

Quetta
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DAILY MIRROR

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Mir Sarfraz Bugti urges immediate action to prevent defamation of state institutions over missing persons issue

APP

QUETTA: The Balochistan Provincial Assembly has unanimously approved the Anti-Terrorism (Balochistan Amendment) Bill 2025, Bill No. 18 of 2025, aiming to tackle the longstanding issue of missing persons in the province.

The assembly session was held under the chairmanship of Speaker Captain R. Abdul Khaliq Achakzai. During the proceedings, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti emphasized that the issue of missing persons has been used systematically to malign state institutions and create distrust among the province's youth towards the government.

Chief Minister Bugti stated that many of

those presented as missing persons were found to be affiliated with banned organizations, and the issue had been exploited as a propaganda tool. He highlighted that the solution lies in effective legislation, which this bill seeks to provide.

Under the new law, detained individuals will be held in a centralized facility where they will be allowed to meet their families and have legal representation. The Chief Minister assured that this legislation would put an end to the missing persons problem once and for all and that the law will remain in effect for six years.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti stressed the need to prevent the misuse of the missing persons issue designed to defame state institutions at any cost.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with Chief Ministers of the four Provinces before start of National Economic Council Meeting.

NEC approves Rs1,000b development budget, sets 4.2pc GDP growth target for new fiscal year

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The National Economic Council (NEC) has approved a federal development budget of Rs 1,000 billion for the upcoming fiscal year. The council also endorsed a GDP growth target of 4.2% for the next year.

Under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the National Economic Council (NEC) meeting was attended by Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, and Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah.

According to Planning Commission sources, the budget allocation for the N-25 project in Balochistan has been reduced. A package worth Rs 100 billion has been approved for N-25 instead of the earlier proposed Rs 120 billion.

The NEC has also approved an export target of \$35 billion for the upcoming fiscal year.

In the upcoming meeting of the Council of Common Interests (CCI), the issues of the National Finance Commission (NFC) and tobacco

taxation are expected to be resolved.

During the National Economic Council (NEC) meeting, participants reviewed the National Development Plan, the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), and macro-economic goals. Consultations were held on approving targets for economic growth, agriculture, industry, and the services sector for the upcoming fiscal year.

Speaking to the media after the meeting, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur said the session focused on budget discussions.

"Each province and the federal government will prepare the budget according to their respective interests," he stated.

He added that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is receiving its rightful share.

"Once our rights are granted, both the federation and the province will benefit," he said, noting that a meeting on the NFC Award has been scheduled for August.

"Our province is currently in the strongest economic position," Gandapur asserted.

Intensive talks at UN in New York remained useful: Bilawal

By Khawaja Farooq

NEW YORK: Chairman PPP and former Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari says his intensive talks at the United Nations were very useful and successful.

Speaking at Pakistan Mission in New York, he said delegation received a sympathetic response to Pakistan's position on key

issues with India, especially New Delhi's threat to cut off water.

Bilawal reaffirmed Pakistan's readiness to hold a comprehensive dialogue with India, including discussions on terrorism.

He said that Pakistan has endured the highest number of terrorist attacks globally and has suffered deeply from terrorism's consequences.

Bilawal Bhutto expressed grave concern at the

unilateral suspension of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty — a move that Pakistan considers a blatant act of weaponizing water and a violation of international and treaty obligations.

He stressed that due to India's belligerent aggression, the world has become a less safe place, with real and present implications for peace and security in South Asia.

Balochistan is Pakistan's lifeline, few terrorists cannot destabilize country: Atta Tarar

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said that Balochistan is Pakistan's lifeline and a few terrorists cannot destabilize the country.

He asserted that Indian proxies operating in the region would be defeated, just as India faced defeat in recent conflicts.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Tarar revealed that Balochistan had faced 32 attacks during Operation Bunyan un Marsoos, yet the Pakistani forces have remained resilient. "Peace will return to Balochistan," he stated, emphasizing the nation's resolve against foreign-sponsored terrorism.

Tarar accused India of using terrorism as a tool of foreign policy, citing the killing of a Sikh leader in Canada as an example. He further alleged that Indian intelligence operatives are behind unrest in Balochistan, ref-

erencing Kulbhushan Jadhav—a serving Indian Navy officer caught in Pakistan—who posed as a businessman while facilitating acts of terrorism.

He criticised Indian leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for frequently mentioning Balochistan in their speeches, suggesting it reflects their strategic interest in fueling instability in the province. "Our forces are effectively countering this Indian-sponsored chaos, referred to as Fitna-e-Hindustan," Tarar said.

The minister also highlighted the role of Indian media in spreading misinformation and glorifying terrorism. He pointed out that footage of the recent Jaffar Express attack surfaced on Indian media before Pakistani authorities had access, raising suspicions about India's involvement.

"They celebrated the attack," he claimed, accusing Indian outlets of promoting fake news and giving excessive coverage to separatist elements.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar Addressing a press conference in Islamabad

Pakistan security forces kill 14 Indian-sponsored terrorists

INP

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan security forces killed 14 Indian-sponsored terrorists during an intelligence-based operation in North Waziristan, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) press releases said.

According to ISPR 14 Indian-sponsored militants were killed during IBO in Datta Khel area of North Waziristan. The recovered cache included weapons and ammunition from the slain militants.

Following the engagement, a clearance operation is underway in the region to eliminate any remaining threats. The ISPR asserted that security forces remain fully committed to rooting out all Indian-sponsored terrorist elements from Pakistani soil. Yesterday, Pakistan security forces killed seven terrorists associated with "Fitna al-Hindustan" in two separate IBOs in Balochistan. As per details, security forces conducted IBOs in Machh and Kalat against the "Fitna al-Hindustan", resulting in the killing of seven India-backed terrorists

Pakistan desires to strengthen economic partnership with Belarus: PM

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that Pakistan desired to strengthen economic partnership with Belarus and benefit from the country's expertise in agricultural machinery manufacturing.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a seven-member delegation led by Belarusian Defense Minister Lieutenant General Victor Khrenin, which called on him here, said that Pakistan and Belarus enjoyed excellent bilateral ties which were strengthening over time.

The delegation included Belarusian Ambassador to Pakistan Andrei Metelitsa,

Commander of the Belarusian Air Force and Air Defense Major General Andrei Yulianovich Lukyanovich and officials from the Belarusian defense ministry.

The prime minister said that cooperation with Belarus in information technology and defense sectors would be further strengthened.

He recalled that during his visit to Belarus this year, several memorandums of understanding and agreements were signed, which would contribute to further expand bilateral relations.

He also expressed good wishes for Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko. Apprising the delegation of Pakistan's stance regarding the recent tension.

Healthy, clean environment essential for our lives: Finance Minister

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Noshirwani on Wednesday said that a healthy, safe and clean environment is not only the basic need of our lives but also very important for a better future for future generations.

In a statement on the occasion of World Environment Day, he said that the government, institutions and the public all have a collective responsibility in creating a sustainable ecosystem. Mir Shoaib Noshirwani said that the rapid changes in the climate due to climate change, deforestation, pollution and other environmental challenges require our attention and immediate actions.

