

DAILY MIRROR

Chief editor Syed Mumtaz Ahmed

Executive editor Syed Kamran Mumtaz

Monday, April, 27, 2026

Zul Qadaah, 08, 1447

Iranian FM Araghchi back in Pakistan after Oman visit, to head to Moscow after short stay

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi was back in Pakistan on Sunday, a diplomatic source, a day after he left Islamabad for a visit to Oman as part of a tri-nation tour.

He is undertaking the trip against the backdrop of ongoing diplomatic efforts, notably by Pakistan, to bring Tehran and Washington to the table to talks aimed at ending the conflict that began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28.

Araghchi arrived at the Nur Khan air base in Rawalpindi after completing a day-long visit to Oman, the diplomatic source said, adding that he would meet with senior Pakistani officials during his short stay in Islamabad.

The Iranian foreign minister will then depart for Moscow, he added.

Meeting with Oman's sultan

Earlier in Oman, Araghchi met with Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and briefed him "on the Iranian side's perspectives" regarding the regional developments and the peace efforts, Oman's foreign ministry said in a statement on X.

Araghchi "listened to His Majesty's views on ways to advance these efforts in a manner that enhances opportunities for reaching sustainable political solutions and limits the repercussions of crises on the peoples of the region", the statement said. It added that the sultan affirmed the importance of prioritising the language of dialogue and diplomacy in addressing issues, in a way that contributed to consolidating the foundations of peace. Araghchi expressed Iran's appreciation for Oman's positions in "supporting dialogue efforts and enhancing endeavours for security and stability in the region, especially amid the current regional challenges."



Changsha, China: President Asif Ali Zardari being briefed on machinery, equipment and production capacity during his visit to Sany Heavy Industry Co, Ltd.

President visits SANY Heavy Industry Changsha, underscores industrial cooperation, technology partnership

APP

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari, Sunday, visited SANY Heavy Industry Co., Ltd. in Changsha, Hunan province; China where he was briefed by Chairman of Sany Group Tang Xiuguo, on the company's advanced manufacturing systems, product lines and ongoing investments in research and development.

Vice Mayor of Changsha Qian Lixia was also present on the occasion.

The visit focused on exploring avenues for industrial cooperation, technology transfer and investment between Pakistan and China in the engineering and construction machinery sector, President Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release.

During the visit, the president was given a detailed overview of SANY's operations, including its core business areas of concrete machinery, excavators, cranes, piling equipment and road machinery. He was also informed about the company's financial and operational performance, including its 2024 operating revenue which was \$11.27 billion, product segmentation and sustained investment in innovation and R&D capacity.

The president was accompanied by Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, Sharjeel Inam Memon,

Senior Provincial Minister, Sindh; Ali Hassan Barohi, Syed Qasim Naveed Qamar, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Sindh for Investment and Public-Private Partnership Projects and chief secretary, Sindh; China's Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong and Pakistan's Ambassador to China Khalil Hashmi.

The president was given a round of the company's flagship No. 18 Factory, which is a digitally integrated manufacturing facility recognised for its advanced automation and data-driven production systems. He was briefed on the factory's intelligent operations, high automation rate and its role as a benchmark for modern industrial manufacturing.

He noted the scale of technological integration and its relevance for countries seeking to modernise industrial production and improve efficiency.

President Zardari appreciated the scale, sophistication and technological depth of SANY's manufacturing ecosystem.

He emphasised the importance of strengthening cooperation in industrial technology, skill development and joint ventures that could support Pakistan's infrastructure and industrial growth.

He also highlighted the potential for collaboration in areas such as construction machinery, digital manufacturing, clean energy and engineering solutions.

Iran will not negotiate under pressure, threats or siege: President Pezeshkian

MONITORING DESK

TEHRAN: Iran will not enter into negotiations under pressure, threats or siege, President Masoud Pezeshkian said, according to Mehr News on Sunday. He criticised what he described as continued violations and coercive conduct by the United States during both ceasefire negotiations and their implementation.

Pezeshkian said Washington's so-called maritime restrictions on Iran amounted to a clear breach of ceasefire understandings and were inconsistent with the United Nations Charter. Such measures, alongside what he called threatening rhetoric, had raised doubts about the US commitment to the diplomatic process.

Reaffirming Iran's resolve to safeguard its national security, he warned that any renewed confrontation involving the United States and Israel could have serious consequences for both regional and global stability. He also stressed that Iran remained committed to strengthening ties with neighbouring countries, including those along the southern shores of the Persian Gulf, based on good neighbourliness and mutual respect. He expressed hope that regional states would work collectively to promote peace and security free from external interference. He made these remarks in a telephone call with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif that lasted 50 minutes, during which the two leaders discussed the regional situation and ongoing efforts to promote peace.

President briefed on Hunan Tea Group operations, int'l market presence

APP

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari, Sunday, visited Hunan Tea Group Co., Ltd. in Changsha, China where he was briefed by Zhou Zhongwang, Chairman of Hunan Tea Group, on its operations, supply chain and international market presence.

The president was apprised of the Group's end-to-end model, which brings together cultivation, processing, research, marketing and tea culture within a single industrial framework.

The briefing outlined how ecological tea garden bases, specialized production facilities and distribution systems were organised to support both domestic sales and exports, President Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release.

The president was informed

that Hunan Tea Group functions as a coordinating platform for the province's tea sector, connecting growers, industry and research institutions with branding and market access.

The president was accompanied by Senator Saleem Mandviwalla; Sharjeel Inam Memon, Senior Provincial Minister, Sindh; Ali Hassan Barohi; Syed Qasim Naveed Qamar, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Sindh for Investment and Public-Private Partnership Projects; Chief Secretary, Sindh; China's Ambassador to Pakistan, Jiang Zaidong and Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi.

During the visit, the president toured the company's history gallery and observed a presentation on tea processing and tea culture. He also attended a tea tasting session.



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrives in Pakistan.

Pakistan exercised restraint as responsible nuclear state during India conflict: Gilani

NEWS DESK

LAHORE: Acting President and Chairman of the Senate, Yousaf Raza Gilani, on Sunday said that Pakistan was a responsible nuclear state, despite Indian aggression after the Pahalgam incident, Islamabad exercised restraint while safeguarding its right to self-defence.

Speaking as the chief guest at the 41st annual dinner of the Old Ravians Association in Lahore, Gilani said that this was a time for unity, and that such unity was also demonstrated when India attacked and Pakistan responded as a responsible nuclear state.

"India not only carried out an attack but also unilaterally revoked the Indus Waters Treaty, Pakistan exercised restraint while safeguarding its right to self-defence," he said. Escalation between Pakistan and India began on April 22, 2025, when an attack in Pahalgam killed 26 people. India immediately blamed Pakistan for the incident. However, Pakistan categorically

rejected the Indian blame.

In response, India undertook a series of hostile actions the next day, on April 23, 2025, including suspending the 65-year-old Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), cancelling visas for Pakistani citizens, closing the Wagah-Aitari border crossing, ordering the shutdown of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, and reducing diplomatic staff at each other's embassies. The acting president, in his address today, said that Pakistan's brave armed forces and political leadership, through their unity, sent a clear message to the world that Pakistan was a responsible nuclear state.

