Daily

# THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

ABC Certified

www.voiceofmillionsqta.com

Chief Editor: Syed Abdul Wadood Shah

Quetta

Rabi-ul-Sani 18,1448 AH | Vol: XX No. 49 Thursday October 01, 2026 | Pages 4, Price Rs. 5 | Ph: 2823307

## CM Bugti vows to eliminate malnutrition; improve food security in Balochistan

***Says the joint initiatives of the Government of Balochistan and the World Food Program would yield fruitful results in eradicating malnutrition and promoting food security in the province***

QUETTA, (VoM Report): The Country Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) Pakistan, Anita Hirsh, called on Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on mutual cooperation, including ending malnutrition, ensuring food security, improving nutrition, and expanding ongoing WFP projects in Balochistan. The meeting reviewed ongoing WFP-sponsored projects, the food security situation in the province, and future strategies.

Discussions also focused on making joint efforts more effective to tackle malnutrition, provide quality nutrition to women and children, and ensure food security.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that malnutrition is a serious issue in Balochistan and well-coordinated, joint efforts between the government, international organizations, and relevant stakeholders are essential to address it.

He maintained that the Balochistan Government is taking effective measures to eliminate malnutrition and improve food security, and highly values the cooperation of international organizations in this regard.

The Chief Minister added that providing adequate and quality nutrition to women and children is fundamental to creating a healthy and vibrant society, since malnutrition directly impacts human health, child development, and overall human progress, long-term and sustainable measures are indispensable to resolve this issue.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti further noted that the joint initiatives of the Government of Balochistan and the World Food Program would yield fruitful results in eradicating malnutrition and promoting food security in the province.



QUETTA: The Country Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) Pakistan, Anita Hirsh, called on Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar addressing during launching ceremony of special report titled: "Weaponising Waters: Historical, Legal and Strategic Dimensions of IWT Suspension" at ISSI

## Pakistan believes in peace but won't allow India to weaponise water: Tarar

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday said Pakistan would not allow India to weaponise water, describing the Indus waters as a fundamental and basic right of the country's 240 million people.

Addressing the launching ceremony of a special report titled "Weaponizing Waters: Historical, Legal, & Strategic Dimensions of IWT Suspension" at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), the minister said Pakistan was a peaceful nation that believed in peace but would continue to defend its vital national interests in accordance with international law.

Highlighting Pakistan's historical connection with the Indus River, Tarar said the country's identity was deeply rooted in the Indus Valley Civilization. He said Pakistanis took pride in identifying themselves as people of the Indus Valley Civilization, whose lives and identity were connected with the banks and tributaries of the mighty River Indus.

He said the framers and signatories of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) had not envisaged that, decades after its signing, India would take steps that legally ignorant, morally bankrupt and devoid of ethics.

Tarar said the treaty was a legal instrument that defined the terms and conditions agreed upon by both parties and was legally enforceable and binding once signed. He said the treaty did not permit either party to unilaterally alter, rescind or revoke it, or hold it in abeyance.

He emphasised that both parties were required to adhere to the treaty's terms and conditions even in the event of a dispute.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication Ayesha Raza Farooq chairs a review meeting to assess the performance and key outcomes of the September sub-national polio immunization campaign

## Delays in projects of public interest not to be tolerated: Chief Secretary

***Chief Secretary directs the district administrations to ensure the holding of separate open courts for women***

QUETTA, (VoM Report): A Deputy Commissioners Conference was held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakil Qadir Khan, during which a detailed review was conducted of ongoing development projects in the province, the performance of district administrations, redressal of public complaints, price control, agricultural income tax, cleanliness campaigns, educational facilities, and measures related to public welfare.

The Department of Monitoring and Evaluation briefed the meeting on the progress of ongoing development projects. The meeting was informed that a total of 2,935 development projects across the province have been monitored and reviewed, of which 1,667 projects have been completed, while work on the remaining projects is ongoing.

The meeting was also briefed on projects being implemented under the BSDI program. It was stated in the briefing that 4,052 projects are included under BSDI in the province, and their progress is being continuously reviewed.

The Chief Secretary directed the relevant authorities and Deputy Commissioners to ensure that development projects under completion are completed within the stipulated period and that no compromise is made on the quality of the projects.

He said that delays in projects of public interest would not be tolerated, while regular monitoring of development projects should be ensured.

The Chief Secretary directed the district administrations to ensure the holding of separate open courts for women so that their problems could be resolved promptly and they could be provided an opportunity to present their complaints in a dignified manner.

He said that effective and immediate measures should be taken at the district level to resolve the problems faced by women. He directed that missing facilities in schools be provided on a priority basis. He said that providing basic educational facilities to male and female students is an important priority of the government.

## Gohar urges federal govt to avoid governor's rule in K-P

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on Wednesday said the party's planned October 4 long march would remain a peaceful and political activity, urging the government to avoid imposing measures such as governor rule or emergency in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P).

Speaking to the media at Parliament House, Barrister Gohar said, "The response to the long march should not be the imposition of governor rule but rather political engagement with PTI founder Imran Khan." "Our effort is that the long march remains peaceful and completely political. Neither should governor rule be imposed nor should an emergency be enforced," he added.

## Govt 'seriously' considering imposition of emergency in K-P

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Parliamentary Affairs Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said on Wednesday that the federal government was "seriously" considering the imposition of an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) in response to the worsening security situation in the province.

Political uncertainty has deepened in K-P amid growing tensions between the federal and provincial governments, with the Centre considering governor's rule and emergency as possible options. Speaking to journalists at Parliament House, Chaudhry stated that the imposition of an emergency was being considered in K-P because of "increasing terrorism" and the provincial government's lack of "interest" and failure to control the security situation. "The possibility of imposing an emergency under Article 232 of the Constitution is being discussed". While talking about consultations with the Pakistan Peoples Party on the imposition of emergency in K-P, Chaudhry said the National Assembly speaker would chair a meeting where matters related to legislation would also be discussed. He added that the federal government could take the PPP into confidence if it decided to proceed with the emergency.

## Views of young people vital for improvement of sports sector: Meena Majeed

QUETTA (VoM Report): Provincial Adviser for Sports and Youth Affairs Ms. Meena Majeed Baloch, along with the Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs and Director General Sports, attended a seminar on the Youth Sports Policy held at Ayub Stadium, Quetta. Representatives of various sports associations, athletes, young people, and participants from other relevant sectors attended the seminar.

On the occasion, participants presented various suggestions and questions regarding the promotion of sports, opportunities for young people, sports infrastructure, and the policy.

Provincial Adviser Ms. Meena Majeed Baloch responded to the questions of the participants, interacted with them directly, and carefully listened to and noted their suggestions and views regarding the sports sector.

## Commissioner for convenient, user-friendly public transport system for citizens of Quetta

QUETTA, (VoM Report): A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Quetta Division Commissioner Zeeshan Lashari regarding the digitization of the Green Bus Service and the provision of better travel facilities to the public. The meeting reviewed matters relating to providing better, easier, and modern travel facilities to citizens, as well as modernizing the Green Bus Service and bringing it in line with a digital system. The meeting was attended by the Additional Secretary Transport, MD PMTA, Director General PTCB, CEO PPP, Secretary RTA Quetta, Assistant Commissioner City Quetta, CCO TSPL, Chief Operating Officer, and other officers.