He said that planting trees is a collective responsibility of all of

us, greenery and trees have a positive impact on our environment, they provide health-promoting gases in the air and absorb toxic gases that is why trees are also called the lungs of the universe.

He stressed that we have to take practical steps like planting trees, conserving water, reducing air pollution and improving sanitation system while bringing about changes in our lifestyle. He said that the provincial government is formulating concrete policies for the protection of the environment and all the relevant institutions have been directed to take effective steps to eliminate environmental pollution and create awareness among the public.

He said that the citizens should adopt an eco-friendly lifestyle in their homes.

Tump assistant commissioner abducted near Balochistan's Tigranabad

NEWS DESK

QUETTA: Armed men abducted Tump Assistant Commissioner Hanif Noorzai on Wednesday morning near Tigranabad as he was traveling with his family to Quetta, according to local sources.

Eyewitnesses report that between six to eight armed individuals stopped his official vehicle, took him away at gunpoint, and fled with the car. His wife, driver, and official gunman were left at the site and remain unharmed.

The incident has prompted a swift response from security forces, who have launched a large-scale search operation in the area. Snap-checking has begun along Zubaida Jalal Road and nearby routes, while intelligence-based efforts are being used to track the abductors.

The abduction of a senior government officer has raised concerns over the safety of civil servants in Balochistan, particularly in the Makran region. Authorities have not yet identified those responsible, and no group has claimed responsibility as of now.

Efforts to locate and safely recover Assistant Commissioner Noorzai are ongoing.

Naqvi, Fazl discuss overall political situation

INP

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held an important meeting with Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence.

During the meeting, the overall political situation of the country was discussed, along with the current regional scenario in light of recent Pakistan-India tensions.

The Interior Minister inquired about Maulana Fazlur Rehman's well-being and expressed his best wishes for him.

Earlier, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman strongly opposed the child marriage law, declaring it against the Quran and Sunnah.

PM Shehbaz invites PTI's Omar Ayub for consultation for appointing new ECP chief

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has invited National Assembly Opposition Leader Omar Ayub for a meeting regarding consultations over the appointment of a chief election commissioner (CEC).

In a letter addressed to the opposition leader, the PM pointed out that the term of the CEC as well as two other members of the ECP culminated on January 26 but they have been continuing their duties under Article 215 of the Constitution.

Under Article 218, proposals for the CEC and members have to be sent to the parliamentary committee, the premier wrote.

It is pertinent to know that the five-year term of CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja ended on January 26, along with two other members of the Election Commission i.e. Nisar Ahmad Durrani (Sindh) and Shah Muhammad Jatoi (Balochistan).

The procedure for appointing the CEC and members of the Election Commission is explained in Article 213 of the Constitution, wherein the PM and the leader of the opposition send three names to the president by consensus.

If there is no agreement on the names, the prime minister and the leader of the opposition will send their respective names to the parliamentary committee after which the National Assembly speaker will form a 12-member parliamentary committee, having equal representation from the treasury and opposition benches. The committee will send one name from these names to the president for approval after a consensus. As per Article 217, upon the expiry of the CEC's term, the senior member will assume the responsibilities of the chief election commissioner and in the event of his absence or vacancy, the senior member will assume these responsibilities. The two other members of the electoral body have over two years to continue, as the term of the Election Commission Member (ECM) from Punjab Babar Hassan Bharwana will end on May 29, 2027, whereas the term of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa member Justice (ret'd) Ikrumullah Khan will expire on May 31, 2027.

India's regional dominance claims 'in tatters': DPM Dar*India lied to harm Pakistan, and today, its claims of regional superiority have been reduced to dust"*

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar declared on Wednesday that India's claims of regional dominance have been shattered following recent developments, adding that there is "mourning" in India over its failure to undermine Pakistan's diplomatic standing.

Dar's comments followed significant diplomatic engagements during his recent visit to China, where he held bilateral meetings with Chinese Foreign Minister and participated in a trilateral meeting with Afghan officials.

The visit, which also served as a thank-you to China for its support on the Pahalgam issue, highlighted the growing international recognition of Pakistan's stance.

"India lied to harm Pakistan, and today, its claims of regional superiority have been reduced to dust," Dar stated, underscoring that Pakistan's response to Indian aggression has been both effective and measured.

The escalating tension between Pakistan and India began on April 22 with the attack in Pahalgam area of Indian

Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), where 26 people were killed.

India immediately blamed Pakistan without providing evidence, while Islamabad denied New Delhi's claim and called for an independent probe. The Narendra Modi-led government in India then took a series of hostile actions, including suspending the 65-year-old Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), cancelling visas for Pakistani citizens, closing the Wagah-Attari border crossing, ordering the shutdown of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, and reducing diplomatic staff at each other's embassies.

Pakistan retaliated with swift actions, including counter-measures such as halting trade and closing airspace, were followed by a series of military engagements.

On May 7, missile strikes hit Pakistani cities, resulting in civilian casualties. Pakistan responded by shooting down Indian warplanes and neutralizing drones.

Despite the military confrontations, the war of narratives continued even after a ceasefire was announced by US President Donald Trump on May 10.

He reiterated that both India and Pakistan are nuclear-armed nations, and highlighted the potential consequences of any further aggression.

Addressing regional dynamics, Dar highlighted the active role of the Pakistani delegation, led by Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, in promoting Pakistan's diplomatic message on the global stage. He added that Pakistan's engagement with international powers, including Russia, Türkiye and Iran, has significantly strengthened its diplomatic standing.

He particularly noted the positive diplomatic outcomes from Prime Minister's recent visit to Türkiye, which further strengthened bilateral ties.

Dar also highlighted Pakistan's strategic and economic initiatives, such as the formation of the Strategic Bitcoin Reserve (SBR) and Pakistan's plans to power Bitcoin mining and AI data zones using surplus energy.

He concluded by reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to regional peace and security while maintaining a unified stance on issues related to national integrity and sovereignty.

Immediate diagnosis will now be accessible to patients from across Punjab: Prof. Asif Bashir

By Maqsood Khalid

Lahore, June 4: The Punjab Institute of Neurosciences (PINS), Lahore has launched round-the-clock MRI services for patients. This significant step is in line with the vision of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, to provide the best healthcare

facilities to the public. According to Executive Director of PINS, Professor Asif Bashir, the newly available 24/7 MRI service will enable immediate diagnosis for patients coming from all across Punjab, thereby aiding in timely treatment without delays.

Professor Bashir emphasized that PINS is now the first public sector institution in Pakistan offering uninterrupted MRI services to all patients without discrimination. He added that patients will no longer have

to rely on expensive private sector options for MRI scans.

He further reiterated the institute's commitment to continuously provide high-quality medical and diagnostic services in the future. PINS healthcare professionals remain dedicated to delivering top-tier care and internationally recognized diagnostic standards.