Gilani added that Pakistan had called for an independent investigation into the Pahalgam incident but had received no response, while its position had been acknowledged internationally.

Commenting on the recent crisis, Gilani said that Pakistan was playing a responsible and active role in promoting peace, dialogue.



Islamabad: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Mr. Attaullah Tarar addressing a press conference.

Creative and courageous initiatives are the guarantee of a bright and educated future for Balochistan: CM Balochistan

NEWS DESK

Quetta: The Chief Minister of Balochistan has said that the initiative to light the candles of knowledge in remote areas of Balochistan through "Book Car" and "Science Ride" is welcome.

Sarfraz Bugti wrote in his X message that the "Book Vehicle" and the "Science Ride" emerged as a new ray of hope, which increased children's commitment to education.

The project, which started as mobile schools, has transformed into a mobile library teaching and learning and a modern "Science Ride".

He said that the Mobile Science Lab has

started playing an important role in promoting scientific thinking, curiosity and the spirit

of learning in areas deprived of educational facilities.

Such creative and courageous initiatives are a strong

guarantee for a bright and educated future of Balochistan.

Sarfraz Bugti expressed happiness and said that the government will continue to provide all possible support to promote education and provide opportunities for children to learn modern sciences. This initiative is also effectively strengthening the campaign for children's admission to schools.

Tarar recalls PM's Kakul address, reiterates stance on Pahalgam false flag operation

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Saturday recalled Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's address at the Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) Kakul delivered one year ago, and reiterated Pakistan's consistent position on the Pahalgam false flag operation, emphasizing the country's commitment to counter-terrorism, regional stability and a transparent, impartial investigation into the episode.

He was speaking to media on the key points of the national stance regarding the Prime Minister's historic address delivered one year ago at Pakistan Military Academy and the Pahalgam false flag operation.

The minister said that the prime minister, while speaking to cadets at PMA Kakul on April 26, 2025, had clearly articulated Pakistan's stance on the Pahalgam incident, rejecting baseless allegations and calling for an end to the blame game associated with such events.

He recalled that a meeting of the National Security Committee held on April 24 last year had also given a comprehensive response to the allegations, followed by the prime minister's visit to Kakul where he delivered a historic address responding to the Pahalgam false flag operation.

Tarar said the prime minister had termed the Pahalgam incident a "tragedy" and expressed sympathy with the victims, while conveying Pakistan's concern and sorrow at the international level. "The prime minister made it clear that the recurring pattern of baseless accusations under the cover of such inci-

dents must stop," he added.

Contrasting Pakistan's position with that of India, the minister said Pakistan had consistently condemned terrorism and remained engaged in combating the menace, whereas, he said India had failed to adopt a clear stance in this regard.

He said the distinction between a country fighting terrorism and on of promoting it had become evident before the international community.

Highlighting Pakistan's sacrifices, Tarar said the country had suffered economic losses amounting to around 600 billion and over 90,000 lives had been lost, including personnel of the armed forces, police, law enforcement agencies and civilians. "Pakistan has been a frontline state against terrorism and continues to deploy all its energies to eliminate this menace," he said.

Referring to militant groups, the minister said that elements such as the Fitna al-Hindustan (BLA) and Fitna al-Khawarij (TTP) had linkages that traced back to India, and Indian-sponsored terrorism.

He said that when allegations were leveled against Pakistan after the Pahalgam incident, the prime minister, accompanied by Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, visited Kakul and reiterated Pakistan's position, again describing the incident as a tragedy and stressing the need to end the ongoing blame game.

Tarar said the prime minister had also proposed a "transparent and impartial investigation" into the incident, which, he added, reflected Pakistan's confidence in its stance. "This offer strengthened Pakistan's position at the diplomatic front and shifted the focus internationally," he said.

He noted that India did not respond to the proposal, adding that Pakistan's call for an independent probe was widely appreciated at the international level and contributed to strengthening its diplomatic standing.

The minister further said the prime minister, in his address, had also highlighted Pakistan's consistent policy on broader issues, including "water security concerns," stressing that water remained a "red line" for Pakistan.

He warned that any attempt to obstruct or divert Pakistan's water in violation of the Indus Waters Treaty would be responded to decisively.

Tarar said the Kakul address held significant importance in Pakistan's recent history, as it not only clarified the country's position on the Pahalgam incident but also reinforced its broader policy framework.

He said Pakistan's institutional strength and unity were demonstrated during that period, with the armed forces remaining fully prepared to defend the country.

He expressed confidence in the capabilities of the armed forces under the leadership of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, stating that they were capable of responding effectively to any misadventure.

He also referred to Pakistan's response in Marka-e-Haq "battle for truth," saying the country had demonstrated its defensive capabilities.

The minister said the prime minister had reaffirmed that the Pakistani nation would not compromise on its sovereignty, dignity and honour, and that the country's position had gained recognition internationally.

President, PM condemn shooting at WHCA dinner

INP

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has strongly condemned the shooting incident at the White House Correspondents' Association (WHCA) Dinner.

In a statement, he expressed satisfaction that President Donald Trump and the First Lady remained safe.

The President said the incident is a heinous form of terrorism and worth condemning. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has expressed his deep shock by the disturbing shooting incident at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner in Washington.

In a post on his X handle today, Shehbaz Sharif said he is relieved to know that President Trump, the First Lady, and other attendees are safe. The Prime Minister said his thoughts and prayers are with him and also wished President Trump's continued safety and well-being.

Prime Minister visits PA's speaker house to offer condolences

APP

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday visited the Punjab Assembly Speaker's House and offered condolences to Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan and Minister of State Malik Rashid Ahmad Khan.

The Prime Minister expressed his heartfelt sympathies to Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan on the demise of his sister and to Minister of State Malik Rashid Ahmad Khan on the demise of his niece. Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and the Prime Minister's son, Suleman Shehbaz, accompanied him during the visit.

The Prime Minister offered Fateha and prayed for the forgiveness of the departed souls, as well as for the elevation of their ranks and for patience and strength for the bereaved families.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Talha Burki, Member of Provincial Assembly Malik Ahmad Saeed Khan, Dr. Malik Ameer Khan, Malik Taimur Khan, Haider, Malik Sultan, and Sardar Farooq were also present on the occasion.

Trump, administration officials likely targets of shooting at White House correspondents' dinner: US official

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: United States President Donald Trump and officials in his administration were the likely targets of a suspect who fired at a security agent guarding the White House Correspondents' Association dinner in Washington, US Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said on Sunday.

The incident occurred at the Washington Hilton — the same hotel where Ronald Reagan was shot and wounded in a 1981 assassination attempt — adding to the gravity of the situation at a venue long associated with high-level political gatherings. Over the years, the hotel has also hosted Pakistani leaders, including Pervez Musharraf, Benazir Bhutto, and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

As the sound of shots rang out in the ballroom hosting the dinner, gala attendees, including members of the press, their family members, and government officials immediately fell silent, CNN reported. It was only when security charged into the room, and people started screaming, "Get down, get down!", that guests dove under tables to take cover.