The meeting emphasized that the Green Bus Service system should be modernized and digitized in phases to provide better travel facilities to the public, so that citizens can easily access all necessary information regarding the bus service through their mobile phones. Under the proposed digital system, citizens will be able to obtain information about Green Bus routes, bus stops, operating hours, fares, and related travel information through a mobile app or web portal. The provision of live bus tracking was also proposed so that passengers can know where their desired bus is currently located and approximately how long the next bus will take to reach the relevant stop.

## Pakistan to defend Saudi Arabia; enemy of Saudi Arabia is enemy of Pakistan: Defence Minister

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Wednesday said Pakistan would stand by Saudi Arabia against any threat, declaring that "any enemy of Saudi Arabia is an enemy of Pakistan".

According to Al Jazeera, Asif condemned Yemen's Houthi group for carrying out attacks against the Kingdom and said that said Pakistan had no doubt that the Houthis were committing aggression against Saudi Arabia and reiterated that Islamabad would stand by Riyadh against any threat.

"There is absolutely no doubt in our mind that Houthis are committing aggression against Saudi Arabia, and we are there to help Saudi Arabia in any conflict, whether it is coming from Houthis or a country or any other outfit which threatens Saudi Arabia's security," the defence minister said.

His remarks came amid heightened tensions between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis following fresh cross-border attacks. Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye signed the Makkah trilateral agreement on August 7, which provides for collective security and defence cooperation among the three states. The pact — later named the Makkah Defence Alliance — stipulates that an armed attack on any one of the three countries will be regarded as an attack on all of them. The Houthis have carried out repeated missile and drone attacks against Saudi Arabia since announcing a naval blockade on the Kingdom in July. The group has targeted Saudi-linked vessels operating in the Red Sea as part of its campaign, further escalating tensions in the region. The Houthis also targeted Saudi airports, energy facilities and other strategic infrastructure, with the Kingdom's air defence systems intercepting many of the projectiles.




ULAANBAATAR, MONGOLIA: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal in a group photograph with participants of the Governing Council Meeting of the CAREC Institute

## Raheela Durrani vows to promote educational; literary environment in Balochistan

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Addressing the impressive ceremony of the "Allama Iqbal Provincial Literary Award" organized by the Culture Department, Provincial Education Minister Madam Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani said that a deep attachment to knowledge and literature and a connection with books are the soul of any vibrant and awakened society. Our writers, researchers, and poets are our great national and intellectual assets whose efforts provide direction and awareness to society.

The ceremony was formally inaugurated by the Secretary Culture, while Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani was the chief guest at the concluding session. During the ceremony, around 70 prominent writers and scholars were presented Provincial Literary Awards in recognition of their valuable services in outstanding prose writing, poetry, novel writing, and research and authorship in the province's five major languages—Urdu, Pashto, Balochi, Brahui, and Hazargi. In her detailed address, the Provincial Education Minister congratulated all the award recipients and paid rich tribute to their academic and literary services.




QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani and others addressing the participants of policy dialogue on counterterrorism and preventing violent extremism, effective legislation, and institutional coordination

## Balochistan policy dialogue calls for stronger counterterrorism laws, institutional coordination

QUETTA, (VoM Report): A policy dialogue was held in Balochistan on counterterrorism and preventing violent extremism, effective legislation, and institutional coordination, in collaboration with the Home Department of Balochistan and the British High Commission Islamabad. Provincial Minister for Education Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani attended as the chief guest, while Members of the Provincial Assembly Engineer Zamrak Khan Achakzai, Shahida Rauf, and other relevant officials and representatives were also present. The policy dialogue discussed ways to make legislation more effective for countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, strengthen the parliamentary role, and improve coordination and cooperation among relevant institutions.

Addressing the event, Provincial Minister for Education Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani said that the younger generation can play an important role in the development of the country and society.

# THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

Thursday October 01, 2026


## Recognition of state of Palestine vital to isolate Israel's policies

**The anticipated decisions of France and the United Kingdom to recognize the state of Palestine mark a significant diplomatic shift, reinforcing the international consensus that a two-state solution is the only viable path to lasting peace in the Middle East, with global implications. While recognition alone will not alter the realities of occupation, it carries profound legal and political weight – affirming Palestine's right of self-determination and sending a clear message to Israel: the denial of Palestinian statehood is unsustainable and in violation of international law and the prevailing global consensus.**

**This move aligns with a broader trend in Europe, where frustration over Israel's continued settlement expansion and rejection of meaningful negotiations led several nations to reconsider their positions. The symbolic and legal implications of recognition cannot be overstated: it reinforces Palestine's standing in international law and challenges Israel's occupation, which has been declared by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to be "illegal" in two advisory opinions, in 2004 and in 2024.**

**Under international law, recognition of a state is a political act that acknowledges an entity's statehood based on Article 1 of the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States criteria: a permanent population, defined territory, government, and capacity to enter relations with other states. While Palestine's territorial fragmentation under occupation complicates full state functionality, 148 UN member states have already recognized it, affirming its legitimacy as a sovereign state.**

**Admittedly, recognition does not end the Israeli occupation or settle matters related to border demarcation between Israel and Palestine, but it strengthens the latter's standing in international forums and legal disputes. It also signals to Israel that its current policies – settlement expansion, annexation threats, and the refusal to engage in good-faith negotiations – are incompatible with global norms and may lead to sanctions.**

**The ICJ and the UN General Assembly have repeatedly affirmed the principle of Palestinian self-determination and called for compliance with international law regarding the occupation. The ICJ is currently deliberating two significant cases: South Africa v. Israel, which examines the scope of violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including accusations under the 1951 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and an advisory opinion on Israel's legal obligations toward UN agencies, including the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), operating in the region. Recognition of Palestine by additional Western and European states would reinforce these legal precedents, further isolating Israel's policies under international law.**

**The case of Kosovo offers a compelling parallel. Despite Serbia's vehement opposition, recognition by a majority of UN members allowed Kosovo to consolidate its de facto statehood, participate in international institutions, and establish legal precedents that Serbia can no longer overturn. While Kosovo's independence remains contested – given that Russia and China, two permanent UN Security Council members, continue to object – its recognition has normalized its sovereignty in practice.**

**Similarly, widespread recognition of Palestine would solidify its claim to statehood, making its exclusion from meaningful negotiations increasingly untenable for Israel. Like Kosovo, Palestine may not achieve full UN membership under the UN Charter owing to US exercise of its veto power in the UN Security Council, but diplomatic recognition by influential states would grant Palestine greater leverage in future talks.**

**France and the UK are joined by other states such as Portugal, Malta, San Marino, and Finland, joining Spain, Ireland, Norway, Slovenia, and Belgium, all of which have already taken steps toward recognition. Even traditionally cautious nations, such as Canada and Australia, have hinted at reconsidering their positions. This momentum reflects frustration with Israel's opposition to a two-state solution and aligns with broader efforts to revive diplomatic efforts. The EU's gradual shift toward recognition underscores that the status quo – perpetual occupation, settlement expansion, and the absence of a political horizon for Palestinians – is unsustainable.**

**Recognition should not be seen as hostility toward Israel but rather as a reaffirmation of international law. The Oslo Accords were meant to be transitional, yet three decades later, Israel continues to undermine Palestinian self-determination through military control, settlement entrenchment, and the fragmentation of Palestinian territory. By recognizing Palestine, European states underscore that Israel cannot indefinitely dictate terms without consequence.**

