

DAILY MIRROR

Quetta

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Pakistan announces 'temporary pause' in Operation Ghazab lil-Haq against Afghan Taliban

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday announced that Pakistan has decided on a "temporary pause" in the ongoing Operation Ghazab lil-Haq against the Afghan Taliban in view of Eidul Fitr and at the "request of brotherly Islamic countries".

The information minister made the announcement in a post on the social media platform X.

Operation Ghazab lil-Haq was launched on the night of February 26, following unprovoked firing by the Afghan Taliban from across the border.

In his post, the information minister said, "In view of the upcoming Islamic festival of Eidul Fitr, upon its own initiative as well as on the request from the brotherly Islamic countries of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of

Qatar and the Republic of Turkiye, the government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has decided to announce temporary pause amidst ongoing Operation Ghazab lil-Haq against the terrorists and their support infrastructure in Afghanistan."

Tarar said the pause would be applicable from "midnight March 18/19 to midnight March 23/24".

"Pakistan offers this gesture in good faith and in keeping with the Islamic norms," he said.

"However, in case of any cross-border attack, drone attack or any terrorist incident inside Pakistan, Operation Ghazab lil-Haq shall immediately resume with renewed intensity," he warned.

Shortly after the minister's announcement, the Afghan Taliban also announced a temporary suspension of its military operation against Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on the matters related to Federal Ministry of Housing and Works.

DG ISPR rubbishes 'ridiculous' Afghan claim of targeting drug rehab centre, says Pakistan hit ammo storage site

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director-General Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry on Wednesday rubbished what he said was the "ridiculous" claim of Pakistan targeting a drug rehabilitation centre in Afghanistan, saying that the military had targeted an ammunition storage depot.

On Tuesday, the Taliban regime's deputy spokesperson Hamdullah Fitrat claimed in a post on X that an airstrike had hit the Omid Addiction Treatment Hospital, killing up to 400 people in the Afghan capital overnight. However, Pakistan forcefully rejected the Afghan Taliban's claims, terming the allegations "entirely baseless" and part of a wider pattern of misinformation aimed at distorting facts.

Information Minister Attaullah Tarar had said the strikes carried out were "precise, deliberate and professional", targeting only military and terrorist infrastructure linked to attacks inside Pakistan. Meanwhile, an official told Reuters today that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan has "put the death toll in the alleged incident at 143."

Addressing the matter today while speaking in an interview on private television programme 'Capital Talk', the military spokesperson said: "They're saying that there was some drug rehabilitation centre there. Someone ask them why have you made a

drug rehab centre in the middle of an ammunition storage. Which hospital in the world is there that is made beside an ammo storage where you have kept missiles and ammunition. Why was it made? because it was never there."

He questioned who could make such a structure. The DG ISPR said there was a military camp and a drone storage site in Kabul, which had been targeted. "We hit the pinpoint location. The clip is still available, and the whole world saw secondary detonations because our intelligence was accurate and we struck an ammunition storage, which exploded," he said. "When the ammunition exploded, people across Kabul saw flames rising, which lasted for some time because it was the ammunition," he added, saying there were Soviet-era scud missiles and other stored ammunition that was destroyed.

Rejecting claims of civilian casualties, he said Pakistan had used precision-guided munitions rather than general-purpose bombs. "We are being very careful. We used PGMs directly on terrorist support infrastructure, and that is exactly what we used there," he said.

The DG ISPR further asked: "Who is making these claims? It is the Taliban regime, which, 10 days ago, even claimed a Pakistani pilot was targeted while in civilian clothes. The same account that makes these claims posts this, and then deletes it," he added, noting that their lack of credibility was well known.

Ziaullah Langov takes oath as Provincial Minister

APP

Quetta: Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Mir Ziaullah Langov took oath as a Provincial Minister on Wednesday.

The oath-taking ceremony of the Provincial Minister was held at the Governor House, Quetta.

Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhel administered the oath to the oath of office to Member of Provincial Assembly Mir Ziaullah Langov as a Provincial Minister.

Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, provincial ministers, members of the assembly and provincial secretaries, as well as leaders of various political parties, were also present on the occasion.

PM, Sultan of Oman discuss regional situation, emphasize peace through dialogue

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday received a telephone call from Sultan of Oman Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and discussed evolving regional situation.

During the warm and cordial conversation, the two leaders exchanged greetings on the auspicious occasion of Eid, conveying their best wishes for peace, prosperity, and well-being to the peoples of both countries and the Muslim Ummah.

While conveying Pakistan's solidarity with the brotherly people of Oman over the loss of precious lives and injuries during the attacks in various parts of the country, the prime minister emphasized the importance of maintaining peace, stability, and constructive dialogue.

Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening of the long-standing fraternal relations between Pakistan and Oman.

In this regard, the prime minister reiterated his invitation to the Sultan of Oman, to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at his convenience.

He also responded positively to Sultan Haitham bin Tariq's gracious invitation to him to undertake a visit to Oman, at a mutually convenient date.

707 Taliban operatives killed in Operation Ghazab Lil-Haq: Tarar

APP

ISLAMABAD: Seven hundred and seven Afghan Taliban operatives have so far been killed and over nine hundred and thirty-eight injured during the ongoing Operation Ghazab Lil-Haq.

According to the latest updates shared by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on his X handle today, two hundred and fifty five check posts have been destroyed, while forty four others were captured by Pakistan's security forces.

Additionally, two hundred and thirty seven tanks, armoured vehicles, and artillery guns have been destroyed during the operation.

Eighty-one terrorists and terrorist support infrastructure locations across Afghanistan have also been effectively targeted by air.

On Monday night, the Pakistan Armed Forces struck Afghan military installations in Kabul and Nangarhar.

These strikes destroyed drone storage facilities, technical support infrastructure,

and ammunition storage sites in Kabul and Nangarhar, which were reportedly being used by the Afghan Taliban and other terrorist elements to carry out attacks against innocent Pakistani civilians.

Similarly, Pakistan Armed Forces effectively targeted and destroyed Afghan Taliban posts in the Bajaur, Kurram, Torkham, Khyber, and North and South Waziristan sectors.

No civilian population or infrastructure was targeted, contrary to false claims being propagated by Afghan regime officials and certain media outlets.

Iran confirms assassination of intelligence minister Esmail Khatib in Israeli airstrike

MONITORING DESK

TEHRAN: Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian confirmed on Wednesday that Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib had been killed in the war with the US and Israel, blasting a "cowardly assassination".

In a post on X, Pezeshkian did not say who had carried out the attack but earlier Israel's defence minister announced that Khatib had been "eliminated".

"The cowardly assassination of my dear colleagues Esmail Khatib, Ali Larjani and Aziz Nasirzadeh, along with some of their family members and accompanying team, has left us in mourning," he said, referring to Iran's recently killed security chief and defence minister.