This development marks a major step toward expanding modern medical facilities and reflects the Punjab government's practical implementation of its healthcare vision. Prof. Bashir also affirmed that the government will continue to utilize available resources to create further conveniences for patients.

Present at the launch were MS Dr. Umar Ishaq, AMS Dr. Adnan Khalid, Nursing Superintendent Asiya Khanum, and other medical professionals.



ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister of Belarus Lieutenant General Victor Khrenin calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

CDA launches Gandhara Heritage Center to boost cultural, economic activities

INP

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) on Wednesday soft-launched the ambitious Gandhara Heritage and Citizen Center at F-9 Park, marking a new era of public-private collaboration in the federal capital.

CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa, who also serves as Chief Commissioner Islamabad and DG Civil Defense, presided over the ceremony attended by key CDA board members, leading hoteliers, investors, and renowned architect Nayyar Ali Dada & Associates.

The pioneering project will operate under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, with design led by Nayyar Ali Dada & Associates. Officials confirmed the center will be fully operational by next fiscal year, with special emphasis on heritage preservation and maintaining green spaces.

Chairman Randhawa called this a "first-of-its-kind initiative for Islamabad," explaining that revenues generated will be reinvested in city beautification and F-9 Park upgrades. The project aligns with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Interior

Minister Mohsin Naqvi's policy of optimizing government assets.

President, PM praise forces for killing 14 terrorists in N. Waziristan

APP

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday paid tribute to the security forces for eliminating 14 Indian-backed terrorists in an intelligence-based operation in Datta Khel area of North Waziristan.

The president and prime minister, in their separately issued statements, praised the bravery of the security forces and reiterated that due to their professional expertise, the scourge of terrorism would be uprooted entirely.

President Zardari resolved that the operations against terrorists would continue until their complete elimination, as the valiant security forces were resolute in eradicating Indian-backed terrorists.

He reiterated that the nation's resolve to eliminate terrorist elements and defend the country remained unwavering and expressed the country's commitment to eradicate the Fitna al Khawarij.

Commissioner directs to take steps about Eid-ul-Azha for facilitating people in Rakhshan

APP

Quetta: Commissioner Rakhshan Division Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Qambrani directed the administration authorities to take special measures in Rakhshan Division regarding Eid-ul-Adha to provide facilities to people in the area.

He also issued directives to improve the security of Eid Gah in villages and the cleanliness situation in cities and to ensure the presence of doctors and staff in hospitals.

Commissioner Rakhshan Division Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Qambrani said that the district administration and police should pay special attention to the security arrangements in Eid Gah and the cleanliness situation in cities and ensure the presence of doctors and staff in hospitals.

DC Kalat provides laptops to Girls High School's activation of computer lab

APP

Quetta: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kalat Jameel Ahmad Baloch on Wednesday handed over six (6) laptops to the school headmistress to activate the school's computer lab. He gave these laptops in a grand ceremony organized at Government Girls High School Babu Mohalla by District Education Officer Nisar Ahmad Noorzai.

In the ceremony, the students recited the Holy Quran, Naat Sharif, Tablo Milli Naghma and delivered speeches in Urdu and English on the

importance of education and information technology. Addressing the ceremony,

Deputy Commissioner Jameel Baloch said that students are the architects of our future, it is our responsibility to provide them with better education and solve the problems being faced by them.

He said that in order to equip students with modern skills in computer and scientific education, laptops are being distributed in various schools of Kalat district so that students could get modern computer education and make their country

and region famous in various fields.

At the end of the ceremony, the teachers and students of the school thanked Deputy Commissioner and said that for the first time, a Deputy Commissioner is paying special attention to the education sector.

They said that the DC is working day and night to solve the problems being faced in the education sector, the provision of

equipment for science labs in schools and the distribution of laptops are a clear proof of Deputy Commissioner Jameel Baloch's friendship with education.

Probe underway to fix responsibility for jailbreak: Sindh CM

INP

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah has shown concern over the Malir jailbreak incident, sounding a warning that the Sindh government is thoroughly investigating the matter to fix responsibility for negligence.

The provincial chief executive urged the escapees to surrender, otherwise they will face strict action. Murad Ali Shah said that the decision to evacuate prisoners from the barracks due to earthquake was wrong, adding the incident will be investigated, and those responsible will be punished.

The CM said the escapees were not involved in a major crime, adding they were involved in minor crimes.

"One prisoner was killed in a shooting incident during the prisoner escape," the CM said. It should be noted that during the earthquake tremors in Karachi, 216 prisoners escaped from Malir Jail by breaking the walls. The prisoners snatched weapons from the police officers and opened fire. During the firing, one prisoner was killed and 5 were injured. Three FC personnel were also injured, and 87 prisoners were re-arrested from different areas, and 9 suspects were also taken into custody.



QUETTA: A view of Traffic jam in provincial capital due to eid shopping.



ISLAMABAD: Provincial Spokesperson of Markazi Tanzeem Tajiran Pakistan, Kashif Haideri, meeting with the organization & Pakistan Business Forum President, Kashif Chaudhry at the Blue Area Secretariat.



Asia Cup in limbo after Pakistan-India clashes

SPORTS DESK

NEW DELHI: This year's Asia Cup hangs in the balance following the recent clashes between tournament hosts India and arch-rivals Pakistan.

Already-soured relations between the nuclear-armed neighbours further worsened after four days of intense fighting before a ceasefire was announced last month.

India are scheduled to host the Asia Cup, a flagship event of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), in September but uncertainty lingers over the T20 tournament.

"To be honest, we have had no discussions within the board about the Asia Cup," a top official of the Indian cricket board (BCCI) told Reuters on Tuesday, refusing to confirm whether the tournament will go ahead as scheduled.



UKRAINE'S Elina Svitolina plays a forehand return against Iga Swiatek of Poland during their French Open quarter-final at Roland Garros.

Swiatek and Sabalenka set up last-four clash, Musetti carves Tiafoe win

SPORTS DESK

PARIS: Three-time defending champion Iga Swiatek set up a blockbuster French Open semi-final clash with world number one Aryna Sabalenka on Tuesday, with Lorenzo Musetti reaching the last-four on the men's side. Swiatek, the fifth seed, got past 13th-seeded Ukrainian Elina Svitolina 6-1, 7-5 in Paris after top women's seed Sabalenka won a nervy quarter-final against Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen, 7-6 (7/3), 6-3.

"[Aryna] has been having a great season so I'm not going to lie, it is going to be a tough match. But I'm happy for the challenge," said Swiatek after reeling off her 26th win in a row at the French Open.

Both players have shared the number one ranking between them since April 2022. Sabalenka ended Swiatek's 11-month reign as world number one last October but the Pole leads 8-4 in their previous meetings.

World number five Swiatek has been struggling for her best form and has not reached a final since winning the French Open title last year.

But she gave Svitolina little opportunity on her favoured clay surface, breaking in the fourth game to ease through the first set.

The pair exchanged consecutive breaks of serve early in the second set, before Swiatek forced the break-through at 5-5 with a powerful forehand down the line.

She then sealed the win with back-to-back aces.