The suspect — who was armed with a shotgun, handgun and knives, according to CNN — had charged a checkpoint at the hotel, opening fire at a Secret Service agent,

before being tackled and arrested. Secret Service Spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said the shooting took place near the main screening area at the entrance of the event.

The agent who was shot was hit in an area covered by protective gear and not harmed, a Federal Bureau of Investigation official told Reuters.

Secret Service officers in combat gear rushed into the dining room, providing cover to Trump and the first lady, who had bent down behind the dais before being hustled out by Secret Service officers.

CNN footage showed US Vice President JD Vance being pulled out of his chair by security officials and escorted off the dais in the opposite direction.

Some security personnel took up positions on the stage, pointing their rifles into the ballroom.

Only CNIC needed:**IGP Rizvi launches ITP paperless licensing system**

APP

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi formally launched a paperless licensing system, marking a major step towards modernizing services of Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP).

An ITP official told APP on Sunday that Chief Traffic Officer Muhammad Sarfraz Virk and other traffic officers were also present on the occasion.

IGP Rizvi reviewed the newly established paperless counters and issued directions regarding smooth implementation of the system.

The initiative had been taken to facilitate citizens and save their valuable time. He said earlier citizens were required to

fill medical forms, attach photographs and submit multiple documents during the licensing process. He said under the new system, citizens would no longer need to bring documents, photocopies or photographs. He said the entire process, from medical examination to issuance of driving licence, had been made completely paperless.

The IGP appreciated CTO Muhammad Sarfraz Virk and his team for completing the project in a short time. He added that the licensing fee system would also be digitalized soon.

The official said citizens would now only need to bring their Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) to obtain a driving licence from Islamabad Traffic Police.



Changsha, China: President Asif Ali Zardari being given a detailed overview of the plant layout and manufacturing processes at Sany Heavy Industry Co, Ltd.

CM Punjab announces establishment of Punjab Film City over 50 acres in IT City

By Maqsood Khalid

Lahore: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has announced the establishment of Punjab Film City spanning 50 acres in Nawaz Sharif IT City, Lahore.

She said the Film City project would be the country's first fully "end-to-end" media production hub, aimed at reviving Pakistan's film industry through modern technology, advanced facilities and integrated resources.

State-of-the-art infrastructure for film, television, animation and digital media will be provided under one roof.

Facilities for visual effects (VFX)

and post-production will be developed locally to reduce dependence on foreign services.

The project will also include modern studios, sound stages,

and post-production laboratories, along with comprehensive shooting facilities, purpose-built sets and a central lake.

Convention halls will be constructed to host international events and award ceremonies. A media trade hub, as well as film and music schools, will also be part of the initiative.



The chief minister said the project would create thousands of direct and indirect

employment opportunities, while promoting growth in animation, gaming and digital media sectors.

Describing it as a significant step towards strengthening the creative economy, she said the Film City would bring together talent, technology and business on a single platform.

The project will be completed in phases, with further details expected to be announced soon.

Punjab governor vows support for poor, says conscience would not rest otherwise

INP

ATTOCK: Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has said helping the poor remains his foremost responsibility, adding his conscience would not be satisfied if he failed to support the underprivileged while serving as governor.

Speaking during a visit to Langar village Ghundian in Attock, the Punjab governor received a warm welcome from residents and youth, who organised a motorcycle rally in his honour.

During the visit, he also inaugurated a solar water supply project established through personal efforts, with a large number of locals attending the ceremony.

Sardar Saleem Haider said the Pakistan Peoples Party would not

leave the people of Attock alone and welcomed those joining the party, expressing confidence in the party's political future.

He said the alliance between PPP and Pakistan Muslim League (N) was in the national interest and stressed the need for joint efforts to serve the people and resolve their problems.

The governor said obstacles created in welfare projects for Attock's residents were against public interest, adding the PPP stands by its workers and remains committed to development.

He also expressed hope that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would one day become prime minister, while praising Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir for their role in regional diplomacy.

Modi used Pahalgam incident to crack down on minorities: Ramesh Singh Arora

INP

LAHORE: Punjab Minority Affairs Minister Ramesh Singh Arora has said that Modi used the Pahalgam incident to crack down on minorities and to target their religious places of worship.

Addressing a press conference regarding the Pahalgam False Flag and the atrocities on the minority community in India, Ramesh Singh Arora said Pakistan is a peace-loving country, while

India attempted aggression against Pakistan under the guise of the Pahalgam incident.

He further said that violence against minorities in India is not a new phenomenon, adding that the Pahalgam incident has instead brought Pakistan honor on the global stage, while India is facing diplomatic isolation.

All schools of thought should play role to promote brotherhood, tolerance & harmony in society: Remesh

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) Central General Secretary for Minority Affairs Raja Ramesh Lal on Sunday said that all schools of thought should play a joint role to promote brotherhood, tolerance and harmony in the society.

He said this while meeting with Fatehpur's Gadinashin Syed Sarfraz Shah and Jacobabad's renowned socio-religious leader Syed Inayatullah Shah.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional situation and public issues were discussed in detail.

Speaking on the occasion, Raja Ramesh Lal said that Balochistan Awami Party believed in practical steps for the welfare of the people and protecting the rights of all communities living in the province is the party's top priority.

He said that the government and relevant institutions are taking serious steps to solve the problems being faced by minority communities.

On this occasion, Syed Sarfraz Shah and Syed Inayatullah Shah appreciated the efforts of Raja Ramesh Lal and said that joint efforts are indispensable for solving public problems and regional development.



Laborers Transport Tires on Rickshaw in Quetta.

**PM Shehbaz 'graciously' approves spectators for PSL 11 final on franchise owners' request: Naqvi**

SPORTS DESK

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has decided to allow spectators into the stadium for the final of the 11th edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL), Interior Minister and PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi said on Saturday.

In a post on X, the PCB chairman said he had requested PM Shehbaz to allow spectators in the stadiums during the PSL 11 final.

"While he was also inclined to permit fans, he emphasised that austerity measures are currently in place across Pakistan, with efforts underway to minimise fuel consumption," Naqvi said.

"However, on the request of franchise owners, he has graciously approved the presence of fans for the PSL 11 final."

The PCB chairman thanked the premier for the decision to facilitate the fans.

This year's PSL had initially been scheduled to be held across six venues — Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi, Multan, Peshawar, and Faisalabad.

However, last month, it was announced that the tournament would go ahead sans spectators while matches would be held only in Karachi and Lahore in line with the government's austerity drive, which was launched in the wake of the global fuel crisis triggered by the US-Israel's war on Iran. Islamabad United sealed a playoff berth with a commanding eight-wicket win at the National Bank Stadium on Friday night. The defeat dealt a significant blow to the Hyderabad Kingsmen's net run rate, which could prove decisive in the tightly packed race for fourth place.

Meanwhile, Peshawar Zalmi has stayed firmly at the top with eight wins in nine games. Karachi Kings, after suffering their fifth loss in eight outings, lie at the seventh spot in the eight-team league. The final match is scheduled for May 3 at Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore.

"Technically, it was up to the PCB to decide, but we have taken all the franchises into confidence," Naqvi added. In a later press release, the board said, "In consultation with the government of Pakistan, and in line with the officially announced national austerity and resource conservation measures, the PSL has introduced a revised operational plan for the 2026 edition of the tournament."