Earlier, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz claimed that Khatib was killed in an Israeli airstrike in Tehran overnight, adding that "significant surprises" are expected today.

"On this day, significant surprises are

expected across all arenas that will escalate the war we are conducting against Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon," he said during a security assessment.

"The intensity of the strikes in Iran is increasing. The Iranian intelligence minister Khatib was also eliminated overnight," he said. Katz said that he and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have "authorized the IDF to eliminate any senior Iranian figure... without the need for additional approval."

US targets missile sites near Hormuz. The United States said it pounded Iranian missile sites near the key Strait of Hormuz.

as the Islamic republic fired missiles Wednesday around the region, vowing to avenge the killing of its powerful security chief.

Two people died from the missile barrage inside Israel, whose defences have helped it avoid mass casualties since it launched the war alongside the United States.



Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti addresses a press conference alongside a "would-be" suicide bomber arrested from Khuzdar, in Quetta

FO rejects India's 'unwarranted' statement on action against terrorist infrastructure in Afghanistan

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) on Wednesday rejected the "baseless, misleading, and unwarranted statement" issued by India's Ministry of External Affairs on Pakistan's action against terrorist infrastructure in Afghanistan.

The development after targeted overnight airstrikes were carried out in Kabul and Nangarhar amid Operation Ghazab lil-Haq. A day earlier, Pakistan maintained that it had targeted "Camp Phoenix" — a former US military base currently being used by Afghan Taliban forces — even as Afghanistan claimed a drug rehabilitation centre had been bombed instead.

Subsequently, India's Ministry of External Affairs had condemned

Pakistan's action, calling it a "direct threat" to regional peace and stability.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, FO spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said, "Pakistan rejects the baseless, misleading, and unwarranted statement issued by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on Pakistan's ongoing action against terrorist infrastructure in Afghanistan."

"Against the backdrop of India's active sponsorship of terrorism directed at Pakistan from Afghan soil, as well as its historical role as a spoiler, this statement merely reflects India's blatant hypocrisy and duplicity," he said.

Andrabi recalled that the statement emanated "from a country whose leadership remains unaccountable despite instrumentalising Islamophobia for domestic electoral gain and perpetrating pogroms against its Muslim population".

Saudi Arabia to celebrate Eidul Fitr on Friday: State Media

INP

SAUDI: Saudi Arabia announced that Eidul Fitr would be celebrated on Friday, according to a statement published by state media.

"The Supreme Court has decided that tomorrow, Thursday, is the completion of the 30th day of the month of Ramadan, and that Friday is the day of the Blessed Eidul Fitr," the Saudi Press Agency reported.

Across the Muslim world, Ramadan festivities this year were overshadowed by the ongoing war in the Middle East, triggered by the US and Israel's attack on Iran.

The Gulf region has been pummeled with repeated strikes by Iran in a retaliatory

blitz, with airports, residential areas, energy installations and military bases targeted with ballistic missiles and drones.

Last week, the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco) forecast that Eidul Fitr was expected to fall on March 21 as the chances of sighting the Shawwal moon on March 19 were low.

However, it said that the final decision would be made by the Central Ruet-i-Hilal Committee.

Earlier, the Pakistan Meteorological Department also predicted that Ramadan was likely to last 30 days this year as the Shawwal moon was unlikely to be visible on March 19.

'89% payments disbursed under Ramzan Relief Package'

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was informed that payments have been disbursed to 89 percent of the beneficiaries under the Prime Minister's Ramzan Relief Package 2026.

He was chairing a review meeting on the Prime Minister's Ramzan Relief Package 2026 in Islamabad today. The Prime Minister commended all relevant institutions for ensuring transparent disbursement of funds to deserving individuals. He termed Social Protection Wallets a significant milestone and a successful initiative in promoting financial technology and transparency in Pakistan.

Shehbaz Sharif also directed that all payments under the Benazir Income Support Programme be disbursed

through Social Protection Wallets.

The meeting was apprised that, so far, 1,955,620 digital transactions have been carried out under the Ramzan Relief Package 2026.

It was further informed that a comprehensive awareness campaign is being conducted regarding the package. Beneficiaries have been provided complete information through print, electronic, and social media platforms.

It was also shared that 1.7 million calls have been received on the 9999 helpline, while 2.7 million SMS messages have been sent regarding the programme. The briefing highlighted that Social Protection Wallets under the Ramzan Relief Package 2026 have proven highly effective in reducing the gender gap in access to digital financial systems in the country.



Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail Administrators Oath to Newly Elected Provincial Minister Mir Ziaullah Langov in Presence of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

CM Bugti says BLA, other militant outfits exploiting women as female suicide bomber arrested

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday announced the arrest of a would-be-female suicide bomber in Khuzdar, saying that militant groups are increasingly exploiting women to carry out attacks against civilians.

Speaking at a press conference here, Sarfraz Bugti, accompanied by Home Minister Mir Zia Ullah Langov and Additional Chief Secretary Hamza Shafiqat, IG Police Muhammad Tahir Khan and Shahid Rind, he said that security forces successfully averted a large-scale catastrophe by arresting a female would-be suicide bomber, identified as Laiba (also known as Farzana), in the Khuzdar district.

He said that the security forces arrested the suspects during an intelligence-based operation relying entirely on human intelligence. He credited local residents for providing critical information that helped avert a major catastrophe.

Sarfraz Bugti added that the suspect had been misled and manipulated and would be placed in a rehabilitation center for three months, where authorities will conduct a full investigation alongside a de-radicalization program aimed at reintegrating her into society.

He emphasized humane treatment, noting that all procedures would be conducted in the presence of female police officers and without harassment.

"We are different from terrorists. Even someone who came to take innocent lives is being treated with dignity and respect," Bugti said.

The CM accused the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and its leadership, including Bashir Zaib, of degrading societal values by using women as instruments of violence. He stressed that in Baloch and Pashtun traditions, women hold a respected position, and their use in suicide attacks violates cultural norms.

Sarfraz Bugti warned that such tactics have forced security forces to reconsider operational procedures, including checking vehicles carrying women, something traditionally avoided out of respect.

During the press conference, the detainee, Laiba, shared her journey into radicalization, that she had been indoctrinated by militant commander Ibrahim alias Qazi Mama and introduced to another operative, Dil Jan, who was preparing to send her for training.

She admitted she had been tasked with recruiting other young women for suicide missions.

"I was mentally prepared for a suicide attack," she said, adding that she now regrets her actions and urged other girls to avoid such a way.

Laiba said that she was "brainwashed" into becoming a suicide bomber by a Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) command-

er, whom she met last year. She claimed the TTP commander told her she would have to meet a woman and "those of the BYC."

