussion regarding the situation arising out of the baseless attempts to link Pakistan with the Pahalgam Attack in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and India's unlawful and unilateral declaration to hold the Indus Water Treaty in abeyance in violation of the Treaty.

Initiating the discussion, Opposition Leader Omar Ayub condemning the Pahalgam incident, said

Pakistan has nothing to do with the incident. He said India itself is involved in carrying out terrorist activities inside Pakistan.

The Opposition Leader said they will not hesitate in rendering any sacrifice to defend the motherland. He also urged the government to give a befitting respond to any Indian misadventure.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyed Abbas Araghchi calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Interior Minister Mohsin meets Qatari counterpart, agrees to enhance bilateral cooperation

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi, visited the Ministry of Interior in Qatar's capital, Doha on Monday where he held a significant meeting with Qatari Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani.

The two sides discussed matters of mutual interest, bilateral relations, and ways to enhance cooperation in various fields.

Minister Naqvi briefed his Qatari counterpart on the regional security situation, particularly the rising tensions between Pakistan and India.

He conveyed Pakistan's principled stance, stating that the country has always rejected any policy of aggression and has offered an independent and impartial investigation into the Pulwama incident so that the world can see the facts and identify the real perpetrators.

He emphasized that making baseless and illogical accusations against Pakistan is tantamount to ignoring the country's immense sacrifices in the fight against terrorism.

Both sides stressed the need for joint efforts to combat organized crime networks and cybercrime. They also agreed on launching training exchange programs for officers from police and law enforcement agencies.

Muqam accelerates efforts to address grievances of Diamer-Bhasha Dam affectees

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON, Engineer Amir Muqam here on Monday chaired a high-level meeting to address the grievances of those affected by the Diamer-Bhasha Dam project. Speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister Amir Muqam emphasized that resolving the legitimate demands of the affected communities remains a top priority for the federal government, said a press release.

He said that, under the direct instructions of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, significant progress is being made on multiple fronts, including compensation payments, the provision of clean water and sanitation facilities, and the development of educational.

Tax reforms aim to ease burden on common man: PM

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif says ongoing tax reforms are aimed at reducing tax burden on common man.

He was chairing a meeting in Islamabad today, on matters pertaining to Federal Board of Revenue.

The Prime Minister said the reforms will increase tax net and government revenue.

He said the amendments in various provisions of the Income Tax Ordinance and Federal Excise Act will remove obstacles in tax collection.

He said the amendments will make tax payment system more convenient and will not affect the rights of individuals and companies who regularly pay taxes.

Shehbaz Sharif directed the relevant authorities to expedite measures against tax evasion, under-invoicing and other irregularities in different sectors on priority basis.

He also directed strict legal action against buying and selling of illicit cigarettes and other items.

The meeting was briefed about steps taken against tax evasion in tobacco, cement, poultry, sugar, beverages and other industries.

It was briefed that work is underway on digital monitoring and track and trace system, and FBR has been successful in identifying irregularities in many industries through video monitoring.

The meeting was told that powers to seize illicit products have also been transferred to provinces.

Senate Standing Committee on Finance Reviews Pre-Budget Proposals from Key Industry Stakeholders

ONLINE

Islamabad: The Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, chaired by Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, convened today to initiate consultations with associations across the country in preparation for the upcoming budget. The meeting centered on the challenges and recommendations presented by major sectors, including textiles, poultry, dairy, steel, property development, and consumer goods.

Representatives from the towel manufacturing sector shared that their exports are nearing \$2 billion, contributing 18% to the country's total towel exports. However, they expressed serious concerns over delays in sales tax refunds, which are often processed after six months. They urged the revival of SRO 112 and pointed out the misuse of the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS). The sector also requested a subsidy on electricity bills for SMEs and proposed the removal of the 2% normal tax currently imposed.

Moreover, Chairman of the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA), Kamran Arshad, warned that textile exports have remained stagnant for two years. He criticized the EFS scheme for pushing the industry toward collapse, highlighting issues such as the imposition of 18% sales tax on local cotton and the duty-free

import of foreign cotton. APTMA recommended placing yarn and fabric on the

negative list, fixing electricity rates at 9 cents per unit, and reducing the advance tax rate from 2.5% to 1%. The association reported that 120 spinning mills and 800 ginning factories have already shut down, and that textile exports have remained stagnant at 16.5% and 16.7% over the past two years.

Furthermore, the Poultry Association demanded the removal of sales tax on chicken, noting that while other meats are exempt, chicken is taxed when sold under branded packaging. They argued that this inconsistency is unfair, particularly since poultry feed is subject to over ten types of taxes, rendering poultry farming increasingly risky.

Representatives from the Dairy Association requested a reduction in sales tax on dairy products, especially milk, from 18% to 5%.

They emphasized that milk is typically not taxed worldwide and urged the government to align with international best practices. In response, the FBR Chairman asked for concrete proposals to offset the revenue shortfall that would result from such a tax cut.

Similarly, the Fruit Juices Council advocated for a reduction in Federal Excise Duty (FED) from 20% to 15%, citing a 40% decline in sales over the past two years due to the current tax structure.

Additionally, the Pakistan Builders and Developers Association (ABAD) proposed the elimination of advance income tax on property purchases and investments.

Gohar expresses unity with Army over Pahalgam incident

INP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, stated that the party stood united against the Pahalgam incident and India's provocative actions, and expressed full support for the Pakistan Army.

Speaking to media outside the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad, Barrister Gohar strongly condemned terrorism, reaffirming that PTI was aligned with the military in defending the nation.