Swiatek is aiming to become the first woman to win four straight Roland Garros crowns since Suzanne Lenglen 102 years ago.

Earlier, reigning US Open champion Sabalenka defied the windy conditions and Zheng to avenge her recent loss to the Chinese star in Rome.

"The last tournament I was pretty exhausted," said

Sabalenka. "Today I was more fresh I was ready to battle. Sabalenka once again got the upper hand on Zheng, who had been on a winning streak of 10 matches on the Paris clay after her run to Olympic gold last year.

Zheng broke and led 4-2 in the first set. But numerous unforced errors 31 in total allowed the Belarusian to come back.

The second set was also tight before Sabalenka broke back to lead 4-3, taking advantage of her opponent's errors.

"I gave her the chance, so easy, said Zheng, who has lost seven times in eight meetings to Sabalenka, including in last year's Australian Open final.

Madrid Open champion Sabalenka feels she is ready to go all the way in Paris, where her previous best performance was reaching the semi-finals two years ago.

"It's high-level matches. I'm super excited to go out there and to fight and to do everything I need to get the win," said Sabalenka of her tie against Swiatek.

With the main arena finally almost full, Italian craftsman Musetti used his full palette of shots to decorate Court Philippe Chatrier with blistering baseline winners, beating American Frances Tiafoe 6-2, 4-6, 7-5, 6-2 to reach the semifinals for the first time.

Despite a few muddled moments, the world number seven set up a meeting with either defending champion Carlos Alcaraz or Tommy Paul of the US as he continues his renaissance after some soul searching.

Musetti, who said he put some order in his mind and game, did not let frustration take the best of him after losing the second set and once he found his groove, there was no stopping him as 15th seed Tiafoe gradually lost the plot, twice arguing with the chair umpire over line calls.

He bowed out with yet another routine shot into the net, his 'Big Foe' neck chain dripping with sweat as a testimony of the battle just fought.

ICC confirms 2025 Women's Cricket World Cup Schedule; Pakistan's matches to be held in Colombo

SPORTS DESK

Dubai/Colombo: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has officially confirmed the schedule and venues for the 2025 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup, which will be co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka from September 30 to November 2, 2025.

Matches for the prestigious tournament are set to be held across five cities: Bengaluru, Indore, Guwahati, Visakhapatnam in India, and Colombo in Sri Lanka.

A significant aspect of the confirmed schedule is that all matches involving Pakistan, including any potential semi-finals and the final, will exclusively take place in Colombo. This decision stems from Pakistan's stated refusal to play matches in India, a stance influenced by political tensions between the two nations. The co-hosting arrangement itself was impacted by Pakistan's qualification and their position on venue locations.

The 2025 World Cup will feature eight prominent teams: hosts India, defending champions Australia, England, South Africa, New Zealand, co-hosts Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

Regarding the knockout stages, the first semi-final is slated for October 29 in either Guwahati or Colombo. The second semi-final will be held on October 30 in Bengaluru.



The highly anticipated final is scheduled for November 2, with the venue to be either Bengaluru or Colombo.

Meanwhile, Edgbaston in Birmingham has been announced as the host for the opening match of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 with England women kicking off the tournament on 12 June.

Fans can register their interest now to be the first to get their hands on tickets when an exclusive pre-sale window opens on 12 June 2025. Tickets for the opening game will start at £15 for adults and £5 for juniors.

Beyond Birmingham, the tournament will continue its nationwide journey, before heading to London where The Oval is set to host both semi-final clashes, while the final will take place at the iconic Lord's Cricket Ground on 5 July 2026. Both semi-finals will light up London at The Oval on 30 June and 2 July 2026, with tickets from £20 for adults and £10 for juniors, while final tickets start at £30 and £15.

TENDER NOTICE

TSE-242505726413 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. The PMU School Education Department GoB invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2025 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates

S.No	Name of Works	E/Cost
1	SOLAR SYSTEM TO POWER UP DIGITAL LIBRARIES / SMART BOARDS FOR GOVT. HIGH / HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS & GCEES IN BALOCHISTAN PSDP (2024-27 Z2024.2585) PACKAGE 02	25,835,949

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required The bidder must have completed 1 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of at least 18,000,000 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) C-5 and above (Upto 65 million) in Relevant Category And Specialized Code is EE04 (Low Voltage Installation), ME07(v) (General Mechanical Works only), CE10(i) (General Civil Engineering Works), EE11(i) (Solar), EE11(ii) (Solar Energy), EE11(iii) (Solar Energy system), EE11(vi) (General Electrical Works Only). Valid ISO Certificate 9001:2015, 50001: 2018 & 45001: 2018 JV is not permissible. The bidder must have completed at least 01 Assignment of similar nature of work Hybrid solar system minimum 50 million or above in last 03 years Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the undersigned from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 19 June, 2025 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 19 June, 2025 till 10:30 AM . Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under- signed at 11:30 AM Address: H. No 74-A. Chaman Housing Scheme Quetta Phone no: 0812864295

Procurement Officer
School Education
Department GOB

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Polio hour-glass

Earlier this month, the federal health minister reportedly said during a meeting with the president of global development at the Gates Foundation that the country has pledged to eradicate polio by the end of this year. In the time that has elapsed since then, Pakistan's total confirmed polio cases for 2025 have risen to 10 after the health authorities confirmed two new cases of wild poliovirus in the Lakki Marwat and Bannu districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, villagers in the Kohat Road area of Peshawar briefly boycotted the latest nationwide anti-polio campaign to protest the 18-hour loadshedding in their regions, and a police constable providing security to a polio vaccination team was martyred when unidentified gunmen opened fire in Nushki, Balochistan. These developments highlight the multi-faceted challenges that Pakistan faces when it comes to eradicating polio and just how hard it will be for the government to meet its aim of getting rid of the virus by the end of the year. The latter two incidents both took place in the days following the launch of the third National Immunisation Days (NIDs) campaign on May 26. The campaign aims to immunise over 45 million children under five years of age.

While one wishes this campaign every success and hopes that 2026 will be the dawn of a polio-free Pakistan, this is not the first such campaign the country has seen and the challenges that face polio eradication seem as formidable as they have ever been. The virus remains widespread, having been detected in samples in 50 out of 89 districts of Pakistan and this year's confirmed cases spanning Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is hoped that Balochistan, which saw 27 polio cases last year, will not join the list.

Aside from the public health challenge, the continued attacks on polio teams and their security escorts and the refusal of many across the country to have their children vaccinated only complicate the challenge. If polio could be treated like a simple health problem, Pakistan would not be one of the two countries, along with Afghanistan, where the virus remains endemic. But polio has become political, which is why we see it being used as a bargaining chip in protests and health workers and their security having to put their lives on the line just to give children a shot at a healthy life. If there are any positives we can draw, it is that the rate of new polio cases seems less steep than last year. The current tally of 10 for the ongoing year averages out to about two cases per month. Sadly, this is still far too high.