It said that to support the efficient use of energy and public resources in light of the prevailing regional geopolitical situation, the number of host venues had been streamlined from six to two. "Additionally, under the revised government standard operating procedures, matches will initially be held without spectators. This operational adjustment has been made purely in support of the broader national conservation effort and to ensure that the tournament is conducted in the most efficient and responsible manner," it said.



LAHORE Qalandars opener Fakhar Zaman plays a shot as Peshawar Zalmi wicket-keeper Mohammad Harris looks on during the Pakistan Super League match at the Gaddafi Stadium.

Qalandars end Zalmi's unbeaten run, stay in hunt for playoffs

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: It was quite an unusual scenario here at the Gaddafi Stadium with Lahore Qalandars batters showing their grit in their last initial-stage match.

Though their innings against Peshawar Zalmi revolved around Fakhar Zaman, Qalandars' mainstay known for his belligerent willow work, the southpaw on Saturday night crafted an uncharacteristic knock while his batting partners took the main role as they overhauled 200 with three balls to spare.

Abdullah Shafique, Charith Asalanka, Sikandar Raza and Daniel Sams all made valuable contributions with the bat.

The Shaheen Shah Afridi-led side in the process became the first team to beat table toppers Zalmi who had won eight matches of the ongoing edition before Saturday.

The thrilling win, Qalandars' fifth in 10 games, lifted them to the fourth spot as they kept their playoffs hopes alive in the eight-team league.

With 10 points under their belt, defending champions Qalandars now wait anxiously for the outcome of Sunday's clash between Hyderabad Kingsmen, who have four wins (eight points), and bottom-placed Rawalpindi in Karachi. Kingsmen, in order to reach the playoffs, need to beat Rawalpindi by a big margin to get a relatively better net run-rate or else Qalandars will go through.

Sams' (35 not out off 15, five fours and a six) couple off pacer Mohammad Basit in the final over gave Qalandars a memorable six-wicket victory.

Earlier in their innings, Qalandars after losing Mohammad Naeem (10) to pacer Khuram Shahzad in the third over at the total of 21 cruised to 64-1 in powerplay as a unusually quiet Fakhar, who made 58 not out off 47

— steadily lifted the scoring rate.

Fakhar was accompanied by Abdullah Shafique who walloped an 11-ball 25 laced with four fours and a six as the duo sought to cruise ahead.

However, immediately after powerplay, spinner Ifthikhar Ahmed sent Abdullah back to the pavilion as the batter looked to play a slog sweep but only managed to get caught at deep mid-wicket by Sufiyan Muqem.

Fakhar, later named player-of-the-match, then combined with Asalanka, who made 33 off 26, to help Qalandars get past 100 in the 11th over. The 53-run stand was broken by Ali Raza in the 13th over when a well-disguised slower ball deceived Asalanka who was caught in the cover by Michael Bracewell.

Sikandar Raza looked in a punishing mood as the right-hander made a whirlwind 29 off just 11 striking three sixes and a couple of fours to steer Qalandars to 150 in the 16th over. In the same over however, he was dismissed — hit-wicket while attempting a shot over fine-leg — by Sufiyan as the scoreline now read 160-4.

But Sams and Fakhar completed the job for Qalandars without any further loss.

Khuram, Ifthikhar, Ali and Sufiyan claimed a wicket each for Zalmi.

Earlier after being sent in to bat, Zalmi posted a solid 199-4 off the stipulated overs thanks to the fireworks by Bracewell who was well supported by Babar.

Zalmi were restricted earlier as opener James Vince and in-form Kusal Mendis were sent back in a double strike by Shaheen inside powerplay.

Vince, after making 10, was cleaned up by an inswinging yorker in the third over. In the fifth, Shaheen intelligently deceived Mendis with a slower one as the Sri Lankan batter attempting to pull mistimed it to give a simple catch to Harris Rauf at mid-on. It was now 36-2.

Sinner overcomes Bonzi in record hunt at Madrid Open

SPORTS DESK

MADRID: Jannik Sinner took a first step towards a potential record fifth consecutive Masters 1000 title with a 6-7(6/8), 6-1, 6-4 victory over Benjamin Bonzi in the Madrid Open second round.

The Italian world number one is looking to beat the rec-ord of four consecutive triumphs held by all-time greats Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal this week in the Spanish capital.

Sinner dropped only one set on the way to trophies in Paris, Indian Wells, Miami and Monte Carlo, but Bonzi battled brilliantly to claim the first at the Manolo Santana stadium.

The Frenchman survived five break points to reach a tie-break, where he also saved set point before edging ahead. However Sinner stepped up a gear in the second set, securing breaks in the fourth and sixth games, and another in the third on his way to the third round.

"It was a tough match, I had some chances early on and I couldn't use them, but this is tennis," said four-time Grand Slam winner Sinner.

"It's not bad to start the tournament like this, two and a half hours on court, it gives me good feedback where we need to improve for the next round.

"Of course, we need to improve, but I'm also happy, when you're not playing your best tennis and win, it's still a good result."

Earlier, Croatian qualifier Dino Prizmic sent world number six Ben Shelton crashing out with a 6-4, 6-7(4/7), 7-6(7/5) victory. Promising 20-year-old Prizmic, ranked 87th, secured his first ever win over a top-10 player in a three-hour battle in the Spanish capital.

American Shelton triumphed at the Munich Open on Sunday on clay but was unable to force a single break point on Prizmic's serve. Italian Lorenzo Musetti, ranked ninth, defeated Hubert Hurkacz 6-4, 7-6(7/4).

In the women's draw, world number two Elena Rybakina scraped into the Madrid Open third round with a 4-6, 6-3, 7-5 win over Gabriela Ruse. Kazakhstan's Rybakina, who won the Australian Open in January and triumphed at Stuttgart last week, struggled in the first set, making 24 unforced errors to just eight winners.



ROMANIA'S Elena Gabriela Ruse hits a return against Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan during their Madrid Open round-of-64 match at Park Manzanares.

Member APNS

Daily Mirror

Chief editor Syed Mumtaz Ahmed

Printed and Published Chief Executive Syed Mumtaz Ahmed, For MEM Publications (Pvt) Ltd, 4-A Model Town Hali Road Quetta Cantt. Phone, No. 081-2829164, Fax No. 081-2835934

Lebanon truce

THE fact that the truce between Israel and Lebanon has been extended for three weeks should be welcomed. But there should be no illusions about Tel Aviv's intentions in Lebanon and the rest of the Middle East. It is not seeking genuine peace; instead, the objective is clearly to destroy all forces that stand in its way of expansion.

The Zionist state's ultimate dream — a nightmare for the rest of the states of the region — is one of a 'Greater Israel'. Under American aegis, Lebanese and Israeli officials extended the truce in Washington, with US President Donald Trump commenting that his country would work with Lebanon to "protect itself from Hezbollah". Any protection the Lebanese need is from Israel's brutal attacks — despite the extension of the ceasefire, Tel Aviv continued its hostile activities on Lebanese soil yesterday.