**A two-state solution remains the only framework endorsed by the UN, the EU, and major global powers. Recognition does not replace negotiations but reinforces their urgency. If Israel continues to reject Palestinian statehood, it risks further diplomatic isolation and the erosion of its own legitimacy as a democratic state. Therefore, recognition sends a powerful message: Palestinian statehood is not a concession but a right. As with Kosovo, international consensus can shape realities on the ground. For peace to prevail, Israel must accept that denial is no longer an option.**

**The expected recognition of Palestine by France, the UK, and other Western states marks a turning point in the conflict's diplomatic landscape. While it will not immediately end the occupation or resolve all disputes, it reasserts the principle that Palestinian self-determination is non-negotiable. Israel now faces a choice: adapt to the changing international consensus or face growing isolation and the real possibility of sanctions. The two-state solution, though challenged, remains the only viable path to peace. Recognition is not the end of the process – but it is an essential step toward a just and lasting peace under the UN Charter.**

## Sandy Eldorado

**F.S. Aijazuddin**

Never throw away a diary. It is like burying your past prematurely. In 1980, I worked in Dubai for a while and then for the next nine years in the Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. Both sheikhdoms were emerging from the chrysalis of their sandy past to become modern Eldorados.

C. Davidson's recent book From Sheikhs to Sultanism (2021) encouraged me to re-read my early diaries. Davidson focuses on the rise of two modern Arab rulers — Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman al-Saud (MBS) and the UAE's President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (MBZ). MBZ (born in 1961) is older than MBS by 24 years. MBS defers to MBZ as his 'wise uncle'. The enormous disparity in their wealth, however, makes MBS far more important.

Both rulers govern through layered control — using what Davidson defines as 'patrimonialism' (governance dominated by the ruler, his family and friends) and 'neo-patrimonialism' (in which modern-looking institutions and rules are the veneer for patrimonialism). The ADNOC I joined in May 1980 fell into the second category.

From ADNOC's inception in 1971, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan had been keen that it should be run on professional lines. He did not trust the Western oil giants. He was suspicious of Egyptians and other Arabs. He turned instead to Algeria, where, after the peremptory departure of the colonising French, young Algerian executives in its national oil company Sonatrach stepped into the vacuum.

The man sent by Sonatrach to head ADNOC was a 31-year-old Sorbonne-trained economist, Dr Mahmoud Hamra Krouha. An FT profile described him as "a slightly-built man, neatly dressed in western suits, with an easy smile and an Indira Gandhi-style streak of white in his hair". A formidable linguist, he was fluent in Arabic (including the local Bedu dialect), French and English. He took with him about a dozen Algerians (not all properly qualified) to help him run ADNOC.

I had the privilege of working with Dr Krouha for seven years, between 1980 and 1987. Over my long professional career, I have encountered many chief executives, each a giant in his own field. None — except for our Syed Babar Ali — could compare with Krouha for vision, dynamism, and competence.

Dr Krouha exercised an unshared grip over ADNOC's 10 directorates — exploration & production (E&P), hydrocarbon processing, marketing, etc — and its 18 subsidiaries and affiliates. He knew everything about them and expected his staff to be as well informed. Every paper requiring his approval went up to his Spartan 12th-floor office in ADNOC's headquarters. (Its replacement is a 65-floor skyscraper, costing $316 million.)

He chaired the board meetings of each of ADNOC's subsidiaries, usually in the afternoons (ADNOC closed at 2:30pm.) All too often, underprepared CEOs would find themselves outgunned by him. On one occasion, I witnessed him take on Dr Mana bin Said Al-Otaiba, then UAE's minister of petroleum and mineral resources. A new general manager had to be appointed in a company of which Dr Otaiba was the chairman. British Petroleum proposed a candidate. Dr Otaiba welcomed him. Dr Krouha objected: "It is ADNOC's right as the majority shareholder to nominate the GM." BP and other foreign shareholders had to agree. The minister left the room, but returned. Dr Krouha had made his point.

Inevitably, as young watanis or locals returned from their training abroad, they eyed the top posts in ADNOC. In January 1981, ADNOC's board instructed Dr Krouha to appoint Abu Dhabians as deputy directors. The first ha---ppened to be Su--h-ail Al-Mazrui. I know the exact date — Jan 25 — from my diary. I was in the room of the Algerian director (E&P) when Suhail was ushered in. I wrote in my diary: "He is a young mild-looking engineer who has recently returned from the US." His salary I noted was in Grade 12, mine Grade 15.

I suspected that he had been chosen by Sheikh Zayed to take over from Dr Krouha. That took another six years. In 1987, during a routine majlis, Dr Krouha attended on Sheikh Zayed. Zayed asked Sheikh Tahnoun (his son-in-law and chairman, ADNOC): "Is he still here?" Before Dr Krouha could return to his office in ADNOC, it had been sealed and he was escorted to his villa. A BP representative commented afterwards, "We were there before, and we are here now. How long did he think he would last?"

Suhail Al-Mazrui took ad hoc charge of ADNOC. With the sustained patronage of MBZ, in time he rose to become minister of energy & infrastructure.

Davidson's detailed book mentions ADNOC only three times, Dr Krouha not once. Broken by the death of a son, Krouha died in Paris in 1997, unsung, but not forgotten.

## Two things to beware

**Khurram Husain**

Here are two things to beware: billionaires in politics and government officials who publicly praise the 'resilience' of the people. These two may seem unrelated but they share a devastating quality: they mask the failure of governance and distort the public's understanding of power, responsibility and survival.

Let's begin with the billionaires.

In recent months, Rahul Gandhi's sharpened attacks on Narendra Modi have reignited a debate that India's ruling class would prefer to bury. At the centre of his criticism is not ideology, not even electoral promises, but a relationship. The relationship between Prime Minister Modi and Gautam Adani.

Gandhi has been unflinching in what he calls a "symbiotic" arrangement between political power and corporate interest. In speech after speech, he has laid out how Adani's businesses ballooned after Modi came to power, often expanding into sectors — airports, defence, energy — where government clearances and public assets were key to growth. Gandhi's central point is blunt: Modi governs for Adani, not for India.

Adani's rise was greased by access — access to land, licences, loans and, above all, impunity. This is not business. It is cronyism par excellence, and a cautionary tale for the rest of us. It shows billionaires in politics are usually there for themselves only. They use their wealth to buy themselves a country, and use the country to increase their wealth.

In Pakistan, we've had our own versions of this playbook. One example would be Jehangir Tareen, who bankrolled Imran Khan's rise, shuttled independents into the PTI camp, and carried the party through its early years in power. And what did he get in return? Sugar — and a lot of it. Subsidies flowed, prices were manipulated, and regulatory oversight vanished. When the sugar inquiry report finally came out, it laid bare the scale of profiteering. Tareen's political investment paid off handsomely till he was caught with his hand in the jar and, mercifully for the rest of us, was turfed out of the game that he thought he had bought.

Then there's Elon Musk in America. Though not a politician in the formal sense, Musk now wields political power in all but name. From manipulating markets with tweets to controlling public infrastructure — satellite internet in war zones, electric vehicles on government subsidies — Musk has blurred the line between private ambition and public consequence. His public behaviour, particularly since acquiring Twitter (now X), reveals not a disrupter of elites but a billionaire deeply committed to reshaping the rules in his favour. He demands tax breaks, moves factories when displeased, and openly flirts with political candidates who will leave him alone. His influence is not democratic. It is imperial.