As has always been the case, the success of the nation's polio programme hinges less on the ability of health authorities to vaccinate all children and meet the other health-related goals, and more on the government's ability to counter any misinformation related to the polio vaccine and to convince all communities that vaccinating their children should come before anything else. There appears to be a stubborn view among many Pakistanis, even the ones that do not mistakenly believe that the vaccine is harmful, that the polio vaccine is just another irritating government requirement. The government must drive home to this cohort that the vaccine is just as crucial to the well-being of their communities as uninterrupted power, if not more so.

By Zahra Niazi

India's costly misadventure

There has been a surge in nationalistic fervour among the Indian electorate. Yet, a consideration of the broader consequences suggests that India's misadventure was a grave strategic miscalculation. The Modi government emerged diplomatically weakened, with its so-called 'Hindu pride' damaged, credibility brought under scrutiny for underestimating Pakistan's response and military might, operational weaknesses of the Indian military exposed, and, not least, billions of dollars drained from the economy.

A review of the estimated costs and losses resulting from the escalation reveals its far-reaching impact on the Indian economy. Within two days, the Indian stock market lost an estimated \$83 billion in market value. A \$83 billion loss exceeds India's entire defence budget, is more than six times its education allocation, and over seven times the health budget for FY2025-26. This may also partly explain why, anticipating a likely response from Pakistan, New Delhi proceeded with a second round of strikes inside Pakistan territory, potentially to accelerate the unfolding escalation and a subsequent international intervention for de-escalation.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) incurred at least \$1 billion in equipment losses and operational expenses. Likewise, disruption in the services sectors, including logistics (airports and seaports), civil aviation, and New Delhi's high-profile Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket tournament, resulted in losses exceeding \$1 billion.

The macroeconomic cost for the Indian economy was also significant, with more than \$3 billion in output lost in four days and over \$0.5 billion allocated to finance the emergency. Infrastructure repair, humanitarian relief and compensation, and cybersecurity response also inflicted direct costs, though smaller in

magnitude individually.

Military and non-military conflicts also involve substantial hidden costs, ranging from covert operations to information warfare, that are inherently difficult to quantify due to their opaque nature and lack of publicly available data.

For the wealthier demographic, these numbers may seem negligible, but for the masses in India, home to the largest number of people living in poverty, these statistics should matter. Reportedly, the Indian government is already considering increasing taxes to offset the conflict's financial burden. The people of India, many of whom barely make it through the day, have been radicalised into supporting the government's militant nationalism, often without realising its direct and indirect impact on their socioeconomic conditions.

The costs mentioned above represent only the initial impact, as the broader financial ramifications of the conflict have yet to unfold. India is already the fifth-largest military spender in the world, with \$77.4 billion allocated to defence in the FY2025-26 budget. The Kargil War in 1999 and Operation Parakram in 2001-2002 led to a 30 per cent increase in overall Indian defence spending between 1999 and 2005.

A year after the Pulwama crisis, the Indian defence budget rose by 5.8 per cent.

But now, having faced a major military setback during Operation Sindoor, New Delhi will likely pursue a more aggressive military modernisation drive this time. Even before the Operation, India had increased its defence budget for FY2025-26 by 9.5 per cent. It reportedly plans another jump of more than 7.0 per cent in the defence allocation. Given this context, even a 15 per cent increase in the defence outlay next fiscal year would be a conservative estimate. With a defence budget as enormous as

India's, a 15-20 per cent hike also translates into a massive sum. If there isn't a large increase in the transparent allocations, much of the rise is likely embedded within concealed defence provisions.

Again, the ordinary citizen in India will bear the major brunt as the government increases taxes or reduces non-defence expenditures to finance the defence bill. But the narrative in favour of military overdrive (to maintain an excessively aggressive posture against Pakistan) may be too strong for them to question it, let alone recognise.

Beyond defence expenditures, multinational companies might factor in war risk premiums, favouring investment in other emerging markets over India, especially given New Delhi's repeated belligerent rhetoric. For the Indian population, this would mean job losses, and as fewer industries are established, wages could remain low and economic prospects could shrink. The conflict may also entail other long-term costs, such as human capital loss – for instance, due to a potential increase in outward migration as people search for an environment of sustained peace.

Every Indian rupee spent on or lost (directly or indirectly) due to military conflict and sustaining an aggressive military posture is a rupee diverted from lifting over a million of its citizens out of poverty, sacrificing human development at the altar of militarised ambition. Yet, as long as the people continue to endorse or fail to question the government's militaristic course, they may continue to suffer the social strain these policies bring in the name of national pride.

It now falls upon India's few remaining rational voices to reclaim the narrative space, urging the public to critically examine and challenge the government's belligerent, war-centric policies.

By Asad Baig

Powering the future

FOR every prompt on ChatGPT, the cost is a bottle of water spilled", read a post I recently came across on my timeline; an attempt to moralise the environmental cost of every AI prompt.

The implication was clear: that interacting with generative AI, particularly large language models (LLMs), is somehow an extravagant and irresponsible use of electricity. It is the kind of sanctimonious alarmism that sounds intelligent until you hold it up to basic scrutiny.

Because if we're going to start measuring digital behaviour by the drop, let's at least be consistent. How many litres are poured into the void every time someone binge-watches an entire season on Netflix in HD?

How many hours are spent mindlessly refreshing timelines, watching algorithmically served rage bait, or uploading the fifth filtered version of a sunset or a workout video for some Instagram validation? These, too, are digital actions. They, too, have a carbon cost. But somehow, they escape critique, not because they're cleaner but because they're culturally familiar. We've normalised that waste, so we don't see it.

It's not that AI and crypto shouldn't be held to environmental standards; they absolutely should. But let's not pretend that the sudden concern about electricity and water consumption is rooted in climate justice. It's not. It's rooted in a deep discomfort with change, with disruption, and with technologies that threaten to redistribute power away from legacy structures, and towards something less familiar, less controllable, and potentially more liberating. This is much less about the energy, or the climate, and much more about inertia masquerading as morality.

At the cost of repetition, the point is not to excuse AI's energy demands but to highlight the absurdity of pretending that prompting GPT is where the guilt should begin.

These criticisms aren't rooted in environmental justice but the fear of technological disruption, especially of tools that could shift knowledge creation, creative production, and economic opportunity outside the gates of elite institutions.

Newfound enthusiasm for crypto doesn't have to follow the chaotic arc seen elsewhere.

I've been noticing similar fear-mongering around Pakistan's recent interest in crypto and AI, especially the chorus of concern over energy consumption. The government's announcement to dedicate two gigawatts of power towards AI data centres and crypto mining has triggered a kind of moral panic that feels less about climate and more about control.

Overnight, everyone's turned into an energy auditor, as if this country hasn't spent decades watching power get siphoned off by inefficient state-owned enterprises, bloated real estate empires, and unmetered political favour. Now, when the state finally signals an intention to invest in frontier tech, industries that might bring Pakistan into the modern digital economy, it's met with outrage dressed up as environmentalism. Let's be honest: this isn't about the electricity. It's about the shift. About newer, faster players entering spaces traditionally guarded by bureaucracy and old power structures. It's about the fear of Pakistan participating in a world its critics no longer fully understand.