Israel has caused immense devastation in Lebanon after initiating hostilities in early March. The death toll exceeds 2,200, with Lebanese journalist Amal Khalil among the latest victims. She was killed on Wednesday in an Israeli strike. Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam has termed her killing a war crime. In fact, her death is one in a series of war crimes committed by Israel across occupied Palestine, Lebanon and Iran.

The aim of Israel-Lebanon parleys seems to be the disarmament of Hezbollah. Perhaps this focus is misplaced; the goal of the talks should be the complete withdrawal of Israel from Lebanese territory, and a pledge from Tel Aviv not to attack the Arab state again. Of course, this cannot be expected from Israel, which has been regularly violating Lebanese sovereignty since 1948. It currently occupies a so-called security zone in Lebanon, demolishing villages and homes in the south. Remarking on this illegal occupation, the Israeli prime minister has said "we are not leaving". The past few days also saw extremist Israeli settlers cross over into Syria and Lebanon, before being herded back.

Lebanon has seen decades of foreign invasions and internal strife. The road to normalcy lies in ending the Israeli occupation and preventing the frequent invasions of its belligerent neighbour. Hezbollah's arms are an internal Lebanese matter, and Israel and the US should not be dictating the terms.

All Lebanese political forces must work to end the Israeli occupation of their land. They must ensure that a 'peace deal' does not turn out to be an instrument of surrender. Israel rarely gives up territory it has occupied unless the terms are tilted heavily in its favour.

The OIC, the Arab League, as well as other international actors must see to it that Israel ends its hostilities in Lebanon permanently, and is held to account for the loss of lives in Lebanon, and the massive destruction of property there.

By Sheikh Moazzam Khan

Institutions, Justice, and a Weary Man
The Defeat of a Nation

Rise, Moazzam... rise, Moazzam... This is not merely a call; it is the collective cry of a society crushed under the weight of persistent injustice, apathy, and institutional decay. This voice does not belong to a single individual—it represents millions who have knocked on the doors of justice until exhaustion, yet those doors never opened.

Our society suffers from a profound contradiction: the rhetoric of law is abundant, but its implementation is scarce. Parliament, which ought to be the epicenter of legislation, has increasingly become a marketplace of competing interests. Decisions are made that favor specific groups rather than public welfare. When those entrusted with making laws undermine their very spirit, expecting justice for the common citizen becomes little more than an illusion.

The question now grows sharper: is our system truly designed to deliver justice, or merely to project the appearance of it? The state of the courts provides a stark answer. When an ordinary citizen approaches the judiciary, he no longer feels like a human being—he becomes a "file." Every hearing becomes a fresh wound; every adjournment, another delay. Promises of justice are repeatedly made, yet their fulfillment is endlessly postponed. This delay is not merely administrative inefficiency; it is a systemic tragedy that calls the entire structure into question.

Human rights institutions, from which the public expects the most, often appear confined to statements rather than action. There is no shortage of words, but a visible absence of implementation. When a victim approaches these bodies and receives nothing beyond assurances, the very idea of justice begins to dissolve. This reality not only questions their performance but also exposes the seriousness—or lack thereof—of the entire system.

This city, this system, now revolves in a cycle where truth consistently loses and falsehood rises. Honesty, integrity, and principle are increasingly confined to books. In practical life, success favors those who know how to exploit the system's weaknesses. This trend signals not just moral decline but a looming crisis for the future.

The condition of government offices reflects the same decay. The voice of an ordinary citizen is often stifled. Applications pile up, files circulate, yet

decisions vanish into obscurity. Bureaucracy, designed for public service, becomes a wall too thick to cross. The result is predictable: people grow disillusioned, and their trust in the system erodes.

The most dangerous aspect of all this is normalization. Injustice is no longer shocking—it is becoming routine. People begin to accept it as fate. When a society normalizes injustice, it weakens its own foundations, because justice is the pillar upon which any state stands. If that pillar collapses, the entire structure risks falling apart.

It is also a bitter truth that those most affected by this system are already the most vulnerable—the traveler, the patient, the destitute. These are individuals with neither resources nor access, nor the power to assert their rights effectively. For them, justice becomes a distant dream that never materializes.

In such circumstances, the question becomes unavoidable: must we continue living within this system, or is transformation necessary? The call of "Rise, Moazzam" is, in essence, a call for that transformation. It is a message of awakening—that the time has come to break this inertia, to stand against injustice, and to strive for a system that genuinely serves its people.

Another painful dimension cannot be ignored: the decline of informal justice systems within society—such as panchayats, community forums, and family elders. There was a time when these platforms operated with sincerity, integrity, and collective responsibility. Their decisions were not only fair but effectively implemented—whether issued by a landlord, a tribal chief, or a respected elder. Today, however, even these systems have deteriorated. Bias, self-interest, and, above all, the rise of hypocrites have eroded their credibility. Places that once offered swift justice have themselves become questionable.

If we examine Pakistan's justice and administrative structure in sequence, the citizen's journey begins with government offices, where even the simplest request becomes entangled in procedural complexity. Files move, signatures accumulate, and progress halts at every desk, forming a cycle that consumes both time and energy. When the same citizen turns to the judiciary, he enters a prolonged and exhausting process, where each hearing brings delay and each date introduces

another trial. If clarity and timely relief are still not achieved, he turns to the offices of the Ombudsman, where hope is offered but action often remains limited. Finally, he approaches human rights commissions, where words and assurances abound, yet tangible progress remains elusive.

To pass through these four stages demands a level of patience, time, and resources that no ordinary individual possesses. It feels as though one must have the lifespan of Prophet Noah, a vast mastery of law, the patience of Prophet Job, and ultimately the sacrifice of Prophet Ishmael—all qualities that cannot coexist in a single person. This is why the common citizen eventually breaks, grows weary, or falls silent, and justice remains an abstract concept.

In such a reality, a pressing question arises: if institutions fail in their fundamental duty—to deliver timely and effective justice—what justification remains for their existence? This is not an emotional outcry but a serious policy question. It is not about abolishing institutions, but about re-evaluating their performance, structure, and accountability so they can become accessible, effective, and responsive to the citizen. Otherwise, a framework that generates despair instead of justice loses its very purpose.

This struggle will not be easy. It will demand time and sacrifice. Yet history bears witness that no society progresses without confronting and correcting its internal failures. Justice is not solely the responsibility of courts or institutions; it is a collective obligation in which every individual plays a role.

If we truly seek a better society, we must redefine our priorities. We must stand with truth, however difficult that may be. We must oppose falsehood and injustice, even at personal cost. Because if we fail to act today, tomorrow may be too late.

In the end, it would not be wrong to say that "this is not justice—this is merely accusation" has become a lived reality. Yet this reality is not permanent. It can be changed—if we act together. "Rise, Moazzam" is not just a name; it is a symbol—a reminder that silence is no longer an option, and that raising one's voice is essential.

This is the moment. If we continue to remain passive, future generations will not forgive us. So rise, reflect, and act—because every transformation begins with a single step, and that step must be ours.