Whether it's Adani, Tareen, or Musk, the pattern holds: billionaires do not enter or shape politics out of civic duty. They do it to protect and expand their empires. They present their wealth as a marker of success. 'My wealth is evidence of my success. Give me control of the state, and I will operate it successfully too,' they say.

But it's a lie. In truth, they ask for control only to increase their wealth and nothing more.

Now to the second thing to beware: the myth of the 'resilient' Pakistani.

You've heard it before — usually from a government official at a conference, a donor event or a television interview. 'The people of Pakistan are incredibly resilient.' It sounds flattering. It sounds noble. But it's neither. It's a euphemism for abandonment.

We are not resilient because we choose to be. We are resilient because we have to be.

Because when inflation ravages the monthly wage, life must go on. Because resilience is what it takes when the roads are flooded after the slightest rain, crime is rampant, public service non-existent, property rights hard to come by and justice elusive, and education a luxury. Let's be clear. This is not resilience. It is endurance. It is a forced adaptation to failure.

And when officials celebrate this they are not saluting the people. They are excusing themselves. Every time they praise our 'strength' they are also admitting their own weakness. Their inability to provide the basics of governance becomes, in their narrative, proof of our heroism.

But there is no dignity in being told you are brave for surviving conditions that should not exist in the first place.

The woman who walks five kilometres for clean water does not want to be called strong. She wants water. The child studying by candlelight is not doing it for the applause.

And here's the real danger: once 'resilience' becomes the official line, it lets the state off the hook. It becomes a substitute for service delivery. 'Look how resilient they are,' they say — so why fix anything?

Let's retire this fiction. Let's stop romanticising suffering. The people of this country do not want to be resilient. They want to be safe, fed, housed and heard. And if there is any role for government in this country, it is to build a society where nobody needs to be resilient just to survive. So beware the billionaire who seeks to 'serve'. He's likely here to collect. And beware the official who praises your 'resilience'.

They are telling you not that you are strong — but that they are absent. Because in both cases, the real message is the same: 'you're on your own, kid.'

## Peace and justice

**Mohammad Ali Babakhel**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity by 2030. Achieving these ideals is difficult in a world that is increasingly divided, with some regions enjoying sustained levels of peace and security while others are confronted with endless cycles of violence. Violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on global peace, affecting economic growth. Addressing this requires a global approach and cooperation.

SDG 16 — 'Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions' — focuses on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, ensuring access to justice, and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. For developing societies with strong colonial pasts, the implementation of SDG 16 is complex. Its primary aim is to reduce all forms of violence by working with governments and communities to find solutions to conflict.

It includes 12 targets and 23 indicators. Its priority areas include strengthening police and judicial systems, community-based violence prevention programmes, reintegration of former combatants, ensuring access to justice through legal aid programmes and simplification of court procedures, human rights training for police and judiciary, fighting corruption through transparency in public finance, anti-corruption commissions, whistleblower protection laws, and building effective institutions with transparent governance structures, citizen participation in decision-making and digital governance. To protect human rights, national human rights commissions are to be formed, and human rights protection laws and monitoring mechanisms for rights violations are to be established. A few countries have introduced innovations to achieve the targets set in SDG 16. Rwanda introduced community courts (Gacaca) for post-genocide justice. They were designed to address the massive scale of crimes committed during the Rwandan genocide by involving local communities in the judicial process. Argentina opened 90 access-to-justice centres. Latvia planned the promotion of dialogue and civic education through accessible spaces like libraries and museums. Georgia initiated juvenile justice reforms that have lowered child incarceration and recidivism rates. South Korea and Sierra Leone established legal aid corporations and justice centres that have provided assistance in millions of cases, expanding equitable legal access. Australia introduced interdepartmental governance mechanisms for improved coordination, and Nigeria introduced a youth alliance to incorporate the participation of youth in civic engagement. In Pakistan, point 20 of the National Action Plan lists a commitment to revamp and reform the criminal justice system. Point 12 of the revised NAP 2021 includes it as one of its priorities. Pakistan has also drafted two internal security policies: NISP I 2014, NISP II 2018 and the National PVE Policy 2024. These federal initiatives need to be translated into action plans by all provinces, irrespective of political inclinations, as they are meant to improve institutional capacity and ensure order, security and peace. Pakistan's security rankings warrant more coordinated efforts among all federal and provincial agencies. In the Global Terrorism Index 2025, Pakistan has been ranked the second most impacted country by terrorism. In the Rule of Law index, it has been ranked 129th, and in the Human Development Index at 168. Translating global commitments into tangible action re--quires locally tail-o-red strategies. When evaluating the legal system, countries need to consider the cost, complexity, discri-mination and distance from rural communities. In rural areas, community-based justice solutions should be funded, and barriers to justice for vulnerable groups addressed. By improving transparency through digital tools, fostering partnerships between governments and civil society, strengthening legal aid and anti-corruption bodies, empowering women and youth in governance and peacebuilding, and encouraging robust data collection systems, the hurdles may be overcome. Implementation strategies include policy reform to align national laws with international human rights standards, capacity building of bureaucracy, data collection, encouraging civil society and youth engagement in governance, and fostering international cooperation. The SDGs and peace are interconnected. A developing state should interpret SDG 16's targets more flexibly. It must be understood that investing in the criminal justice system is not a non-developmental activity, but an investment in sustainable development and peace.

## No room for complacency

**Ishrat Husain**

Recent external developments have been quite favourable for Pakistan — some of them unexpected. Pakistan's emerging importance after the May skirmishes with India, President Donald Trump's soft pronouncements coupled with a warm welcome to the top leadership, the souring of US-India ties, a reasonably good deal on reciprocal tariffs, the upgrading of credit ratings, prospective investment in 'massive' oil reserves and minerals, etc, have led to euphoria.

However, this exuberance should be tempered by the experience of past relationships with major powers, which have been transactional and not permanent. High-wire acts carry risks. We should not allow the feel-good factor to intoxicate us. Our policymakers should not project life as being easy going forward, as if they were no longer obligated to carry out the onerous task of building a strong economy through stabilisation and deep reform. In short, there is no room for complacency as we are far from overcoming our domestic vulnerabilities, which are accentuated by adverse external conditions.

De-globalisation, inward-looking industrial policies, onshoring and nearshoring of supply chains, disruptive and exorbitant tariffs hindering international trade and openness, the likely slowing down of the US economy, climate change risks and AI penetration have made it difficult for emerging economies to repeat the exceptional progress made in 1990-2015. Domestically, the drivers of competitiveness — industrial and agricultural productivity through diffused innovation, a less skilled workforce, dysfunctional governance institutions, political instability, an inequitable and distortive taxation structure, over-regulation, the deep intrusion of state agencies in the market, an outdated model of energy pricing and the SOEs' continuing losses — are stumbling blocks to generating jobs, expanding exports, reducing poverty and attracting investment.

Digitisation, financial inclusion and the absorption of emerging technologies are still in their infancy and yet to permeate transaction structures. The debt burden has not yet reverted to the legal benchmark of 60 per cent of GDP, and the rollover risk of short-term deposits by friendly countries remains high. Foreign exchange reser-ves are inadequate for the growing needs of a buo-yant economy and as a buffer for unanticipated future shocks. Continuity and consistency of economic policies are yet to be tested when faced with politically unpopular decisions that end the privileges of rent-seeking classes, including those defying formalisation and documentation.