If we're serious about addressing the environmental cost of emerging technologies like AI and crypto, the answer is to steer it responsibly, and not outrightly shut it down. That means demanding transparency from data centres on their energy and water use, pushing for cleaner energy integration, and incentivising green infrastructure, not stoking public fear to stall progress.

An inclusive approach understands that Pakistan, already trailing in tech, can't afford to sit out the AI revolution. At the same time, it also can't replicate the dirty roads of the past. The task is to build a roadmap where innovation and sustainability aren't seen as opposing forces but as twin imperatives.

But that roadmap can't be built in isolation. Voluntary commitments by tech companies to switch to clean energy have, time and again, proven inadequate. What's needed now is serious advocacy that targets global forums, from the United Nations to international standard-setting bodies, to push for

binding protocols that compel technology firms to meet stringent environmental obligations. The burden of sustainability cannot rest on consumer guilt or national regulation alone; it must be enforced at the level where tech power actually resides.

As for Pakistan's new love for crypto, there are far more pressing questions to be asked than the performative panic over electricity consumption. Who is shaping the regulatory framework? Who stands to benefit, and who might be excluded? Is this going to be another playground for politically connected actors to mine profit under the guise of innovation, or can it become a legitimate avenue for financial inclusion in a country where access to traditional banking remains out of reach for millions?

The energy question is real, but it can't be the only lens. We need to talk about transparency, governance, digital rights and whether this tech will empower or further marginalise. The conversation must move past the performative activism and dig into the architecture being quietly built. If we don't shape it now, we'll find ourselves locked out of systems that claim to be open.

Pakistan's newfound enthusiasm for crypto doesn't have to follow the chaotic, exploitative arc seen elsewhere. This moment presents a chance to do it differently, to design systems that are transparent, inclusive, and locally rooted. Crypto can be more than just speculative trading and mining farms; it can be a way to reimagine financial access, to build tools for remittances, savings, and digital ownership for people excluded from formal banking. But that requires intent. We need a regulatory framework built in consultation with technologists, civil society, and financial experts, and not just the enforcement bodies. We need clarity, not criminalisation; guardrails, not gatekeeping. If Pakistan wants to embrace crypto, it must also invest in public literacy, consumer protections, and infrastructure that ensures the benefits are not just concentrated at the top. This doesn't have to be a rushed gold rush. It can be a careful, deliberate step towards something fairer, but only if we're brave enough to move past the performative actions.

DAILY MIRROR

Meet the Press” Initiative launched in Balochistan: Major depts unveil development milestones

APP

Quetta: The Directorate General of Public Relations (DGPR) Balochistan, under the directives of Secretary Information Imran Khan, has launched an informative initiative titled “Meet the Press”. As part of this series, secretaries from various provincial departments will regularly brief the media on key developments and progress of ongoing mega projects across Balochistan.

The inaugural session, held under the supervision of DGPR Noor Khetran, witnessed an extensive interaction between media representatives and secretaries from seven departments alongside Commissioner Quetta.

During the session, each departmental head highlighted major public-oriented initiatives: Information Technology Secretary Ayaz Mandokhail revealed that over 1,500 youth have been trained in freelancing through the DG Bizz Program, enabling them to earn through online platforms. Centers have also been established across multiple districts to promote digital entrepreneurship. Additionally, more than 1,400 surveillance cameras have been installed in Quetta under the Safe Cities Project, which is now being expanded to Gwadar and other districts. An AI-based facial recognition attendance system has also been introduced in government offices, and youth laptop and virtual education

programs are underway, he said.

Forest Secretary Abdul Fateh Bhangar disclosed that over 7 billion saplings are being planted under the Green Pakistan Programme, with expanded operations planned for other districts.

He also highlighted the declaration of 1,450 acres of mangrove forest as protected, aligning with UN SDG commitments.

Irrigation Secretary Hafiz Abdul Majid provided updates on the under-construction Basol Dam in Gwadar, expected to be completed this year, ensuring irrigation for thousands of acres and potable water for local communities.

Transport Secretary Hayat Kakar shared that the Green Bus service launched in Quetta in 2023 is being expanded to include more buses, enhancing affordable mobility for women, students, and the elderly. Plans to launch Pink Buses exclusively for women were also announced.

Energy Secretary Dawood Bazai stated that 15,000 off-grid households in remote areas are being provided with solar home systems, benefiting nearly 100,000 individuals. Moreover, 27,437 agricultural tube wells will be solarized under the Green Agriculture Program to improve irrigation and reduce operational costs. He also termed the renewal of the Sui mining lease with Pakistan Petroleum Ltd. as a landmark step for regional investment.

Fisheries Secretary Tariq Qamar Baloch introduced major investment initia-

tives including shrimp farming across designated coastal lands in Jewani, Ormara, Pasni, and Lasbela. Cage farming and a coastal aquaculture program are also in progress to stimulate the province’s economic growth.

Agriculture Secretary Noor Ahmed Pirani announced that under the Balochistan Green Tractor Programme, farmers will receive tractors at 50% subsidized rates. Other projects include the introduction of a Kisan Card, cold storage facilities in key cities, and solar-powered tube wells under the Green Balochistan Initiative.

Excise Secretary Syed Zafar Ali Bukhari stated that from July 1, vehicle smart cards will be launched to streamline registration and payments. Furthermore, property tax will now be assessed based on capital value instead of rental value.

Quetta Division Commissioner Hamza Shafiqat briefed that to accommodate parking for over one million vehicles in Quetta, spaces will be established at Mutton Market,

Taxi Stand, and Municipal Plaza. Jinnah Road, Liaquat Bazaar, and Airport Road have been declared no-parking zones, with Prince Road to follow. Solar streetlights will be installed city-wide, and sanitation improvements will be ensured under the Saafa Quetta campaign. He also mentioned the reactivation of the historic Café Baldia in central Quetta.



Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti speaking to inauguration of the new block and auditorium hall at the Balochistan Assembly in Quetta.

Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir returns after completing UK's official visit

INP

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir, Riaz Fatyana along with other three MNAs Rana Qasim Noon (Chairman) Syed Javed Ali Shah and Malik Anwar Taj, after completion of official visit to the United Kingdom, returned to Pakistan.

They met with local members of the Parliament and Deputy Speaker from House of Commons and House of Lords, Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Media, Think Tanks, Pakistanis and Kashmiris, Officials of the Government and explained their latest update on Kashmir dispute which is long awaiting incomplete agenda of United Kingdom since 1947.

India is bound to implement Article 1 and 25 of Charter of United Nations regarding self-determination. UN General Assembly Resolution number 1514 (1960) on “Declaration on the granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and people”, UNSC resolution in 1948 on Referendum in Kashmir for Self Determination, UN International Covenants passed in 1966 on Civil, Political, Economics, Social & Cultural rights.