By Arif Hasan

Homeless Karachi

THERE is a whole world of activities in Karachi that are performed on the streets because there is no place for them otherwise. These activities also take over space such as streets and the floodplains of Karachi's rivers and streams. For instance, an increasing number of families and individuals have made their homes along the edge of the Lyari river. They are both individuals and families. Besides the Lyari river, people have also found shelter under bridges, especially the street hawkers and kids who paint themselves with gold and silver spray, and perform at weddings and similar events.

Many innovative designs for homes have emerged that protect from theft and keep belongings safe. One of the most common is the semi-circular ventilated steel cage, about four feet (1.2 metres) high and four feet wide, which can be locked. The steel sections used in this design are about half an inch thick. When people leave for work, they either lock their belongings inside these structures or hire someone nearby to keep an eye. At night, they sleep inside these locked cages so that their belongings are safe and they are not forced to move suddenly by the authorities.

Settlements are provided with tea and roti for breakfast at a very reasonable price by hawkers. Small snacks are also managed within the community itself. The main meal is dinner, because by then people have earned some wages and can afford a proper meal.

There are also other homes which are made of bamboo supports and chatai. These settlements are growing, and most residents are from lower-income communities from rural Sindh and the Seraiki

belt. Much of the Lyari bed has also become a sorting ground for garbage. Tricycles collect waste from different parts of the city and bring it to the riverbanks, where it is sorted into useful and non-useful categories. The useful material is kept aside, while the rest is sold to informal recycling industries. This process generates billions of rupees per year. But where does this money go, and why is it not used to improve the working conditions of the people involved? Non-useful or organic waste is dumped along Karachi roads, rivers and low-lying areas, or for the reclamation of land, creating environmental problems.

When the government removes the homeless, where do they go?

These homes are the katchi abadis of the future. As people occupy the edges of spaces, they gradually expand into clusters of homes. Once they become somewhat stable, the authorities demolish them, and people have no option but to sleep on the streets. When the government removes these people, where do they go?

These settlements not only provide homes but also jobs. When formal systems fail to provide space and opportunity, people create their own systems to meet their needs.

The streets offer more than just survival — they become spaces of work, shelter and community. People arrange food for each other, share resources and create small support systems to get through daily life.

There is constant migration to Karachi from the rest of Sindh and the Seraiki belt because feudal systems there are breaking down, giving people more freedom to move.

At the same time, survival now depends

on cash, which is easier to earn in cities. Migration also creates competition for jobs between new migrants and existing urban communities, and is responsible to a great extent for Karachi's ethnically based settlements.

New forms of work have also emerged. For example, women now gather at certain spots where employers come to hire them for short-term domestic work. Unlike traditional hiring through connections, these arrangements are more flexible and che-a-per. Women can work for a few hours or a single day, which gives them some in-dependence and allows them to manage both work and home responsibilities. But these conditions also raise questions: how will this system shape the wo-men's job market, and what impact will it have on urban ho-useholds and lower-middle-class families?

The homeless must carry out many daily activities on the streets or along rivers and creeks.

Communities have built makeshift toilets using bamboo poles and cloth for privacy, but these often drain directly into the water bodies of the city, causing pollution and health problems. Early in the morning, one may even see small informal services appear — like a man with a stool offering basic grooming for men, such as a haircut or beard trimming, only to disappear later in the day.

The big question the city faces is what it can do for this growing population. If this goes unanswered, we will create a much larger housing and environmental crisis, especially related to waste disposal and associated issues.

Research on who does what, how, where and why becomes necessary if we are to have a workable compromise among all the actors.

DAILY MIRROR

Power Division asks Nepra to scrap fee, licence rule for solar consumers up to 25KW

NEWS DESK

KARACHI: On directives of Federal Minister for Power Awais Leghari, the Power Division has formally asked the National Electric and Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) to abolish the application fee and remove the license requirement for solar consumers of 25 kilowatts and below.

The Power Division had previously alerted Nepra about the adverse effects of this decision and requested that it be aligned with the old regulations, the Power Division said in a statement on Sunday.

The development comes a day after the Nepra clarified that solar consumers who are not connected to the national grid do not require any licence from the regulator, and no such proposal was currently under consideration.

Under the previous 2015 regulations, distributed generation facilities of 25 kilowatts or below did not require a license from Nepra. Applications were processed directly by Distribution Companies (Discos) without any fee, serving as a major fiscal incentive for residential users, it added.

However, the new Prosumer Regulations centralise approval authority with Nepra and impose application fees even on these small facilities.

The Power Division noted that the Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) had flagged the regulatory shift and requested Nepra to maintain consistency with the earlier approvals regime for systems of 25KW or below.

Additionally, during public hearings, the Pakistan Solar Association, Primage (Pvt) Ltd, the Pakistan Alternative Energy Association, and Siddiq Renewable Energy (Pvt) Ltd formally objected to the changes, arguing that removing approval authority from Discos creates unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles. Following the minister's directive, the Power Division has now formally requested Nepra to reinstate the earlier practice for systems of 25KW and below, warning that the current approach risks slowing the national drive toward alternative energy adoption.

A day earlier, the Nepra officials explained that its regulations cannot be applied to off-grid solar consumers, adding that these rules only cover users falling under net metering and net billing categories, which are limited to those connected to the national grid.

They added that under the new Nepra regulations, net billing has been introduced solely for new consumers, and all solar users connected to the national

grid with any level of load will now be required to obtain a licence from the authority.