Sarfraz Bugti reiterated that the insurgency in Balochistan is a futile war that brings only destruction, pointing to damaged infrastructure,

closed schools, and lost opportunities for youth. He rejected claims that the unrest is political, describing it instead as a matter of state authority and law enforcement.

He said that such groups recruit people through the internet and organisations with names such as the Baloch Yakhjeji Council, looking for people who could be radicalised against the state of Pakistan.

He announced that three battalions of the Federal Constabulary have been requested to support security operations. On missing persons, Bugti claimed the state is not responsible for enforced disappearances, alleging that banned groups are involved in kidnappings.

Sarfraz Bugti also highlighted regional security concerns, accusing militant elements in Afghanistan of orchestrating attacks inside Pakistan.

The chief minister said the repatriation of Afghan refugees is part of state policy and will be carried out with dignity. He noted Pakistan's decades-long role in hosting refugees but stressed that current security concerns necessitate action.

Bitget Hosts Ramadan Drive Across Pakistan, Distributes 600+ Iftar Meals

PRESS RELEASE

LAHORE: Bitget, the world's largest Universal Exchange (UEX), today announced the successful conclusion of its Pakistan Ramadan Iftar Drive, held across two cities in celebration of the holy month. The initiative saw Bitget distribute over 300 Iftar boxes to community members in Lahore, followed by a second drive in Islamabad, bringing the total to 600+ across both locations. The initiative was rooted in a single intention: to give back to the communities that make up the heart of Pakistan. Ramadan is one of the most significant periods in the Islamic calendar, a time defined by fasting, prayer, reflection, and above all, generosity toward others. By organizing Iftar drives in two of Pakistan's most prominent cities, Bitget sought to embody those values directly, ensuring that hundreds of community members could break their fast with dignity and warmth. The drives brought together local residents, volunteers, and Bitget team members, creating moments of genuine human connection.

"At Bitget, our growth is inseparable from the well-being of the communities we operate in. Ramadan is a time of reflection, giving, and solidarity, and we wanted to show up for the people of Pakistan. The response we received across both Lahore and Islamabad was a powerful reminder of what collective action looks like," said Gracy Chen, CEO at Bitget.

Sindh accelerates digital governance as CM Shah oversees expansion of e-stamping system

INP

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah launched an expanded push for digital governance in the province, describing technology-driven reforms as central to building a transparent, efficient and citizen-centric government, as he presided over the signing ceremony for the e-Stamping system.

The ceremony held at CM House was attended by Provincial Ministers Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho and Syed Sardar Shah, SACM Ali Rashid, Spokespersons Nadir Gabol and Buland Junejo, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Chairman P&D Najam Shah, and Senior Member Board of Revenue Khalid Hyder Shah, Secretary Finance Fayaz Jatoi, Secretary to CM Asif Jameel, Secretary U&B Abbas Baloch, Secretary IT Zulfiqar Nizamani, Dr Sarosh Lodhi, President Sindh Bank Anwar Shaikh and Deputy CEO Asad Shah, along with senior officials.

The ceremony marked the signing of a Master Service Level Agreement and Service Order between the Board of Revenue Sindh and the Sindh Information Technology Company (SITC) for the continued rollout and expansion of the e-Stamping platform.

Pakistan represents one of the most dynamic and fast-growing markets in Bitget's global ecosystem. With a young, digitally native population and an accelerating appetite for blockchain and digital asset adoption, Pakistan sits at a critical intersection of financial inclusion and technological growth.

The Pakistan Ramadan Iftar Drive series reinforces Bitget's philosophy that a truly universal exchange must create universal value, not only for traders, but for the communities in which it operates. This is consistent with Bitget's broader global impact strategy, which includes its partnership with UNICEF to support blockchain education for 1.1 million people by 2027. From financial literacy programs to on-the-ground humanitarian efforts, Bitget is committed to

ensuring that its presence in every market translates into tangible, lasting benefits for the people who live there. As Bitget continues to deepen its presence in Pakistan, initiatives like the Ramadan Iftar Drive sit alongside the platform's ongoing investment in blockchain education and local ecosystem development, positioning Pakistan as a key market in Bitget's global growth strategy. Bitget remains committed to expanding its community engagement efforts across the country in the months ahead, with further initiatives being planned to support financial empowerment and digital adoption at the grassroots level.

Balochistan Announces Sudden Province-Wide Holiday for Thursday

PPI

Quetta: The provincial administration today declared Thursday, 19 March 2026, a closed public holiday across Balochistan, according to an official announcement made on Wednesday.

The directive was issued in a press release from the Services and General Administration Department of the Government of Balochistan. The official notification stated, "It is for general information that the Government of Balochistan, has been pleased.



QUETTA: Peoples busy in selecting & purchasing shoes from stall for Eid-ul-Fitr festival I.

CM Punjab Meets Newly Appointed Chinese Consul General Sun Yan in Lahore

By Maqsood Khalid

Lahore: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif met the newly appointed Consul General of China, Sun Yan, in Lahore.

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif congratulated Sun Yan on assuming his diplomatic responsibilities in Lahore. During the meeting, the Chinese Consul General invited the Chief Minister to visit China, an invitation that she accepted with thanks.

Both sides agreed to further strengthen strategic cooperation and promote the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif

appreciated China's continued defence cooperation with Pakistan and its role in helping ease tensions with other countries, describing the friendship between Pakistan and China as exemplary.

The meeting also reaffirmed the commitment to further strengthen Pakistan-China friendship and work together for shared prosperity. Both sides emphasised enhancing bilateral cooperation in trade, infrastructure, energy and information technology while expanding economic and cultural exchanges between the Government of Punjab and the Chinese



Consulate. CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif stated that China has played an important role in Pakistan's regional security, sovereignty and development. She noted that Punjab is keen to strengthen cooperation with Chinese partners in industrial development, technological collaboration and urban management.

LHC nullifies single bench ruling allowing Sheikh Rashid to perform Umrah

INP

RAWALPINDI: The Lahore High Court (LHC) Rawalpindi bench on Wednesday nullified a single bench order that had permitted Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid to travel to Saudi Arabia for Umrah.

The court ruled that only an anti-terrorism court (ATC) has the authority to permit accused persons under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) to travel abroad.

The division bench, comprising Justice Jawad Hassan and Justice Tariq Mahmood Bajwa, announced its verdict on the federal

government's intra-court appeal against Rashid, which had been reserved on March 12. Earlier, a single bench headed by LHC's Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan had allowed Rashid to perform Umrah.

However, Rashid was stopped at the airport before departure in November last year, prompting him to file a contempt of court petition against FIA immigration and passport officials.