Pakistan sees exodus of 200,000 Afghans since crackdown began

INP

ISLAMABAD: More than 200,000 Afghans have left Pakistan since the government renewed a deportation drive in April, with Iran also stepping up expulsions of Afghans. Generations of Afghans have fled to neighbouring Pakistan and Iran during decades of successive wars, seeking safety and better economic opportunities. Both governments have grown weary of large migrant populations and ordered millions to leave under the threat of arrest.

Pakistan has launched a strict campaign to evict more than 800,000 Afghans who have had their residence permits cancelled, including some who were born in the country or lived there for decades. According to the interior ministry, more than 135,000 Afghans left Pakistan in April, while around 67,000 departed in May and more than 3,000 were sent back in the first two days of June.

Environmental protection a shared responsibility: NA Speaker

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq emphasized that protecting the environment is not solely the responsibility of the government or institutions, but a collective duty of every citizen. In a special message issued on the occasion of World Environment Day, observed annually on June 5 under the United Nations, he highlighted the critical role Pakistan’s Parliament is playing in raising awareness and enacting legislation on environmental issues.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq stated that providing a clean, green, and safe environment is a fundamental right of future generations, and ensuring this is a shared obligation. Although Pakistan contributes only 0.5% to global greenhouse gas emissions, it is among the countries most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change.

He warned that rising temperatures, unpredictable rainfall patterns, rapidly melting glaciers, and frequent flooding are having severe repercussions on Pakistan’s environment, economy, and public health. He noted that environmental degradation poses a major obstacle to

achieving sustainable development goals, and if immediate, coordinated action is not taken, the country could face further climate-related losses.

The Speaker underlined that parliamentary committees focused on environmental issues are actively working and have proposed

several initiatives including nationwide tree plantation drives, water resource conservation, measures against air pollution, and promotion of environmental education.

He further noted that Parliament has played a significant role in formulating effective policies and legislation to combat climate change and promote environmental sustainability.

The passage of the Pakistan Climate Change Act 2017 and the ratification of the Paris Agreement in 2015 are strong indicators of Pakistan’s commitment to meeting global environmental objectives.

Calling for global cooperation, the Speaker urged the international community to support developing nations like Pakistan, which suffer disproportionately from climate-related disasters despite contributing minimally to global emissions.

Fatemi calls for boosting Pakistan-Russia energy cooperation

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Syed Tariq Fatemi has emphasized the prospects of further development of energy cooperation between Pakistan and Russia.

He made this emphasis, while talking to Russian Minister of Energy and Co-Chair of the Pakistan-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission Mr. Sergey Tsvilev during his three-day visit to the Russian Federation that concluded today.

Both sides took a holistic stock of bilateral relations, identifying key areas of trade, energy, connectivity, new Steel Mills, cybersecurity, and etcetera for future cooperation.

In addition, he briefed Sergey Tsvilev on the recent developments in South Asia, while lauding Russia’s role in de-escalating tensions. Sergey Tsvilev expressed satisfaction on the outcomes of the ninth Pakistan-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission held in Moscow last year and hoped for productive next IGC in

Pakistan this year, adding that Pakistan has the potential to become a transit hub.

Later, the SAPM called on Mr. Yury Ushakov, Senior Aide to the President on Foreign Policy Issues. During the meeting, Syed Tariq Fatemi briefed the Russian side on the recent escalation in the South Asia and outlined Pakistan’s position vis-à-vis India’s aggressive actions, especially unilaterally holding the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance.

Besides these meetings, the SAPM gave two interviews to the leading Russian TV networks, expressing his candid views on the increasingly positive trends in Pakistan-Russia relations and recent escalation between Pakistan and India. He also had an extensive exchange of views with a group of academics and journalists from prominent print and electronic media.

Furthermore, the SAPM was hosted by Valdai Discussion Club, a prestigious think-tank in Moscow, for a talk, on the recent developments in South Asia and Pakistan-Russia relations.

Pakistan, UK pledge to deepen trade, economic relations

APP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the United Kingdom have emphasized joint measures to further strengthen their bilateral trade and economic relations, with special focus on the railways sector.

The emphasis was laid during a meeting between Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi and British High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriott in Islamabad on Wednesday.

The meeting discussed enhancing bilateral cooperation in the railways sector.

The Minister called for a comprehensive strategy between Pakistan and the United Kingdom for development and modernization of railways. He said Pakistan is ready to fully benefit from UK’s expertise in modernizing the railways infrastructure in the country and improving performance of this sector.

The Minister said Pakistan is desirous of enhancing collaboration with the United Kingdom for promoting the use of modern technology in its railways sector. He said the two countries will continue to work on projects of mutual interest in this sector which will not only benefit the economies of both countries, but will also improve public transportation. The two sides agreed that their bilateral economic cooperation is based on a solid foundation.

Sana Yousuf murder case: Accused sent to jail on 14-day judicial remand

INP

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad’s District and Sessions Court on Wednesday sent TikToker Sana Yousuf’s murder suspect, Umar Hayat, to jail on a 14-day judicial remand.

Judicial Magistrate Ahmad Shehzad Gondal presided over the hearing of the murder case involving TikToker Sana Yousuf. The main accused, Umar Hayat, was brought to the court under strict security, with his face covered.

Police submitted a request for physical remand and an identification parade.

At the start of the proceedings, the magistrate expressed strong displeasure over the absence of prosecutors, saying, “Where are the prosecutors of my court? They usually don’t show up, today, no one has come!” He ordered that the district prosecutor be summoned to the courtroom immediately. The duty prosecutor informed the court that the relevant prosecutor was on leave. The magistrate firmly responded, “This case will not proceed until the district

PM directs expansion of Pakistan Railway network to boost trade with Central Asia

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday calling railway system the backbone of any country’s economy, directed the Pakistan Railway to expand its network to enhance trade links with Central Asian countries.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to discuss the matters pertaining to Pakistan Railway, said that sustainable rebuilding of railway infrastructure was essential for economic and industrial development, and its modernisation was a key component of government policy to promote regional trade and connectivity.

He also instructed the Pakistan Railway to expedite efforts to connect Gwadar with its network.

Railways Minister Hanif Abbasi, briefing the prime minister on ongoing reforms in Pakistan Railways, said that the organisation had immense potential for further investment.

He highlighted the establishment of modern information desks at major railway stations, outsourced cleaning systems at Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Multan railway stations, collaboration between Railways and provincial food authorities to monitor food quality at trains and stations, and the resumption of long-suspended services.

He told the meeting that Bolan Mail had recently been relaunched as a daily service, and restoration of Dera Ghazi

Khan and Khushhal Khan Khattak Express. The minister said that the concrete sleeper factories in Sukkur, Khanewal, and Kohat, and Railway hospitals, schools, colleges, and rest houses in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, Multan, and Sukkur were being out-sourced.

Moreover, Royal Palm Golf and Country Club, Lahore, is being auctioned with the potential to establish a five-star hotel and the digitization and restructuring of the Railways’ IT Directorate is underway.