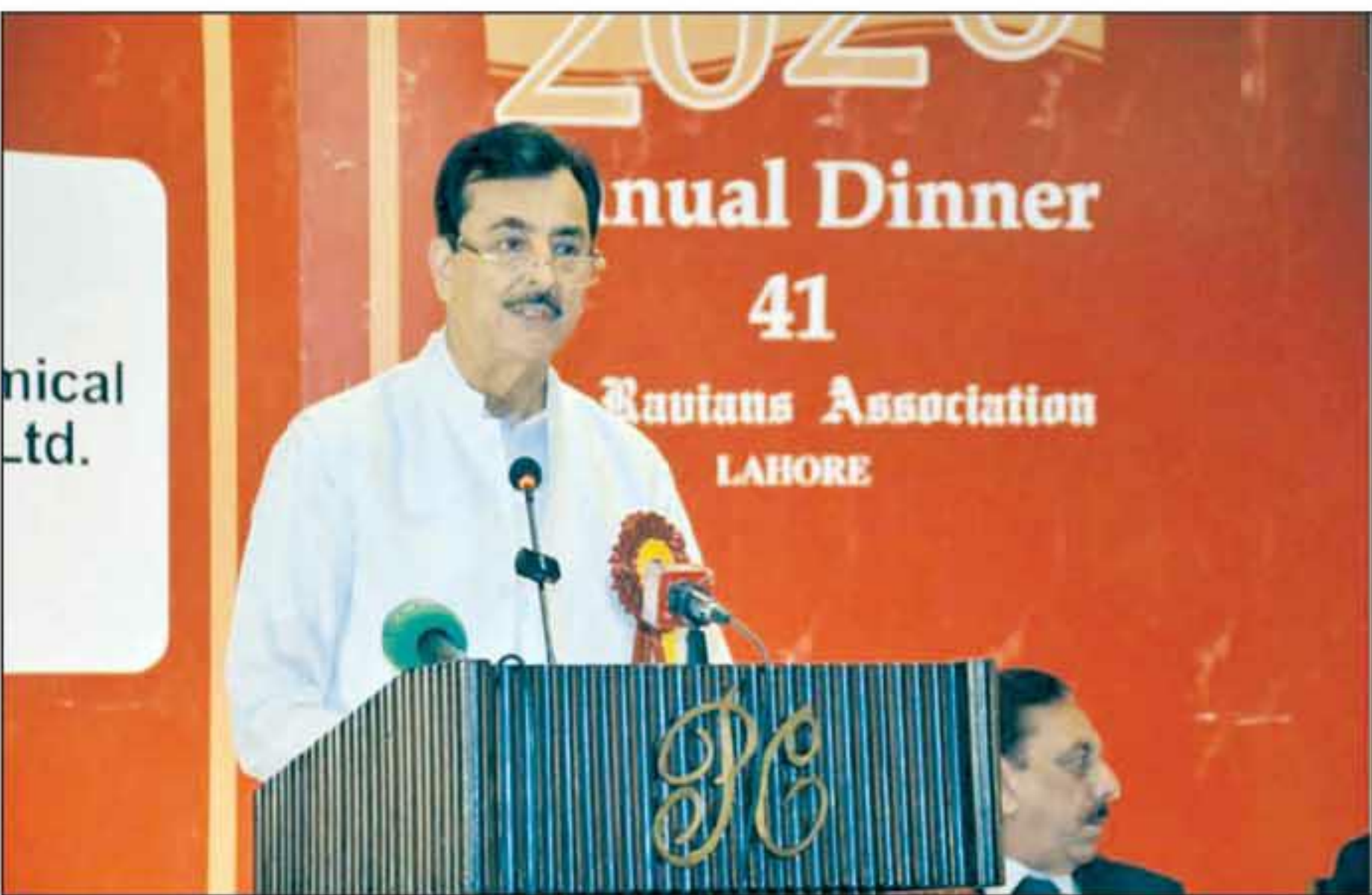
Finally, he expressed confidence that strategic adjustments, including reducing diesel load and channeling it into petrol, have strengthened fuel availability and helped manage prices effectively.

Responding to a query, Minister for Petroleum stressed that Pakistan does not produce oil or petrol domestically and relies entirely on imports to meet its energy needs, adding that ensuring a stable supply and managing prices requires strategic planning and adherence to international agreements.

He further noted that permanent control of petroleum product prices is linked to resolving global conflicts, particularly between the US and Iran, which directly impact international oil markets.

The minister highlighted that ending such tensions, along with other geopolitical issues, is essential for long-term stability in fuel costs.

In response to another query, he highlighted the ongoing OGRA digitalization process and the need for further deregulation to improve efficiency and transparency in the petroleum sector.



Lahore: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani addressing a gathering of the Old Ravians Association as Chief Guest.

NA Speaker expresses grief over passing of Jakhrani's son

APP

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Sunday visited the residence of Chief Whip of Pakistan Peoples Party in the National Assembly Mir Aijaz Hussain Jakhrani and expressed his heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of his son, Zaid Hussain Jakhrani.

The Speaker expressed profound grief and sorrow and extended his deepest sympathy to Aijaz Jakhrani and his family, saying that the loss of a son is the most profound grief for any parent.

Ayaz Sadiq said that the passing of a young son was an indescribable tragedy that cannot be expressed in words.

He said that parents attach countless dreams, hopes and aspirations to their children and such a sudden loss leaves behind deep and lasting sorrow.

Ayaz Sadiq said, in this difficult time, he stands in complete solidarity with the bereaved family and shares their grief from the depths of his heart.

New wave of Israeli strikes kill 4 Palestinians in Gaza

MONITORING DESK

GAZA: Four Palestinians, including a child, were killed early Sunday in a new wave of Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip despite an ongoing ceasefire, medical sources told Anadolu.

The bodies of two Palestinians were brought to Al-Shifa Medical Complex after an Israeli drone strike targeted a motorcycle near Kuwait Roundabout on Salah al-Din Street, south-east of Gaza City.

The sources added that a third Palestinian was killed by Israeli army gunfire in the Al-Mughraqa area in central Gaza, while a 14-year-old teenager later died from injuries he had suffered in an Israeli strike in the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood, north of Gaza City, Saturday evening.

Israel also shelled areas east of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, witnesses said.

In central Gaza, eastern areas of Al-Bureij refugee camp also saw gunfire from an Israeli helicopter and artillery shelling.

Israeli artillery also targeted the eastern parts of the Al-Tuffah neighborhood east of Gaza City, while naval boats fired shells toward the city's coast.

Pakistan's fuel supply stable, ending global conflicts crucial for permanent price control: Ali Pervaiz Malik

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik emphasized that resolving world conflicts is crucial to permanently control petrol prices, affirming that Pakistan's fuel supply is secure, unlike India, where citizens faced long queues and shortages on petrol pumps. During an exclusive conversation with a local news channel, Ali Pervaiz Malik stated that efforts are ongoing to stabilize fuel prices and maintain balance in the market. He emphasized that Pakistan's situation remains comparatively stronger than many countries like India facing economic stress due to global conflicts. He praised the leadership of the Prime Minister, the Field Marshal Asim Munir and the Deputy Prime Minister for their proactive measures, expressing admiration for their efforts in ensuring energy security and economic stability.

The minister also highlighted that Pakistan has an agreement with the IMF which must be honoured, warning that any failure to comply could have serious consequences for the country's economic situation.

Finally, he expressed confidence that

strategic adjustments, including reducing diesel load and channeling it into petrol, have strengthened fuel availability and helped manage prices effectively.

Responding to a query, Minister for Petroleum stressed that Pakistan does not produce oil or petrol domestically and relies entirely on imports to meet its energy needs, adding that ensuring a stable supply and managing prices requires strategic planning and adherence to international agreements.

He further noted that permanent control of petroleum product prices is linked to resolving global conflicts, particularly between the US and Iran, which directly impact international oil markets.

The minister highlighted that ending such tensions, along with other geopolitical issues, is essential for long-term stability in fuel costs.

In response to another query, he highlighted the ongoing OGRA digitalization process and the need for further deregulation to improve efficiency and transparency in the petroleum sector.

The minister stressed that these reforms are essential for better governance and streamlined management of fuel distribution.

China-backed healthcare initiative launched to uplift maternal, newborn services

INP

QUETTA: In a major boost to Balochistan's public health sector and a significant demonstration of deepening Pakistan-China cooperation, Balochistan government has formally launched a comprehensive initiative aimed at improving maternal and newborn healthcare services across seven districts, with substantial support from the Government of China.

The project, described by officials as a transformative intervention in the province's healthcare delivery system, will upgrade facilities in as many as 100 medical centers.

According to a Gwadar Pro's report, these upgrades are expected to enhance access to quality care for mothers and infants, particularly in underserved and

remote areas where healthcare indicators have historically lagged behind the national averages.