He criticised the government's approach to the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, suggesting that an All Parties Conference (APC) should have been convened instead of a simple briefing.

Commenting on PTI's absence from the recent national security briefing, he clarified that the party believed a comprehensive APC was necessary to address the seriousness of India's actions regarding the Indus Waters Treaty, not just a routine session. He added, "PTI stands like a fortified wall in the defense of Pakistan."

Pakistan offers untapped carbon trading market for Azerbaijan, says Climate Minister

INP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan presents a lucrative untapped market for Azerbaijan in carbon trading and green energy investments, Federal Minister for Climate Change Musadik Malik said during a meeting with Azerbaijan's Ambassador Khazar Farhadov on Monday.

Pakistan offers untapped carbon trading market for Azerbaijan, says Climate Minister

The discussions focused on environmental cooperation, carbon offsetting, and investment opportunities in Pakistan's renewable energy sector. Pakistani travel guides

Malik highlighted Pakistan's potential for carbon credit projects, particularly in forestry and mangrove conservation, which could yield high returns for Azerbaijani investors.

"Pakistan is positioning itself as a hub for green industry, and we encourage international partnerships to develop projects that are not only profitable but also beneficial for the environment," Malik stated.

He invited Azerbaijan to explore joint ventures in solar energy and other sustainable initiatives.

Ambassador Farhadov expressed interest in deepening ties, noting Azerbaijan's commitment to strengthening business and people-to-people relations.

President Zardari, Iranian Foreign Minister discuss bilateral ties, regional security

ONLINE

Islamabad: The Foreign Minister of Iran, Seyed Abbas Araghchi, called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr today to discuss matters of bilateral and mutual interest, regional security situation, particularly the ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan in the wake of the Pahalgam incident.

Welcoming the Iranian Foreign Minister, the President emphasised that Pakistan and Iran enjoyed historic and brotherly relations. He stressed the importance of both countries working together to promote peace and prosperity in the region.

The Iranian Foreign Minister said that he was undertaking the visit on the instructions of the

Supreme Leader, Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei, and the President of Iran, Masoud Pezeshkian. He expressed understanding of Pakistan's position on the current situation and called for restraint by both sides to de-escalate the tensions.

The Foreign Minister stated that Iran attached importance to its relations with Pakistan and was desirous of further

strengthening bilateral ties for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries. He also highlighted the need to further expand the bilateral trade between the two countries to its fullest potential. He also discussed the situation in Afghanistan and assured of working in coordination with Pakistan on all regional matters.

The President thanked the Iranian Foreign Minister for undertaking the visit to Pakistan at a critical juncture. He reiterated

Pakistan's commitment to dialogue and diplomacy, while expressing concern over India's aggressive posture, which he said was endangering regional peace and stability. The President also underscored the need to boost bilateral trade with Iran for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

The two sides also discussed the situation in Gaza and strongly condemned the ongoing atrocities and human rights violations by Israeli forces in Gaza and the West Bank.

The Foreign Minister also conveyed the best wishes of the Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian for President Asif Ali Zardari.



ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zidong called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Pakistan, Iran reaffirm shared commitment to regional peace

APP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Iran have agreed to continue working closely to enhance mutual understanding and build a strong foundation for economic and strategic cooperation in the region.

This agreement reached at a meeting between Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi in Islamabad on Monday.

Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi conveyed cordial greetings from the Iranian leadership and reaffirmed Tehran's desire to further deepen bilateral relations with Pakistan.

Ishaq Dar welcomed the Iranian delegation and highlighted the historical, cultural, and religious bonds that unite the two neighbouring nations. He expressed appreciation for the positive momentum in Pakistan-Iran relations and emphasized the need to expand cooperation in key areas including trade, energy, border security, and regional connectivity.

The two dignitaries exchanged views on major regional and international developments.

Ishaq Dar shared Pakistan's serious concerns over the prevailing tensions in South Asia as a result of India's provocative behavior since the Pahalgam incident. He firmly rejected unsubstantiated attempts to implicate Pakistan in the incident, reiterating Islamabad's call for an international, transparent, and impartial investigation to establish the facts.

He further noted that such allegations appear to be a tactic to divert global attention from the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

Emphasizing that Pakistan has consistently denounced terrorism in all its forms, the Deputy Prime Minister underscored the country's frontline role in the fight against terror and the significant sacrifices it had made in this struggle.

The two sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to peace and stability in the region. Ishaq Dar appreciated the visit of the Iranian Foreign Minister at this critical juncture.

Pakistan has Suffered most from Terrorism: NA Speaker

APP

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Monday said that Pakistan has suffered the most from terrorism, sacrificing over 90,000 lives, and once again offered an independent investigation into the Pahalgam incident.

Chairing the National Assembly session, the Speaker informed the House that the Pahalgam incident was discussed in the House business Advisory Committee meeting.

He said members strongly condemned the attack and voiced serious concerns over Indian threats of a water blockade and military aggression following the incident.

He said that Pakistan's position on the matter has always been clear and consistent, adding that the true facts behind the Pahalgam incident are well known to all.

Ayaz Sadiq also thanked members of the Senate for passing a unanimous resolution on the issue, calling it a reflection of national unity.

"Pakistan has been on the frontlines in the fight against terrorism and understands the pain of such tragedies better than any other country," he said.

"No nation has paid a higher price in this war than Pakistan. We have repeatedly called for an independent investigation into the Pahalgam incident, and the entire nation is united on this issue."



QUETTA: Activates of new ittehad nanbai hold sit-in outside QPC in favor of their demands.