Many reforms resulting in stabilisation, deregulation of wheat prices and non-essential drugs, the Pakistan Single Window, automation and data integration of FBR taxes with third-party databases, the phasing out of regulatory and additional duties and reduction in rates and slabs, right-sizing of the federal government, privatisation of PIA and the Discos, civil service reform, and introducing a competitive market for the energy sector have been initiated. They should be brought to a successful culmination. Other planned reforms such as targeted subsidies and training of women through BISP, the repair of provincial finances by raising outcome-based investment in social sectors, developing employable skills for youth, the efficient use of irrigation water and drought- and heat-resistant seeds, boosting industries providing intermediate inputs such as steel, petrochemicals, active pharmaceutical ingredients, electronics and export facilitation have yet to see the light of day.

Delivery of basic public services has suffered since directly elected, fully empowered and well-resourced local governments were dissolved. Stiff resistance by MNAs and MPAs, who fear losing their clout, has prevented the completion of devolution. There's no realisation that dissatisfaction with the government of the day will dwindle once local communities take charge of their own affairs, and mobilise and allocate resources for what they see as priority needs in their areas. Surveys show that citizens with complaints have easier access to local councillors who can address their grievances than they do to their MPAs and MNAs. The Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad metropolitan corporations will no longer be dependent upon the provincial or federal governments, who can then allocate more resources to backward districts.

# Iran threatens attacks on regional energy infrastructure after Trump's threat over Hormuz

**Monitoring Desk**

TEHRAN: An Iranian military source warned on Wednesday that Tehran would strike regional infrastructure, including energy facilities, if Washington targeted bridges and power plants in Iran, following US President Donald Trump's threat to attack infrastructure over commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump threatened earlier today that the US would bomb an Iranian bridge or power plant every time Tehran attacked a commercial vessel in the strategic waterway.

Speaking to the semi-official Tasnim News Agency, the source said Iran has a "steel determination" to exercise its sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz and "would never allow the waterway to become a source of threats" against the country again.

The source added that shipping through the strait would remain safe provided vessels coordinated with Iran and complied with arrangements established by Tehran.

Otherwise, the source said, Iran would continue exercising what it described as its firm resolve to control the strategic waterway as part of ensuring its long-term security.

"If the US targeted any Iranian bridge or power plant, Tehran would respond by striking regional infrastructure, including energy facilities in which Washington has interests," he warned.

The source also said the US should have become fully aware over the past 10 days that Iran is capable of striking any target it chooses, adding that any "gamble" by Trump "would once again end in failure".

The warning comes as US and Iranian forces continued exchanging strikes despite a Pakistan-brokered framework agreement signed in June to end the war that began in February and pave the way for a lasting peace agreement.

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday warned that the United States would retaliate with strikes on Iranian infrastructure if the Islamic Republic attacked any vessel transiting the Strait of Hormuz. In a post on his Truth Social platform, he said any attack by Iran on a ship in the strategic waterway — whether carried out with "a missile, rocket, drone, or any other device or weapon" — would trigger a US military response.



**A farewell ceremony was held for the bodies of 105 Palestinians recovered from the rubble around the Taj Apartment building in the Yarmouk area of ??Gaza City in the Gaza Strip. Candles were placed on the bodies, which included women and children. Press vests, toys, and candles were also placed for the bodies of journalist Dua Sharaf and her daughter, who lost their lives.**



**QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti presenting a souvenir to the Country Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) Pakistan, Anita Hirsh.**

# Desperate search for survivors after flash floods 'like an earthquake' kill 23 people

**Monitoring Desk**

KABUL: Rescue crews were digging through mud and rubble for the second day in search of survivors after flash floods tore through a remote province in eastern Afghanistan, killing at least 23 people and leaving over 100 missing.

The floods struck Nuristan province on Monday, collapsing an undetermined number of buildings and injuring 80 people, the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority said. Parun, the provincial capital, was among the worst-affected areas and officials said they expected the death toll to rise as rescue reached cut-off villages.

Nuristan is one of Afghanistan's most isolated provinces, a sparsely populated stretch of steep valleys and forests along the Pakistan border where roads are poor and settlements cling to mountainsides. Its harsh terrain is slowing the arrival of help from the national capital Kabul, leaving residents to join the search alongside emergency teams.

Scores of people gathered in Parun on Tuesday to look for the missing, some using wooden poles and their bare hands, an AFP journalist at the scene reported.

Farid Gul Zaheer, a 34-year-old pharmacist who was hurt while trying to escape up the mountainside, said he had never witnessed such a dangerous flood. "It felt like there was an earthquake, and I heard children and people screaming," he told AFP.

Severe weather was forecast to persist for a few days, with heavy rainfall, thunderstorms, winds carrying dust and sand.

# Lebanon's PM visits shattered border village as deal with Israel begins

**Monitoring Desk**

BEIRUT: Lebanon's prime minister visited Wednesday a battered southern village as the implementation of a Washington-brokered Lebanese-Israeli agreement began, following months of war between Israel and the Iran-backed Hezbollah.

The latest conflict started March 2, when the Lebanese militant group fired rockets toward Israel after the U.S.-Israeli February attacks that set off the Iran war.

In response, Israel launched an aerial campaign and ground invasion in Lebanon, killing more than 4,000 people and displacing 1.2 million others.

The two sides, technically in a state of war nearly 80 years after Israel's establishment, started rare direct talks championed by Washington.

They reached an agreement by late June, setting a plan for the deployment of Lebanese military forces in areas in southern Lebanon, where Hezbollah had a military presence and influence, and the withdrawal of Israeli forces, while disarming the militant group.

Hezbollah has refused the talks and disarmament calls.

Nawaf Salam's visit to Zawtar Al Gharbieh came a day after President Joseph Aoun's landmark White House meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump, who made a surprise announcement, allowing American carriers to resume direct flights to Lebanon for the first time in 40-plus years.

Salam, alongside Lebanon's defense minister and senior military officials, pitched a Lebanese flag near a destroyed building in the town, vowing the government will start rebuilding destroyed homes and infrastructure.

"We have insisted since the beginning that our goal is the complete Israeli withdrawal from all our territory," Salam said.



**European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama (not seen) hold a joint press conference during von der Leyen's visit to Tirana as part of her Western Balkans tour in Tirana, Albania**

# Nearly 1,000 people have died from Ebola in DR Congo

**Monitoring Desk**

CANGO: Nearly 1,000 people have died from Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the country's health ministry says.

DRC's National Institute of Public Health said on Wednesday that 999 deaths have been confirmed since the outbreak of the Bundibugyo strain of the virus began in May.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), two people have also died from the virus in neighbouring Uganda.

DRC's Health Ministry said that as of Monday, 2,473 cases had been recorded in the latest outbreak. At least 737 patients are currently in isolation and hospitals, it added.

The DRC outbreak was declared on May 15 after several deaths were recorded in the northeastern province of Ituri, where cases remain concentrated. Several cases linked to the DRC's outbreak were then reported in Uganda.

This outbreak has killed more people at a quicker rate than any Ebola outbreak on record, including the 2013-2016 outbreak that is considered the worst on record with over 11,000 deaths out of at least 28,000 cases. That outbreak took about eight months to reach 1,000 deaths.

Last week, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned that the current outbreak had over the past month "expanded faster than any previous outbreak" of the virus.