The minister highlighted that Free Wi-Fi introduced on trains; Rabta App upgraded for ticket booking; 155 railway stations shifting to solar, saving millions; 17,101 posts cut, 5,695 more to be phased out; and Pakistan Railways Advisory and Consultancy Services, Railcop, Pakistan Railways Freight Transport Company, and Project Implementation Unit have been discontinued. It was told that Rs 10 billion railway land had been reclaimed and planning with Punjab was in progress on Lahore-Rawalpindi high-speed train, station upgrades, and suburban services.

Besides, the Saryab-Kachlak and Quetta-Chaman sections will be upgraded in collaboration with Balochistan government. Prime Minister Shehbaz commended Railways Minister Haneef Abbasi for the pace of reforms and new projects in Pakistan Railways. The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi, Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr. Tauqir Shah.



QUETTA: Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar in a meeting with Provincial Health Minister Bakh Muhammad Kakar.

Govt not abolishing net metering: Awais Leghari

APP

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari says the government is not abolishing net metering but is considering transforming its existing mechanism into a more effective, transparent, and sustainable model.

He was speaking at a consultative meeting in Islamabad today regarding the transition from net metering to a net billing system.

The Minister said the government does not intend to harm any consumers or businesses, and all decisions are made in the national interest while ensuring long-term sustainability of the energy

system. He further clarified that net metering users are not being asked to provide electricity at the lowest energy source rates.

Discussions are ongoing regarding the procurement of electricity units, with efforts underway to align pricing with energy purchase rates so that the system can automatically adjust to fluctuations in prices.

All these proposals are currently under consideration.

The meeting was attended by experts from the solar industry, representatives of relevant government agencies, provincial governments, and other stakeholders.

Livestock Sector key to rural livelihoods and economic growth: Rana Tanveer Hussain

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, convened a high-level meeting with officials from the Livestock and Dairy Development Board (LDDDB) to evaluate Pakistan’s livestock sector and deliberate on future development strategies.

The Minister underscored the sector’s vital role, describing livestock not just as part of agriculture but as the backbone of rural livelihoods and a critical driver of economic resilience.

During the meeting, Minister Hussain highlighted that livestock is the largest sub-sector within agriculture, contributing

14.63% to Pakistan’s GDP and 60.84% to the agriculture value added. The sector also significantly supports national exports, accounting for around 1.6% of the country’s total foreign exchange earnings.

“The livestock sector provides essential raw materials for local industries, creates markets, generates capital, and acts as a social safety net for rural house-

holds,” the Minister stated. He emphasized the importance of livestock income, particularly in rainfed (barani) areas, where it serves as security against crop failures.

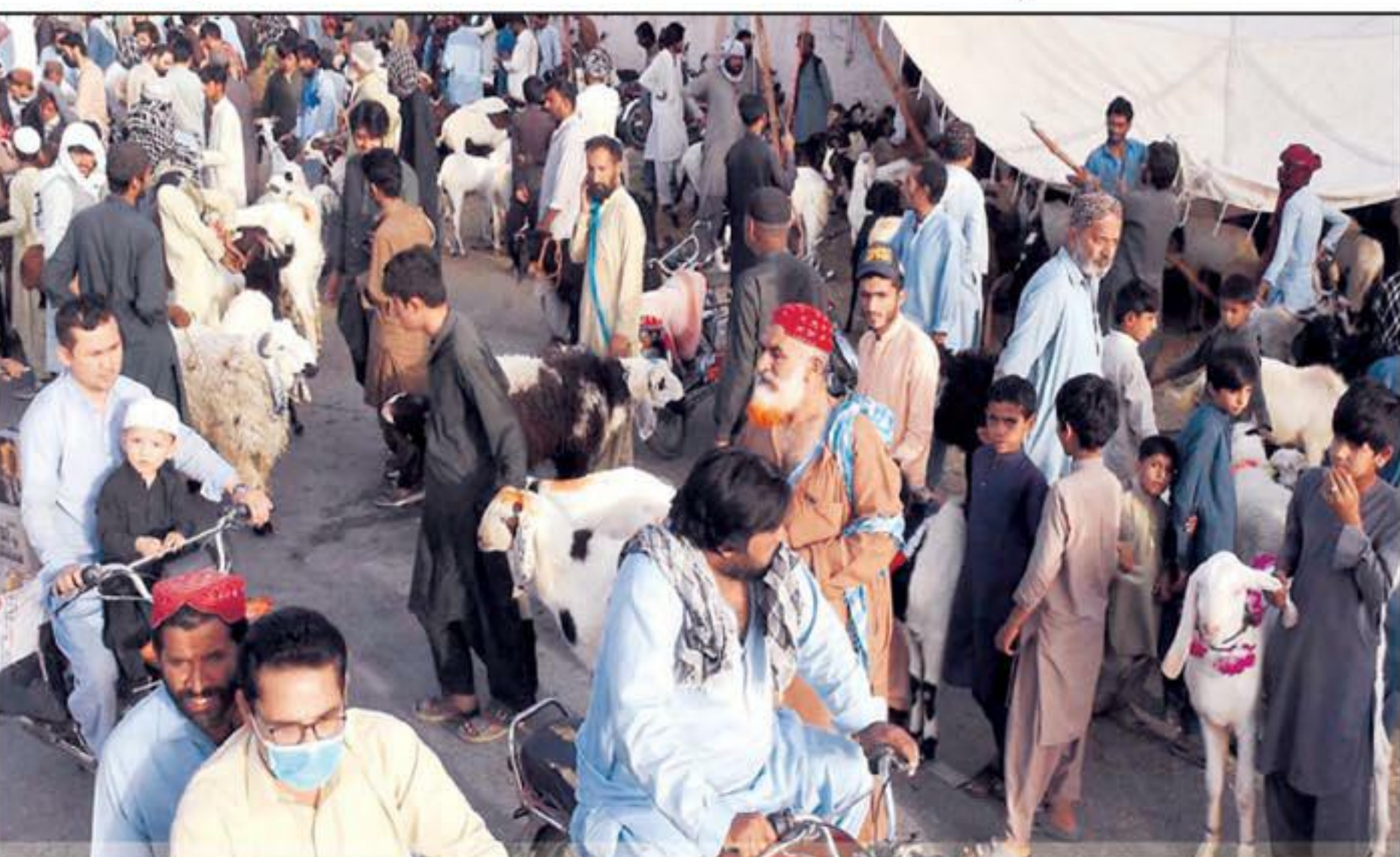
The Minister noted that over eight million rural families depend primarily on livestock

for their livelihoods, making it a strategic area for focused public and private investment to combat poverty in vulnerable regions.

Rana Tanveer Hussain added that a thriving livestock sector not only promotes

food security and economic progress but also creates employment opportunities and supports national development goals.

“If we are serious about eradicating poverty, especially in rural Pakistan, the livestock sector offers the most direct and inclusive path forward,” he said. The government remains committed to fostering an enabling environment for small-scale farmers by improving access to veterinary services, feed supplies, financial assistance, and market linkages.



QUETTA: A view of rush on sacrificial animals market as Eid ul approaching.