In its 23-page verdict, the bench ruled that Rashid must now approach the ATC in Rawalpindi. "The Anti-Terrorism Court shall hear the matter and decide according to the law," the verdict stated.



QUETTA: People buying Nimko from shop for Eid-ul-Fitr festival.



Pakistan, India in same Hockey World Cup pool

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Pakistan have been placed alongside arch-rivals India in Pool 'D' after the International Hockey Federation (FIH) announced the groupings for this year's World Cup, scheduled to be jointly hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands in August.

According to an official announcement, Pakistan will face India, England and Wales in what is being viewed as one of the most competitive pools of the tournament.

The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF), in a press release issued here on Tuesday, said the groups were finalised following a transparent draw process.

"The Pakistan hockey team has been placed in the challenging Pool 'D', where they will face formidable opponents including traditional rivals India, England and Wales," the PHF stated.

The inclusion of both Pakistan and India in the same pool is expected to generate significant global interest, with the much-anticipated clash between the two sides set to take place at the world level after several years.

Pakistan's recent struggles and lower international ranking had limited opportunities to face top-ranked teams prior to their participation in this year's FIH Pro League.

Hockey followers are particularly looking forward to the Pakistan-India encounter, traditionally regarded as one of the sport's biggest rivalries.

FIH World Cup pools:

Pool 'A': Netherlands, Argentina, New Zealand and Japan; Pool 'B': Belgium, Germany, France and Malaysia; Pool 'C': Australia, Spain, Ireland and South Africa; Pool 'D': India, Pakistan England and Wales.

Pakistan were then finally rewarded for their persistence in the 42nd minute when Rana Waleed tapped in a cross from Ghazanfar Ali. But Ben Fox made absolutely sure of the England victory with another goal in the 52nd minute to wrap up a 4-1 win.

Hooper, who was named player-of-the-match, expressed satisfaction at achieving the target set by England.

"We came [to Egypt] with the idea of winning the tournament, not just qualifying. Obviously, qualifying was the most important thing, but we really wanted to come out here and win every game and do that by playing our style, and I think we've done that all week. So we're really happy," Hooper said after the final.

In the bronze-medal match, Japan came from two goals down to edge Malaysia 5-4, although both the teams celebrated qualification for the World Cup.

Three goals in five minutes in the final quarter saw Japan come from behind to beat Malaysia to seal their qualification. However, Malaysia also booked their ticket as the highest-ranked fourth-place finishers across the two qualifying events.



Iran players celebrate after the FIFA World Cup match against Wales at Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium, Al Rayyan, Qatar. File Photo

'Iran negotiating with FIFA to move World Cup games to Mexico': president Mehdi Taj

SPORTS DESK

MEXICO CITY: Iran's football federation is in discussions with FIFA about moving their World Cup matches to Mexico from the United States due to concerns about the safety of their players, Iranian football president Mehdi Taj has said.

Iran's participation in the global showpiece event was thrown into doubt after co-hosts the US launched joint airstrikes on the country along with Israel on Feb 28.

US President Donald Trump said last week that Iran were welcome to participate but suggested it might not be appropriate for them to play in the US "for their own life and safety".

"When Trump has explicitly stated that he cannot ensure the security of the Iranian national team, we will certainly not travel to America," said Taj in a post on the Iranian embassy in Mexico's X account.

"We are negotiating with FIFA to hold Iran's World Cup matches in Mexico."

FIFA did not confirm any specifics.

"FIFA is in regular contact with all participating member associations, including Iran, to discuss planning for the FIFA World Cup 2026. FIFA is looking forward to all participating teams competing as per the match schedule announced on Dec 6, 2025," a FIFA spokesperson told Reuters.

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum confirmed on Tuesday that her country was prepared to host Iran's first-round matches at the World Cup if needed due to the conflict in the Middle East.

Asked at a press conference about reports that Iran's football federation was negotiating with FIFA to relocate its matches from the US, Sheinbaum said that her country could respond favourably. Huge logistical switch

Iran secured a trip to a fourth successive World Cup by topping their group in the third round of Asian qualifying last year.

The tournament is due to kick off on June 11 in the US, Canada and Mexico, with Iran scheduled to play two group matches in Los Angeles and one in Seattle. Belgium, Egypt and New Zealand are Iran's opponents in Group 'G'.

The organising committees for matches in Los Angeles and Seattle did not immediately respond to a request for comment outside normal US business hours.

The prospect of shifting Iran's fixtures to Mexico would mark a significant logistical switch for the tournament, though relocating matches for security or geopolitical reasons is not unprecedented.

In September last year, Scotland secured a 2-0 World Cup qualifying win over Belarus at Zalaegerszeg near the Austrian and Slovenian borders, after a ruling by UEFA over the role of Belarus as a staging ground for Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

In other sports, soured political relations between India and Pakistan means the nuclear-armed neighbours in South Asia only face each other at neutral venues in multi-team events of the ICC.

India refused to travel to Pakistan for last year's ICC Champions Trophy and were allowed to play all their matches in Dubai instead in accordance with an ICC-endorsed hybrid model agreed upon with Pakistan. As agreed upon in the model, the latter played all their matches of this year's T20 World Cup in Sri Lanka, who were the joint hosts alongside India.

Federation Decides Should FIFA reject a switch of venue to Mexico, it seems unlikely that Iran would travel to the US and take part in the tournament while at war with one of the co-hosts.

Conway helps NZ level Twenty20 series against South Africa

SPORTS DESK

HAMILTON: Devon Conway blasted a half-century before New Zealand skittled South Africa cheaply to win the second Twenty20 International by 68 runs in Hamilton on Tuesday and level the five-match series 1-1.

Conway's 60 off 49 balls set the home side up for a competitive 175-6 after being sent in to bat at the Seddon Park.

The Proteas lost wickets regularly to be dismissed for 107 off 15.3 overs, with pace bowlers Ben Sears and Lockie Ferguson snaring three wickets each.

South Africa won game one in Mount Maunganui on Sunday by seven wickets.

Both the sides are fielding largely second-tier line-ups, choosing to rest their first-choice players in the wake of the T20 World Cup.

New Zealand lost the final of the global tournament to hosts India earlier this month, having beaten South Africa in the semi-finals.

Conway produced easily the most important innings of the game, the 34-year-old posting five fours and two sixes.

The South African-born left-hander played with controlled aggression as wickets fell around him to reach his 13th half-century in the format.

Conway was delighted to contribute after being an unused squad member throughout the World Cup.

"It has been a very quiet couple of months for me, going over to India and not featuring at the World Cup," he said. "It's been nice to come back and play and be able to contribute for the boys and the group."

Josh Clarkson raced to 26 not out at the death while all-rounder Wiaan Mulder took 2-14.