"We are deeply grateful to the Government of China for this vital collaboration," Balochistan's Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said in a statement, adding that the project underscores the strength of bilateral ties and places maternal and child health at the forefront of provincial priorities.

Health officials explained that the program is designed not only to upgrade infrastructure but also to elevate service delivery standards, ensuring that expectant mothers and newborns receive timely and effective medical attention.

The initiative will also contribute to reducing maternal and infant mortality rates, a longstanding challenge in Balochistan.

Jl launches countrywide membership drive

INP

LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has launched a countrywide membership drive and pledges to register five million members, said its emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman here on Saturday.

The JI chief said people have seen that no government did work for their welfare, adding the party has started membership drive across Pakistan, and five million members will be registered.

"Our youth will go door to door and contact people. The rights of farmers are being violated, so they will also contact them. More than three thousand farmers are not getting their money and farmers are being exploited due to middlemen."

"The Punjab government is spending billions of rupees on advertisements while not working on good governance. Thirty-five million children are out of schools," said the JI chief.

There is a system of oppression, no work has been done in IT field; only laptops are being distributed, sources of electricity generation are not being created in Pakistan, IPPs are receiving money without providing electricity, while basic needs are not being provided to the people, he went on saying.

Abbasi terms launch of EO-3 satellite a milestone in Pakistan's scientific self-reliance

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi on Sunday hailed the successful launch of Pakistan's EO-3 satellite, calling it a significant boost to national prestige and an important milestone toward scientific self-reliance.

In a statement, the minister said the EO-3 satellite reflected Pakistan's growing capabilities in space technology and symbolized the progress of a developing and modern nation.

He praised the scientists and engineers of SUPARCO for their dedication and hard work in making the mission a success.

Abbasi also said China's cooperation in the space sector as a strong example of the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China.

He expressed the confidence that the EO-3 satellite would open new avenues for advanced research, innovation and development in the country, helping Pakistan move forward in science and technology.

IMF executive board to meet on May 8 to approve disbursement of over \$1.2bn to Pakistan

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has called a meeting of its executive board on May 8 to approve the disbursement of more than \$1.2 billion to Pakistan under two concurrent programmes — \$7bn Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF).

Pakistan has qualified for the disbursement of about \$1bn after the successful third review of EFF and \$210 million under the second review of RSF.

The IMF announced on March 27 that it had reached a staff-level agreement for the disbursement of about \$1.2bn on the successful conclusion of the third review under EFF and the second review under RSF. The two sides have since been engaged in changes to fuel pricing and the elimination of subsidies to meet the petroleum levy target budgeted at Rs1.47 trillion for the current fiscal year.

The petroleum levy's collection has already gone beyond Rs1.2tr in the first nine months of the current fiscal year despite the government's claim of subsidising diesel. The levy seems set to cross the Rs1.47tr target with ease in the remaining three months of the fiscal year. However, the government is still considering increasing the levy on petrol or reviving the levy on diesel to make up for the Federal Board of Revenue's shortfall. The Fund has also been advising the government to phase out the fuel subsidy.

Moreover, Pakistan has been holding discussions with the IMF regarding flexibility in its programme's contours, which would be finalised in next year's budget. The finance minister recently announced that Pakistan was committed to fiscal discipline while seeking flexi-

bility in light of evolving global and regional challenges.

While announcing the SLA on March 27, IMF said the programme's implementation by Pakistan under the EFF remained broadly aligned with the authorities' objectives to strengthen public finances, ensure inflation remains durably within the State Bank of Pakistan's target range, advance reforms to improve the viability of the energy sector, and deepen structural reforms, while strengthening social protection and rebuilding health and education spending.

The authorities' climate reform agenda, backed by the RSF, is progressing, and the authorities remain committed to implementing comprehensive reforms and policies that enhance resilience and reduce vulnerabilities to climate-related risks. The talks were held in-person in Karachi and Islamabad from February 25 to March 2 and virtually afterwards. According to IMF mission chief Iva Petrova, subject to IMF board's approval, Pakistan will have access to about US\$1bn under the EFF and about US\$210m under the RSF, bringing total disbursements under the two arrangements to about US\$4.5bn.

Supported by the EFF, ongoing policies have continued to strengthen the economy and rebuild market confidence.

IMF had earlier stated that following recovery in FY25, economic activity gained further momentum in the first part of the current fiscal year. Inflation and the current account balance remained contained, and external buffers continued to strengthen.

The conflict in the Middle East, however, cast a cloud over the outlook as volatile energy prices and tighter global financial conditions risk putting upward pressure on inflation and weighing on growth and the current account.



Karachi: Federal Minister for commerce Jam Kamal Khan addressing the audience at the Karachi Parsi Institute, appreciating the Parsi community's 133-year legacy of service, dedication and contributions to Pakistan's development.

Hajj preparations gain momentum as 20,000 pilgrims arrive in Madinah

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pilgrims from Pakistan and across the world continue to arrive in Saudi Arabia for the annual Hajj, with more than 20,000 worshippers having reached Madinah so far on multiple flights, on Sunday.

According to Saudi media reports, the first groups of pilgrims arriving in Madinah have already departed for Makkah to perform Umrah and prepare for the main Hajj rituals.

The Day of Arafat, the central rite of Hajj, is expected to fall on May 26, 2026, a Tuesday, subject to moon sight-

ing. Saudi authorities have forecast hot weather conditions during the Hajj period, with temperatures likely to range between 40 and 42 degrees Celsius.

Medical experts have urged pilgrims to strictly follow safety guidelines, including staying in shaded areas, using umbrellas, and keeping spray bottles for hydration.

As part of precautionary measures, pilgrims have also been advised to receive vaccinations against meningitis, influenza, and polio before undertaking the journey.

Maritime Minister announces storage relief at KPT terminals to ease exporters' burden amid shipment delays

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry on Sunday announced storage charge waivers ranging from 25 to 50 percent at Karachi Port Trust (KPT) terminals to facilitate exporters affected by recent disruptions in Gulf-bound shipments.

Following constructive engagement with terminal operators to address exporters' concerns, Rear Admiral Shahid Ahmed (ret), Chairman of KPT, led the effort on the minister's direction, securing waivers of 50 per cent at KGTL from March 1 to 10, 2026; 50 per cent at KICT from March 1 to 10, 2026; and 25 per cent at SAPT from March 11 to 31, 2026.

These measures cover export containers stranded at terminal yards that could not be loaded due to operational issues, the minister said. "The waivers aim to

reduce financial pressure on importers and exporters, clear pending consignments, and boost cargo clearance efficiency."

Lauding KPT's efforts, Junaid Chaudhry said it marks a positive step to support the export sector, ensure trade continuity, and ease logistical bottlenecks. "Maritime institutions are being encouraged to adopt a more facilitative and trade-friendly approach so that operational delays do not translate into avoidable costs for stakeholders," he added.

The minister emphasized improved coordination among ports and terminals for smoother logistics and better service delivery. He described such relief as part of a broader strategy to make the maritime sector more responsive, competitive, and aligned with national trade priorities, viewing efficient port operations as vital to economic stability, export growth, and investor confidence.



Asfandyar Khan Kakar and Akhtar Shah Kakar Announce Press Conference at Quetta Press Club