# Iranian official denies 2 French diplomats mistreated

**Monitoring Desk**

DUBAI/PARIS: An Iranian foreign ministry official denied on Wednesday that two French diplomats were mistreated by Iranian security personnel who detained them for several in Tehran.

Paris swiftly dismissed the Iranian official's comments, which were reported by state media, and has warned that there will be consequences over the incident.

The French foreign ministry summoned the Iranian charge d'affaires on Tuesday over the incident, in which it said two French embassy staff had been detained and physically intimidated by Iranian security services. Paris said the diplomats had their phones taken, were forbidden to contact the embassy and were verbally intimidated in a breach of diplomatic conventions.

# Ukrainian drones hit Russian online giant retailer Wildberries for 2nd time

**Monitoring Desk**

KYIV: Ukrainian drones have hit warehouses of Russia's biggest online retailer again, killing one person and injuring another 14, local officials say.

They say logistics hubs run by Wildberries in two south-west cities in the Krasnodar and Stavropol regions were struck overnight, triggering the evacuation of employees.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said the hubs were "involved in providing the Russian army with drone components, navigation equipment and other gear".

Ukraine hit the retailer's warehouses in central Russia four days ago, killing eight people, according to Russian officials. Wildberries - often described as Russia's Amazon - employs some 48,000 people.

Workers were evacuated after the attacks on logistics centres in Krasnodar and Nevinnomyssk, Wildberries founder and Russia's wealthiest woman Tatyana Kim said earlier on Wednesday.

"There are no words to describe all the feelings and emotions caused by the attacks on ordinary people, on our employees, on us, who are simply doing our jobs," she wrote on Telegram. "But these situations demonstrate the most important thing: we must continue to do what we do for the benefit of people."

In Krasnodar, 10 people were injured in an attack on a warehouse complex, with three in a serious condition, the region's Governor Veniamin Kondratyev said.

# FBI chief hold talks in Cambodia

**Monitoring Desk**

PHNOM PENH: FBI Director Kash Patel held talks with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet on Wednesday on joint efforts to combat international online scam operations that cheat victims out of billions of dollars each year.

A report issued Tuesday by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime estimated that scams caused estimated losses in the Asia-Pacific region alone of as much as $114 billion in 2025. It warned that even as authorities conduct raids on industrial-sized scam centers mostly located in border regions of Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia, criminals have responded by shifting to other parts of the world or operating on a smaller scale. Patel arrived in Cambodia from neighboring Thailand.

# Indian opposition disrupts parliament to support student protesters and pressure Modi

**Monitoring Desk**

NEW DELHI: Indian opposition lawmakers disrupted parliament on Wednesday in support of student protesters, echoing their calls for the education minister to resign over exam leaks and ratcheting up pressure on Prime Minister Modi after days of unrest.

The protests, which started last month over the leak of medical school entrance exam papers that affected 2 million students, grew this week when tens of thousands of young protesters took to the streets of New Delhi on Monday, with police using tear gas and batons to push them back.

Protests have since spread around the country to Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Goa, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram, Jammu and Ahmedabad, heightening the biggest youth challenge to Modi since he came to power in 2014.

Opposition lawmakers led by Rahul Gandhi gathered outside the parliament building in New Delhi on Wednesday, many dressed in black and waving placards calling on Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan to quit.

Later, they disrupted proceedings by shouting and interrupting the speaker, forcing repeated suspensions of the lower and upper house.

Gandhi told press conference that students want Pradhan to quit, those who beat them during protests in Delhi to be held accountable, and Modi to apologise to them.

"We are fully backing them. This is not negotiable under any circumstance," he said.

# Zelensky tasks new army chief with stepping up offensive operations

**Monitoring Desk**

UKRAINE: The new commander-in-chief of Ukraine's armed forces, Mykhailo Drapatyi, said President Volodymyr Zelensky has given him "clear tasks" for his new role, including continuing and intensifying offensive operations across all fronts.

Earlier on Wednesday, the outgoing commander-in-chief, Oleksandr Syrskyi, said that he was handing over an army that knows how to fight on the offensive, in a farewell message after his dismissal the previous day. Zelensky dismissed Syrskyi on Tuesday evening after days of protests, replacing him with Drapatyi.

The protests broke out after Zelensky removed the popular politician Mykhailo Fedorov - seen as responsible for recent Ukrainian successes in drone warfare - from his role as defence minister last week. In a post on Facebook on Wednesday, Drapatyi said that his priorities included potential operations deep inside Russian territory and the technological modernization of Ukraine's armed forces.

Drapatyj, who is 17 years younger than the outgoing chief, is expected to bring more modern approaches to warfare and military leadership.

# Mysterious white foam draws crowds on Nigerian highway

**Monitoring Desk**

NIGERIA: An urgent investigation has been launched by Nigeria's environmental agency after a strange white foamy substance appeared on a major highway, sparking a public spectacle and raising safety concerns.

The National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (Nesrea) has warned people to keep their distance from the unidentified substance along the busy Kaduna-Abuja Expressway, linking the main city in the north to the federal capital.



**TELAVIV: Passengers are welcomed by their relatives at Ben Gurion Airport**

# US concludes 11th wave of strikes against Iran as war cost crosses $37 billion

WASHINGTON (INP): The US Central Command (CENTCOM) said it has successfully completed the 11th consecutive evening of strikes against Iran.

CENTCOM assets targeted Iranian military operations centers, maritime capabilities, aircraft hangars, drone storage facilities, and military logistics infrastructure to further degrade Iran's ability to threaten commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz. Over the past three months, Iran has attacked more than 30 commercial vessels transiting the international waterway vital for regional and global trade. The unwarranted attacks have endangered hundreds of innocent mariners and undermined freedom of navigation. Despite Iranian aggression, the Strait of Hormuz remains open for commercial vessel transit. Since early May, CENTCOM forces have helped facilitate the transit of approximately 900 commercial vessels and 450 million barrels of crude oil.

On the other hand, the cost of the United States' military campaign involving Iran has climbed to $37.5 billion, according to U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who briefed lawmakers on Tuesday while seeking additional funding for ongoing operations.

Speaking before the Senate appropriations committee, Hegseth said the total includes projected expenses through September 30. The Trump administration has also requested approximately $87 billion in additional funding from Congress to support the next phase of military operations and defense requirements.

The funding request comes as lawmakers debate continued military.

# German army sends combat engineers to help fortify Poland's border

**Monitoring Desk**

GERMANY: German army combat engineers are helping Poland fortify its border with Belarus and the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, the Bundeswehr said on Wednesday, adding that the troops from a reinforced armoured engineer platoon had already arrived in early July.

The soldiers are working alongside the Polish army to dig anti-tank ditches, erect tank barriers and build field fortifications and fighting positions.

"The aim of this initiative is to delay an invasion by those forces in the event of a military conflict, thereby increasing the responsiveness of Polish troops and NATO," the Bundeswehr, as Germany's armed forces are formally known, said in a statement.