Mulder's addition was the only change to South Africa's team from game one, replacing Jordan Hermann, who was ruled out of the remainder of the series with a hamstring injury.

The tourists never recovered from 31-3 and four wickets fell for three runs late in the chase, before George Lind added some respectability by top-scoring with 33.

The final T20 of the series is scheduled to be held in Auckland on Friday.

Scoreboard

NEW ZEALAND:

D. Conway c Esterhuizen b Mulder60



NEW ZEALAND opener Devon Conway plays a shot as South African wicket-keeper Connor Esterhuizen looks on during their second T20 International at the Seddon Park.

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Exit strategy

MOST members of the international community, particularly states in the greater Middle East, are gravely concerned about the direction the US-Israeli war on Iran is taking. The aggression has taken a heavy civilian toll in Iran, including the slaughter of schoolgirls in the Iranian town of Minab by a suspected American missile, while the global economy is on incredibly thin ice.

Yet there is no sign that the US-Israeli combine realises that the so-called Operation Epic Fury is fast turning into an “epic failure”, with Iran unwilling to throw in the towel. There have been reports in the US media that President Donald Trump’s special envoy Steve Witkoff has traded messages with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. But Mr Araghchi has denied this, saying his last contact with Mr Witkoff was “prior to his employer’s decision to kill diplomacy”. Moreover, there are also reports that Iran’s new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei has rejected outreach to the US.

Meanwhile, the US is floundering in this war of choice with no clear game plan. Mr Trump’s request to his European and Nato allies to assemble a coalition of the willing to end the Iranian blockade of the Strait of Hormuz has met with a cool reception. The German, British, Greek and other European governments have basically said ‘this is not our war’; the EU foreign policy chief has expressed similar sentiments.

The fact is that the US finds itself isolated at this point, except for the enthusiastic support from Israel, which has always been keen to spread havoc in the region.

Therefore, the Trump administration must rethink its approach as its objective of achieving regime change in Tehran is not likely to be achieved anytime soon.

If Mr Trump is serious about ending the war, he must declare an immediate ceasefire. Considering that the Iranians have been betrayed twice by the US during negotiations — before last year’s

12-day war, and, more recently, in the run-up to the latest aggression — there is a massive trust deficit in Tehran. More bellicosity will only harden Iran’s position.

Israel must be particularly reined in. Decapitation strikes — such as the one in which Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was assassinated, and the latest one of Iranian security chief Ali Larijani being hit — will hardly create a conducive atmosphere for a negotiated solution. Some reports say the Israelis have planned attacks for several more weeks. If the situation is to be normalised, the rogue behaviour of both the US and Israel must be contained.

Perhaps America’s European allies can more forcefully project the need for Mr Trump to wind down this useless war, for the sake of global security and economic well-being. It remains to be seen if the Trump administration can swallow this bitter pill.

By Tariq Khosa

Grave new world

FOUR recent pieces on the Iran crisis by eminent commentators writing in the New York Times are worthy of reflection for the distinct perspectives they bring. For instance, American President Donald Trump’s fantasy is crashing around him, says Lydia Polgreen. Trump thinks “America’s awesome power means it is unfettered by any rules, untroubled by any consequences”. Perceived to be “blessed by geography and protected from its enemies by two vast oceans, why shouldn’t it do what it will?”

In the wake of negotiations that were ongoing, a reckless war was launched by the US and Israel when they killed Iran’s top leader on Feb 28 with the ostensible aim of regime change. A disciplined and well-armed response by the Iranians was not anticipated. Their missiles and drones have not only targeted Israel but have also hit US military bases and oil refineries in Gulf states including Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Airports, hotels, data centres and energy infrastructure have been struck. The Strait of Hormuz, crucial to the export of oil and gas, stands inoperative, crippling energy markets. The bubble of secure investment havens in the Gulf has burst.

America’s major conflicts since World War II have taken place in nations that, according to Polgreen, were “on the economic periphery” — Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq. The current US-Israel attack on Iran is unfolding in a crucial global financial centre. The Gulf is home to about half of the world’s proven reserves of oil, which now stand imperilled. Polgreen points out that a fifth of the global LNG comes via the strait, chiefly from Qatar. Liquefaction facilities are shut, with dire implications for importers in Europe and Asia. Trump has ominously declared the war could go on “forever”.

Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth declared “death and destruction from the sky all day long” over Tehran, whose population is around 10 million. He said it “was never meant to be a fair fight. We are punching them while they’re down, which is exactly how it should be”. Polgreen is reminded of poet Aimé

Césaire’s words: “The hour of the barbarian is at hand. The modern barbarian. The American hour. Violence, excess, waste, mercantilism, bluff, conformism, stupidity, vulgarity, disorder.”

The war launched by the US-Israel combine against Iran has led to worrying questions and scenarios.

Conservative Bret Stephens has debated four scenarios vis-à-vis Iran. Regime change, he says, remains the “most optimistic” scenario, with the “resumption of the mass demonstrations that the regime bloodily stamped out in January ... rising to tear down their rulers’ enfeebled apparatus of repression”. Next, according to him, is “regime modification”, where the present rulers remain but comply with US-Israeli demands. He feels that the “new Khamenei’s reign may be very short-lived”. He cites “vulnerability and isolation” especially if American forces seize Kharg Island that accounts for nearly 90 per cent of Iran’s oil exports. This could cripple the regime which would abandon uranium enrichment and wouldn’t be able to support its proxies in Lebanon. The third scenario, not so palatable to Stephens, entails some sort of a “mutual ceasefire declaration”, with all sides proclaiming victory. However, the hawks will say Trump did not achieve Iran’s “unconditional surrender”, and had no hand in choosing the regime’s next leader. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would fall short “of his decades-long dream of toppling the mullahs”.

The new Iranian leaders would claim that the “resistance” they embody “proved stronger than the Great and Little Satans combined”.

This scenario suggests that the regime will exist in a “zombified state”, leading to his fourth scenario, and warning, of “state collapse”, “in which the regime would survive in some areas of Iran, fall in others, invite foreign intervention and lead to killing on an epic scale”. The Israelis would prefer a fractured Iran but for the US and its Arab allies, it would be a persistent problem. Stephens’ prescription: “Seize Kharg Island. Mine or blockade Iran’s remaining ports. Destroy as much Iranian military capability as possible ... destroy what is left of Iran’s

nuclear capacity and know-how”. This is considered the “most realistic path to victory at the lowest plausible price in lives, risk and treasure”.

Thomas Friedman wants politics, not bombs to be the key to Iranian solution. He questions whether the Iranian regime can be removed “without plunging the entire Iranian landmass, about a sixth the size of the United States and home to 90m, into chaos?” He cautions against massive disorder and wants a way forward — one that is based on humility. He wants Trump and Netanyahu to “take their military achievement and call it a day, at least for now”. This war was started by the US and Israel “without any clear endgame in mind”. Netanyahu, he suspects, would be eager to “turn Iran into another big Gaza”. “Keeping Israel at war with Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah enables Netanyahu to drag out his corruption trial and avoid a commission of inquiry for his failure to prevent Hamas’s Oct 7, 2023, invasion. (If you think that is too cynical, you don’t know Netanyahu),” he writes.

Finally, in his guest essay for NYT, author Reza Aslan, who lived in Tehran as a child before immigrating to the US says that freedom and democracy won’t be delivered by missiles. As a child, he “carried an image of America as something almost mythic. It was not just a distant superpower. It was a moral force, a place that corrected wrongs, defended the vulnerable, tipped history towards justice”. When American leaders ask the Iranians to topple the regime, they may, according to Aslan, be “tapping into a powerful longing ... yet, as recent history reminds us, regime change delivered from the outside rarely produces the democracy imagined on the inside”. He adds that “Iran’s political culture carries a deep sense of historical continuity and collective identity — a connection to a civilisation that predates modern states and whose stories of resistance and martyrdom run deep”. Aslan concludes: “Across three millenniums of poetry, philosophy, empire and renewal, this civilisation has outlasted conquerors and kings, clerics and generals ... because its people endured — sustained by a fierce pride in their language and heritage.”

By Maqsood Khalid

Prof. Dr. Qasim Bashir: A Leading Neurophysician and His Services to Humanity

Prof. Dr. Qasim Bashir is regarded as one of the most respected neurophysicians in Pakistan. Through his dedication, expertise, and commitment to medical excellence, he has made significant contributions to the field of neurology and to the healthcare system of the country. His work in diagnosing and treating complex neurological disorders, particularly stroke and diseases of the brain and nervous system, has helped thousands of patients regain hope and quality of life. Over the years, Prof. Dr. Qasim Bashir has established himself not only as a highly skilled physician but also as a compassionate human being whose life’s mission is to serve humanity through medicine.

Dr. Qasim Bashir was born into a family that had a strong connection with the medical profession. His father, Prof. Dr. Bashir Ahmad, was a renowned neurosurgeon and one of the pioneers of neurosurgery in Pakistan. Growing up in such an environment inspired him to pursue a career in medicine from an early age. Observing the dedication and commitment of his father toward patients and the advancement of medical science played a crucial role in shaping his ambitions and values. This background provided him with both inspiration and a clear vision to follow the noble profession of medicine and contribute to society.

Dr. Bashir received his early medical education from King Edward Medical University in Lahore, one of the most prestigious medical institutions in Pakistan. During his academic years, he demonstrated exceptional intelligence, discipline, and dedication to learning. His passion for understanding the human brain and nervous system gradually directed him toward the field of neurology. After completing his basic medical education, he pursued further specialization abroad in order to gain advanced knowledge and experience in neurological sciences.

He moved to the United States, where he underwent extensive postgraduate training in neurology and related specialties. He completed his neurology residency at the University of Vermont and later obtained specialized fellowships in vascular neurology and neurocritical care at the Cleveland Clinic, one of the world’s leading medical centers. In

addition to this, he also completed fellowship training in neuroendovascular surgery at the University of Illinois at Chicago. These advanced trainings equipped him with modern techniques and expertise in the diagnosis and treatment of complex neurological conditions, particularly stroke and vascular diseases of the brain.

After gaining valuable experience in the United States, Dr. Qasim Bashir decided to return to Pakistan to serve his homeland and contribute to the development of neurological care in the country. His return was highly significant because Pakistan had limited specialized facilities and trained professionals in the field of neurology at that time. With his international training and experience, he introduced modern treatment approaches and helped improve the standards of neurological care.

Prof. Dr. Qasim Bashir currently serves as a senior neurologist and academic leader, where he is actively involved in patient care, teaching, and research. As a professor, he has trained numerous medical students, young doctors, and future neurologists who are now serving in different hospitals across Pakistan and abroad. His role as a teacher is equally important as his clinical work, because through education he is helping to build the next generation of skilled medical professionals.

One of his most significant contributions lies in the field of stroke treatment and prevention. Stroke is one of the leading causes of death and disability in Pakistan, and timely treatment is crucial for saving lives and preventing permanent brain damage. Dr. Qasim Bashir has worked tirelessly to raise awareness about stroke symptoms, early diagnosis, and emergency treatment. He has also played an important role in promoting modern stroke management systems in hospitals, which allow doctors to respond quickly and effectively when a patient suffers a stroke.

In addition to his clinical work, Dr. Bashir has also contributed to research and academic discussions in neurology. His participation in international medical conferences, seminars, and workshops has helped bring global medical knowledge to Pakistan. Through these platforms, he shares his experience with other



professionals and stays updated with the latest developments in neurological science.

Another remarkable aspect of Prof. Dr. Qasim Bashir’s career is his dedication to humanitarian service. Throughout his professional life, he has treated thousands of patients suffering from neurological disorders such as epilepsy, Parkinson’s disease, stroke, neuromuscular disorders, and other conditions affecting the brain and nervous system. Many of his patients belong to underprivileged communities who rely on public healthcare facilities. Despite the challenges of limited resources, he continues to provide the best possible care and attention to his patients.

His compassionate approach toward patients has earned him immense respect not only among colleagues but also among the general public. Patients often describe him as a doctor who listens carefully, explains medical conditions clearly, and treats individuals with dignity and kindness. Such qualities are essential in a medical professional, as they create trust between the doctor and the patient.

Over the years, Prof. Dr. Qasim Bashir has received recognition both nationally and internationally for his contributions to medicine. His achievements reflect his dedication, expertise, and continuous efforts to improve healthcare services. However, beyond awards and recognition, his greatest achievement lies in the countless lives he has helped save and the many patients who have regained hope through his treatment.

In conclusion, Prof. Dr. Qasim Bashir stands as a shining example of dedication, knowledge, and service in the field of medicine. His contributions to neurology, stroke treatment, medical education, and humanitarian service have made a lasting impact on Pakistan’s healthcare system. Through his tireless efforts, he continues to inspire young doctors and medical students to pursue excellence and compassion in their profession. His life and work demonstrate how a committed physician can make a meaningful difference in society by combining scientific knowledge with genuine care for humanity.

DAILY MIRROR

Timely holding of senate & syndicate meetings created transparency in affairs of universities: Governor

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhel said that timely holding of Senate and Syndicate meetings has created transparency in the affairs of universities. He said this while talking to the vice chancellors of various universities at Governor House Quetta on Wednesday. The Governor said that every talent needs a suitable opportunity for its development and if it is not given an opportunity, the talent could also be wasted.