# Over 400 arrested amid high school blockades in France

**PARIS, (Agencies): French Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said more than 400 people were arrested Tuesday during widespread high school blockades.**

**"Across the country, there were 440 arrests. We do not yet have the full figures, but I am told that two-thirds resulted in people being placed in police custody," Nunez told broadcaster BFMTV late Tuesday.**

**He said the arrests were mainly linked to property damage and clashes with security forces, including violence against public officials.**

**Describing the incidents as "quite serious," Nunez said security forces had acted in an "extremely proportionate manner" in response to criticism from several political figures over police actions.**

**The high school student union USL reportedly said that 400 of France's roughly 3,700 high schools had been blocked.**

**The Education Ministry also reported 31 injuries among students and staff, while Nunez said "48 members of the internal security forces were injured" during the day.**

**High school students have been mobilizing in the Ile-de-France region over the past week, protesting overcrowded classes and schedules as well as teacher shortages.**

**USL later called for the school blockades to continue on Thursday to demand more resources for students.**




**During the OpenAI DevDay event held at Fort Mason in San Francisco, protesters gathered and demanded that OpenAI and its CEO, Sam Altman, terminate its contracts with the U.S. Army and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).**



**The Israeli army violated the ceasefire by launching a drone attack on a tent housing displaced Palestinians in the Mawasi area of ??Khan Yunis in southern Gaza Strip. Those injured in the attack were brought to Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis for treatment.**

# Dar "stresses to translate SCO's shared vision into practical cooperation, tangible outcomes"

ISLAMABAD, (Agencies): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Wednesday stressed the need to translate the shared vision of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) into practical cooperation and tangible outcomes, chairing the first meeting of the Council of National Coordinators (CNC).

He also "reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to an open, inclusive, and constructive chairmanship, guided by the 'Shanghai Spirit' of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, and common development," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on X. Dar made the remarks while addressing the national coordinators of the SCO member states, along with senior representatives of the SCO secretariat and the organisation's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS).

Underlining the theme of Pakistan's chairmanship, "Turning Vision into Action: Connectivity, Innovation, and Shared Prosperity", Dar "stressed the need to translate the SCO's shared vision into practical cooperation and tangible outcomes," the Foreign Office (FO) said.

It further noted that the foreign minister highlighted preparations to host the SCO Council of Heads of State in Islamabad in 2027, calling for "close coordination among member states to ensure a successful chairmanship."

On Monday, Pakistan chaired the first meeting of the SCO CNC, with participation from the Indian side as well, despite the freeze in bilateral relations between the two countries. Dr Mohammad Faisal, a senior Pakistani diplomat who served as Pakistan's high commissioner to the United Kingdom, represented Pakistan in the meeting.

The meeting discussed a wide range of matters related to SCO activities and cooperation among member states, the FO had said in a statement. The participants also deliberated on the programme of events planned to be held during Pakistan's chairmanship of the organisation.

A day earlier, the FO had announced that Pakistan would hold the first meeting, with a three-day session set to contribute to preparations for the SCO Council of Heads of State meeting that Islamabad will host in August 2027.

It added that the meeting would be held from September 28 to 30.

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif travelled to Bishkek for a three-day official visit to attend the SCO Council of Heads of State meeting and the SCO Plus Summit, where Pakistan assumed the organisation's chairmanship for 2026-27.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar with SCO National Coordinators, senior representatives of SCO Secretariat and SCO RATS, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs



CHAMAN: Balochistan Assembly Speaker Captain (R) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai listening the issues of people during open court.

## Legal fraternity plays essential role in ensuring access to justice: Law Minister

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar Wednesday said that the legal fraternity plays a vital role in ensuring access to justice and the effective functioning of the judicial system. He met with separate delegations of the Islamabad Bar Council and the District Bar Association, discussing issues faced by the legal fraternity, matters relating to the legal profession, and the welfare of lawyers. The Islamabad Bar Council delegation comprised Vice Chairman Asif Iqbal, Chairman Executive Committee Zafar Khokhar, Members Raja Aleem Khan Abbasi and Hafizullah Yaqoob. The District Bar Association delegation was led by President Naeem Gujar and included Secretary Raja Khawar Daniyal and Joint Secretary Imran Kakar. Secretary General of the Islamabad High Court Bar Association Qasim Abbasi, Pakistan Bar Council's Raja Rizwan Abbasi, and Prosecutor General Manzoor Ahmed Jajja also attended the meeting.

## Unnecessary delays in resolving public issues not to be tolerated: BA Speaker

CHAMAN, (VoM Report): An open court was held in District Chaman under the chairmanship of Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly and Deputy Commissioner Chaman, with directions issued for the timely resolution of public issues.

An open court was held today at the DC Complex Assembly Hall in Chaman to directly address public issues, improve governance, and review development matters in District Chaman. The session was jointly chaired by Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly Captain (Retd.) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai and Deputy Commissioner Chaman Habib Ahmed Bangulzai.

A large number of tribal elders, religious scholars, national elders, prominent figures of the area, and members of the public participated in the open court. On the occasion, citizens directly presented their issues, complaints, and suggestions regarding NADRA, electricity, unemployment, an effective sanitation system, regular cleaning of streets, drains and roads, timely drainage of dirty and stagnant water, proper disposal of garbage, and further improvement of the sanitation system in streets and neighborhoods. Particular emphasis was placed on cleanliness around hospitals and other public places so that dirt, foul odors, and pollution could be eliminated and citizens could be provided with a clean and healthy environment. Various other public, administrative, developmental, and basic-facility-related issues were also brought before the Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly and the Deputy Commissioner Chaman.

The Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly and the Deputy Commissioner Chaman listened attentively and patiently to the issues and complaints of the participants and issued instructions to the officers of the relevant departments present on the occasion for the immediate resolution of several matters and for taking necessary measures. They made it clear that unnecessary delays in resolving public issues would not be tolerated.

# Pezeshkian links sustainable Gulf security to regional responsibility

TEHRAN, (Agencies): Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian underscored the importance of the Strait of Hormuz to regional and global security and economy, noting that a responsible approach based on preserving stability and the interests of regional countries, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

According to the Iranian news agency, Pezeshkian said that sustainable security in the Persian Gulf and its waterways depended on cooperation and responsibility among regional countries, in remarks on the occasion of World Maritime Day.

Further, the Iranian president "described the sea for Iran as more than an expanse of water, calling it a divine blessing and part of the country's history, identity and life, as well as one of its most important resources for the present and future," IRNA said.

He added, according to the news agency, that security and development could not be separated and that "maritime security, ports and transport routes provide the conditions for trade and economic activity, while economic development strengthens the country's national capabilities."

IRNA noted that, according to Pezeshkian, "Iran is seriously pursuing its responsibility to maintain security and stability in regional waterways and ensure the security of maritime shipping and trade, relying on the capabilities and experience of naval forces and all those involved in maritime affairs."

Separately, Iran's Deputy Chief of the Army for Coordination, Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, noted that the sea was "a key pillar of national power, a driver of trade and the economy, and vital to energy security and the continuity of supply chains," IRNA reported.

The Iranian news agency noted that, according to Sayyari, the United States-Israeli war imposed over the past year demonstrated the importance of Iran's maritime capacity.

The spokesperson of Iran's Defence Ministry General Talaei-Nik said Tehran seeks peace while defending its rights, security, and interests.

According to Press TV, the spokesperson added that recognising Iran's legitimate rights would pave the way for ending the ongoing conflict. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Centre (UKMTO) said earlier in the day that "a verified source has reported that a tanker has been struck by an unknown projectile." The incident was reported on Tuesday, with the UKMTO noting that authorities were investigating the report.

The centre also issued an advisory for vessels "to transit with caution" and to "report any suspicious activity to the UKMTO."

Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi received US feedback via Qatari mediators in Doha on Tuesday on a seven-day plan aimed at building trust between Washington and Tehran, with sequencing the main sticking point, an official, who was not Iranian but was briefed on the talks. Araghchi is expected to discuss the US response in Tehran on Wednesday, the official said.



QUETTA: A delegation of MPAs led by Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola called on Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

## Pakistan expresses grief over deaths of citizens in Somalia rescue operation

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson announced on Wednesday that three Pakistani nationals, Rafi Ullah Khan, Syed Kashif Umer and Mahmood Ahmed Ansari were among the casualties from the operation to reclaim the hijacked vessel MT Honour 25 off the coast of Somalia. Pakistan was deeply saddened by the tragic loss of five crew members during the operation to recover the hijacked vessel. "The Government and people of Pakistan extend their deepest condolences to the bereaved families. We share their grief at this painful time and pray for strength, patience and comfort for the families, and for the departed souls to rest in peace," the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press statement. Four crew members were also injured, including three Pakistani nationals who had been taken to a nearby hospital and were receiving medical care, while surviving crew members of MT Honour 25 were brought safely ashore at Bandar Beyla. Pakistan's team at the Embassy in Djibouti is proceeding to Bandar Beyla to assist the Pakistani nationals. "The Government of Pakistan, through its Mission and relevant authorities, remains in close contact with the Somali authorities and other concerned stakeholders. Every possible effort is being made to ensure proper medical care for the injured, facilitate the transportation of the mortal remains of the deceased, and ensure the safe return of the surviving Pakistani crew members," it was further added.



KARACHI: Chief Guest Vice Admiral Abdul Munib HI(M) S Bt Commander Pakistan Fleet (ComPak) presents shield to the DG PID Karachi Ms. Iram Tanveer Odho during the inaugural session of the seminar & celebration World Maritime Day–2026

## All resources should be utilized to ensure quality facilities for Hajj pilgrims: Sardar Yousuf

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Religious Affairs, Sardar Muhammad Yousuf on Wednesday chaired a review meeting on arrangements for Hajj 2027 and directed officials to ensure timely completion of all facilities in line with the timelines set by Saudi Arabia.

The meeting was given a detailed briefing on ongoing Hajj arrangements and the procurement of various facilities in Saudi Arabia.

Federal Secretary Abrar Ahmed Mirza, Additional Secretary and officials of the Hajj Wing attended the meeting while Director General (DG) Hajj Abdul Wahab Soomro, Director Hajj Makkah Arif Aslam Rao and other officials participated online from Saudi Arabia.

The minister directed the officials to complete all arrangements within the stipulated timelines and ensure that the required facilities were made available to Pakistani pilgrims, said a press issued here.

"All resources should be utilized to ensure quality facilities for Hajj pilgrims," Sardar Muhammad Yousuf said.

## PPP backs proposed governor's rule in KP: Nayyar Bukhari

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Secretary General Nayyar Bukhari on Wednesday said that his party will give constitutional suggestions if the federal government consults it on governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"Governor's rule could be imposed on the governor's recommendation in case of failure of the provincial government," Bukhari said. Ministers in the (PML-N)-led federal government have repeatedly threatened to impose governor's rule in the violence-hit KP in recent days, citing terrorism and what they describe as "illegal" actions by PTI-backed Chief Minister Sohail Afridi.

PTI has also announced holding long march towards Islamabad on October 4, after postponing the protest from its original date of September 27.

Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar previously said that the Constitution was clear regarding the imposition of an emergency. Speaking to media, he had said that if circumstances reached a point where the Constitution required an emergency to be imposed in KP, "then it should definitely be imposed and it will be imposed".

KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi — a leader of the PPP — later urged the provincial government not to go so far as to create a situation in which governor's rule had to be imposed. However, he said that if President Asif Ali Zardari issued an order for governor's rule, it would be implemented. Meanwhile, Bukhari said that KP was facing a "worst" law and order situation, adding that citizens, including those in the KP CM's own district, remained confined to their homes in the evening. Bukhari also questioned the PTI leadership's absence from the funerals of those martyred in terrorist attacks, asking: "Why does the PTI leadership not attend the funerals of martyrs?" The PPP leader alleged that the PTI government's priority was not public issues but the release of "one individual" — a reference to the jailed PTI founder Imran Khan, who has been incarcerated since August 5, 2023.

## Customs enforcement Gadani foils major smuggling attempts worth Rs. 154 million in IBO

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Collectorate of Customs (Enforcement), Gadani, has intensified its anti-smuggling operations through a series of successful intelligence-based actions conducted across various areas of Makran Division, Lasbela and Hub in Balochistan.

Customs Enforcement teams, in coordination with other law-enforcement agencies, intercepted substantial quantities of smuggled goods with a cumulative value of over Rs 154 million, including the value of seized carriers.

In a joint operation with the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Hub, the Field Enforcement Unit Khurkhera intercepted two passenger buses carrying smuggled goods in the Lasbela area. During a detailed search, substantial quantities of foreign-origin betel nuts, cosmetics, cigarettes, Indian Gutka and parachute cloth were recovered. The goods had been concealed in specially created hidden cavities of the buses. The cumulative value of the seized goods and carriers is estimated at over Rs. 130 million, said a release issued here on Wednesday.



QUETTA: Provincial Adcisor for Sports and Youth Affairs Meena Majeed Baloch giving the answers of questions of participants of seminar regarding sports youth policy.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan addressing the Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners Conference.

## Pakistan's to align medicine safety practices with int'l standards

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan participated in the 44th annual meeting of the World Health Organization Programme for International Drug Monitoring (WHO PIDM), held in Costa Rica, with a focus on strengthening pharmacovigilance, risk communication and patient safety. Representing Pakistan, Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) Director Pharmacy Services Dr Akhtar Abbas Khan moderated a session on "Communication as a Risk Minimization Tool."

The session provided an opportunity for participants to exchange experiences and discuss the role of effective communication in strengthening pharmacovigilance and minimizing risks associated with medicines and vaccines.

## Life imprisonment can't be reduced below 15 years through remission: FCCP

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Federal Constitutional Court has held that under Rule 217(ii) of the Pakistan Prison Rules, 1978, the actual period of imprisonment of a life convict cannot be reduced below 15 years through accumulated remission.

A two-member bench comprising Justice Rozi Khan Barech and Justice Syed Arshad Hussain Shah made the observation while dismissing Federal Constitutional Court Petition for Leave to Appeal (FCPLA) filed by Saba Khan.

The court held that remission beyond the limits prescribed by law could not create an enforceable legal right.

The remission system had to be exercised strictly within the framework of the law and prison rules.

According to the judgment, general and special remissions under Rule 217 of the Pakistan Prison Rules could ordinarily not exceed one-third of the sentence.

In the case of a life convict, however, remission could not reduce the actual period of imprisonment below 15 years.

Saba Khan had been sentenced to life imprisonment under Section 302. According to the nominal roll prepared by prison authorities on August 17, 2023, she had served nine years, four months and 19 days, while 15 years, seven months and 18 days of remission had been credited to her account, leaving only five months and 23 days of imprisonment.

Chief Editor: Syed Abdul Wadood Shah printed at Shah Printing Press, Quetta and Published from Al-Syed Building M.A. Jinnah Road Quetta Ph. 2843190 E.mail: dailyvomqta@gmail.com.