He said that at present, some universities and their campuses in remote districts of the province are facing a severe shortage of professors adding that here, "brain drain" at the level of government universities is having a negative impact on the higher education sector, due to the lack of necessary opportunities and facilities.

He said that our bright minds are forced to migrate to other provinces, so there is a need to adopt a comprehensive policy so that instead of "brain drain", the way could be paved for "brain gain".

Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhel said that we would provide

job security as well as incentives to our professors, associate professors and assistant professors, as a result of which they could work wholeheartedly while remaining associated with the respective university.

He said that our education-friendly strategy would also attract professors and scholars from other provinces in the near future saying that our long struggle and strict monitoring have brought significant improvements.

The Governor said that timely holding of Senate and Syndicate meetings has created transparency in the affairs and affairs of universities.

He said that our universities are at par with the universities of Punjab and Sindh in terms of their performance, Insha Allah, students from other provinces would now come to Balochistan to pursue higher education.

He said that even at this time, due to lack of job security, a total of more than 30 senior PhD scholars have gone to other provinces.

In this regard, the absence of the required professors in our country is not just a crisis of numbers, but it is also an existential question for the higher education sector.

Experience has shown that failure to adopt a policy to stop brain drain

proves to be a "brain hemorrhage" for all institutions over time.

Governor Mandokhel said that on the contrary, the federal and other provincial universities also provide job security, better remuneration and development opportunities to the faculty. In addition, due to the absence of professors, MPhil and PhD scholars studying at the departmental level are deprived of their scientific research and supervision. We need more senior experts, researchers and scholars at this time. The secret of Balochistan's development lies not in exporting its talent but in nurturing it here, he noted.

He said that we spend billions of rupees on the construction and development of universities, but the desired results could not be obtained due to the lack of job security for professors.

He said that the bright future of the province could be easily secured by immediately stopping the wave of brain drain.

The Governor of Balochistan said that immediate steps are indispensable to strengthen and empower our PhD scholars and researchers.

He said that the secret of an educated and developed Balochistan lies in utilizing the knowledge and experience of its experts and researchers.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhel in a meeting with CM Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

PIA suspends UAE flights for 48 hours

INP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has suspended its flights to the United Arab Emirates for the next 48 hours, according to an official statement.

Limited operations, however, will continue on select routes.

According to a statement issued by the national carrier, PIA has suspended its flights to the UAE for the next two days. The decision affects multiple routes, including flights to Fujairah, which have been specifically suspended for 48 hours.

Despite the suspension, PIA confirmed that its flights to Al Ain, UAE, will continue during this period. This means passengers traveling to Al Ain will still be able to use the airline's services, while other destinations remain temporarily unavailable.

Advisory issued for passengers

The airline has issued the update to inform passengers about changes in its flight operations. Travelers are advised to stay updated with PIA announcements and plan their journeys accordingly during the suspension period.

Preventing meetings with Imran amounts to violation of human rights'

INP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Barrister Gohar said on Tuesday that preventing meetings with party founder Imran Khan amounts to a violation of fundamental human rights and a criminal act.

Speaking to the media outside Adiala jail, Barrister Gohar said the doors should be opened and meetings allowed. He said this would bring clarity, cool the political climate, and lead to improvement.

He added that talks had always been urged and that a solution to political issues should be sought.

He said the notion that conditions would improve by halting meetings was a misunderstanding, adding that the country could not bear further division, distance and crises. Barrister Gohar made it clear that the PTI had never said that the sisters of Imran Khan were causing problems.

The PTI chairman appeared uncertain regarding the protest movement, saying the movement had both been announced and not announced.

PM for upgradation of railways infrastructure to spur economic, industrial growth

By Zahid Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Wednesday, underlined the need to rebuild railway infrastructure across the country on sustainable foundations to support economic and industrial growth.

He said that modernizing the railway system is a key component of national policy aimed at enhancing regional trade and connectivity.

The prime minister chaired a meeting of the Pakistan Railways steering committee at the PM House.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Economic Affairs Ahmad Khan Cheema, Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi, Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb, Minister of State for Finance and Railways Bilal Azhar Kayani, and relevant senior officials, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Addressing the participants, the prime minister said that Pakistan Railways served as the backbone of the country's economy and communication network.

He directed authorities to upgrade freight facilities, noting that in the current regional context, rail-based cargo transport became essential for saving fuel and

ensuring efficient movement of goods.

Officials briefed the meeting on ongoing reforms in Pakistan Railways. It was shared that freight services were expected to grow by 21 percent this year.

The meeting was informed that work on the Karachi-Rohri section of the Main Line-1 (ML-1) project was underway with support from the Asian Development Bank. Engineering design, environmental field surveys, and land acquisition processes were currently in progress. Participants were further informed that 57 percent of the Thar rail connectivity project had been completed.

Meanwhile, the upgradation of the Rohri-Nokundi section of Main Line-3 (ML-3) was described as a crucial initiative for transporting minerals from Balochistan. A design consultant had already been hired and the PC-1 was finalized. The meeting also reviewed progress on digitalization within Pakistan Railways, including the introduction of mobile applications, cashless ticketing, and free Wi-Fi at railway stations.

Additionally, systems such as freight management systems, digital weighing bridges, and rolling stock tracking have improved the quality and transparency of freight services.

Tree plantation drive ongoing across Quetta in full swing

APP

Quetta: District administration official on Wednesday said that a tree plantation campaign is underway across the city in full swing under the Quetta District Administration's "Quetta Clean and Green Initiative 2026".

He said that the purpose of the tree plantation drive is to make the city green and lush and controlling environmental pollution. In this regard, joint teams of the district administration and Rotary Club are engaged in tree plantation activities in different areas of Quetta, he said.

He said that plants are being planted in the city's main highways, parks, educational institutions, residential areas and vacant plots so that not only the environment could be improved but also a clean and healthy atmosphere would be provided to the citizens. District administration official said that the aim of this campaign is to reduce the effects of climate change, reduce temperatures and raise awareness among citizens about tree plantation.

He said that trees not only keep the environment free from pollution but also have a positive impact on human health.

Representatives of the Rotary Club also expressed their determination on this occasion to continue playing their role in the beautification and environmental improvement of the city in collaboration with the district administration.

He appealed to the citizens to actively participate in this campaign and plant as many trees as possible in their homes, neighborhoods and surrounding areas.

The district administration also emphasized that the care of the planted trees is very important, therefore, the concerned institutions and citizens should ensure the protection and irrigation of these trees so that this campaign gives lasting results.

People belonging to different schools of thought in the city have appreciated this initiative and termed it a positive and welcome step, which would not only improve the environment of Quetta but also provide a clean and green environment to the coming generations.

Deputy Chairman Senate distributes ration & Eid gifts among needy people in Quetta

APP

Quetta: Deputy Chairman Senate Syedal Khan Nasir distributed ration and Eid gifts among underprivileged in Suburban areas of Quetta on Wednesday.

Deputy Chairman Senate, Syedal Khan Nasir, during his recent visit to Quetta, carried out extensive welfare activities by distributing ration and Eid gifts from his personal resources among approximately one thousand deserving families.

On this occasion, special focus was given to the underprivileged communities residing in the suburban areas of Quetta, ensuring their inclusion in the celebrations of Eid.

The Deputy Chairman Senate stated that supporting the vulnerable segments of society is a collective moral and religious responsibility.

He reaffirmed his commitment to continue taking all possible measures to assist those suffering from poverty and financial hardship.

He further emphasized that on joyous occasions like Eid-ul-Fitr, it is imperative not to forget the poor and needy around us.

Pakistan receives petrol, crude oil tankers at Port Qasim

INP

KARACHI: The arrival of petrol and crude oil tankers continues at Port Qasim, Karachi as Pakistan government is securing fuel amid Middle East crisis.

According to details, two petrol tankers and one diesel-laden tanker have recently reached the port, while additional vessels carrying petrol and crude oil are currently stationed at the outer anchorage awaiting clearance.

Among the arrivals, MT Khairpur delivered 60,000 tonnes of petrol from Fujairah, while MT Sunny Liger brought in a further 26,000 tonnes from the same location. Another vessel, MT NCC Reem, anchored with 38,000 tonnes of petrol.

Meanwhile, several tankers have completed offloading operations and departed. MT Torm Damini discharged 37,000 metric tonnes of petrol before leaving the port, while MT Nave Atropos completed the delivery of 53,000 metric tonnes.

MT Sapporo II also departed after unloading 55,000 metric tonnes of petrol. Additionally, MT Maritime Amity delivered 43,000 metric tonnes of diesel before sailing. However, sources said that MT Sea Clipper, carrying 34,000 tonnes of petrol, remains at the outer anchorage.

Iran's foreign minister says global repercussions of war 'will hit all'

Araghchi says stance against nuclear weapons unlikely to change: Speaks of new rules for governing Strait of Hormuz

MONITORING DESK

TEHRAN: The repercussions of the war in the Middle East would be felt globally, Iran's top diplomat said on Wednesday, suggesting more Western officials should push back against the conflict.

"Wave of global repercussions has only begun and will hit all — regardless of wealth, faith, or race," Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi posted on X, accompanied by a copy of the US National Counterterrorism Center director's resignation announcement prompted by the war on Tuesday.

"A rising number of voices — (including) European and U.S. officials — proclaim that the war on Iran is unjust. More members of the international community should follow suit," the post added.

Joseph Kent, who was appointed by Trump, announced his resignation

Tuesday. "I cannot in good conscience support the ongoing war in Iran," he said.

Talking to Al Jazeera, Abbas Araghchi said Iran's stance against the development of nuclear weapons will not significantly change, cautioning that the new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei is yet to publicly express his view on the matter.

Araghchi said fatwas depend on the jurist issuing them and added he was not yet

in a position to judge the jurisprudential or political views of Mojtaba Khamenei.

Iran's foreign minister said he believed that after the war comes to an end, countries that border the Gulf should draft a new protocol for the Strait of Hormuz, to ensure that safe passage through the narrow waterway is carried out under certain conditions aligned with Iranian and regional interests.



Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chairing a meeting of the Committee to Monitor Petrol Prices to review petroleum stocks, global supply chain developments, and national energy preparedness at the Finance Division, Islamabad.

Junaid Anwar Chaudhry calls KPT channel dredging a major boost to maritime infrastructure

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry said that dredging of the Karachi Port Trust (KPT) main channel by KGTL, which began on Wednesday, will mark a major upgrade to maritime infrastructure.

The minister in a statement highlighted that the work follows a formal agreement between KPT and KGTL to enhance navigational capacity and meet rising demands from international shipping.

"This initiative underscores the government's commitment to modernizing port facilities and bolstering Pakistan's role in regional and global trade."

Upon completion within three months, the project will enable KPT to accommodate vessels up to 350 meters in length with a gross registered tonnage (GRT) of 100,000," the minister stated.

"This will boost port efficiency by handling higher-capacity ships, reducing congestion, and shortening turnaround times," Junaid Chaudhry stated.

The dredging will deepen the upper and lower Harbour channels to 14 meters for safer navigation, while 14 berths will reach 15.5 meters to support larger ships and expand cargo-handling capabilities.

The minister concluded that the project will drive higher trade volumes, slash shipping costs, streamline logistics, and fuel national economic growth.

New medical board examines Imran Khan at Adiala jail following IHC orders

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The medical check-up of PTI founder Imran Khan has been completed by a newly formed board comprising five doctors and staffers at Adiala jail following instructions from the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

The IHC founder has been diagnosed with central retinal vein occlusion (CRVO), a serious eye condition, according to a report submitted to the Supreme Court by his lawyer and the court's amicus curiae, Salman Safdar.

The condition occurs when the main vein draining blood from the retina becomes blocked and is often associated with cardiovascular risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and heart disease.

Sources said on Wednesday that the medical team, comprising five doctors and supporting medical staff, completed a thorough two-hour assessment during which they examined the PTI founder's affected eye.

In a statement, the jail administration said that the Islamabad chief commissioner had formed a new medical board comprising specialist doctors for the health assessment of the jailed former prime minister.

The team includes ENT specialist Professor Altaf Hussain, cardiologist Professor Akhtar Ali Badesha, Dr Muhammad Ali Arif, and Professor

Nadeem Qureshi from Al-Shifa Eye Hospital.

The medical board will submit a comprehensive report to the chief commissioner shortly, the statement concluded.

Last week, the IHC directed the capital city's chief commissioner to constitute a medical board to assess the health condition of ex-PM Khan, while rejecting a petition seeking his transfer to a private hospital.

The petition had requested Khan's transfer to Shifa International Hospital, Islamabad, for eye treatment and was heard by a division bench comprising Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir and Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro.

In a three-page order, the court instructed the medical board to submit its recommendations to the chief commissioner at the earliest.

Based on the board's report, the chief commissioner will decide, under the law and relevant prison rules, whether Khan should be shifted outside prison or continue treatment in jail. The bench emphasised that prison authorities must inform relatives if a serious medical condition arises.

The court noted that under the Pakistan Prison Rules, the government holds the authority to transfer a convicted prisoner for special treatment. It clarified that Section 561-A of the Criminal Procedure Code cannot override executive powers to move prisoners.



QUETTA: Woman busy in selecting & purchasing hand bags from stall for Eid-ul-Fitr festival.