



# Islamabad POST

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## Law and Order

# PM urges KP govt to fulfill its responsibilities

Says federal and provincial governments would continue joint efforts to eliminate terrorism, urging the provincial government to fulfill its responsibilities for establishing law and order in the province as well as for public welfare

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday assuring the federal government's support for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's uplift, urged the provincial government to fulfill its responsibilities to establish law and order in the province, besides providing education and health facilities to its people. The prime minister, in a meeting with Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sohail Afridi here, emphasized cooperation between the federal and provincial government for the development and prosperity of the KP's people, calling it essential for provincial law and order too. The prime minister stressed the need to further intensify the provincial government's efforts to establish peace and security and strengthen its institutions to combat terrorism. He said that the federal and provincial governments would continue joint efforts to eliminate terrorism, urging the provincial government to fulfill its responsibilities for establishing law and order in the province as well as for public welfare. The prime minister said that as the KP government was empowered to ensure the uplift of the education and health sectors, it should take the required measures. Calling the KP province an important unit of the federation, he said the federal government had always been striving for the betterment of the KP's people and would continue similar within its jurisdiction. Emphasising close relations and effective coordination between the federation and the provinces as key to national progress and public service, Prime Minister Shehbaz also assured cooperation within the

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## PM acknowledges WB's valuable support

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday acknowledged the World Bank Group's valuable support which had been instrumental in advancing Pakistan's economic development and reforms. He was talking to President, World Bank Group (WBG) Ajay Banga who called on him at the PM House. The prime minister welcomed Ajay Banga at his first official visit as President of the World Bank Group. The prime minister appreciated the World Bank Group for its long-standing partnership with Pakistan and its commitment to supporting the development priorities of the country especially through the 10-year World Bank Group Country Partnership Framework (CPF). The premier also appreciated Mr. Banga's leadership in transforming the World Bank Group into more impactful development partner. He stated that the government was vigorously working on economic reform agenda with multi-pronged comprehensive

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ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister KP Sohail Afridi called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. – DNA

## Pak, Uzbek FMs discuss strengthening bilateral ties

FAIZ CH

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a telephone conversation with the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, Bakhtiyor Saidov. During the discussion, both leaders reviewed the state of bilateral relations and explored avenues to further enhance cooperation across multiple sectors. They expressed satisfaction at the continued momentum of high-level engagement between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, underscoring the importance of sustained dialogue and collaboration for regional connectivity and prosperity.

## TTAP condemns attacks

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The opposition alliance Tehreek Tahafuz Ayeen-i-Pakistan (TTAP) on Monday condemned the spate of attacks in Balochistan last week, and called it "a security failure on the part of the provincial government and law enforcement agencies". On Saturday, the military's media affairs wing said terrorists of Fitna-al-Hindustan carried out a spate of attacks across Balochistan. 18 civilians and 15 personnel of security forces were martyred in the attacks on Saturday. In a statement, posted on X, the TTAP condemned the attacks and expressed sorrow with the martyrs.

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## Hunt for outlaws continues

# 22 more terrorists of Fitna al Hindustan killed in Balochistan

The sources said that security forces, including intelligence agencies and police, are tightening the noose around terrorists and their facilitators at various locations

DNA

QUETTA: As many as 22 more terrorists were killed by security forces as sanitization operations against terrorists belonging to Fitna al Hindustan continued in Balochistan. Security sources said that around 177 terrorists have been killed in operations carried out over the last three days. The sources said that security forces, including intelligence agencies and police, are tightening the noose around terrorists and their facilitators at various locations. There are also reports of further losses and fatalities among the terrorists and their facilitators, the security sources said. Meanwhile, Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has lauded the security forces, police, and intelligence agencies for eliminating 22 militants linked with the group referred to as "Fitna-e-Hindustan" during a major counterterrorism operation in Balochistan. In a statement on Monday,

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## No talks with terrorists, says govt

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: In the wake of renewed militant attacks in Balochistan, the ruling party lawmakers have called for unequivocal condemnation of terrorists, saying that the issue of terrorism in the province is not linked to deprivation or rights issue. Terrorists affiliated with India-sponsored Fitna al-Hindustan carried out coordinated attacks across 12 towns in Balochistan, targeting civilians in Quetta, Mastung, Nushki, Dalbandin, Kharan, Panjgur, Tump, Gwadar, and Pasni on weekend. During the attacks, carried out by

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## Briefs

### Militant violence surges in January

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: After a noticeable decline in violence in December 2025, the first month of the new year witnessed a renewed surge in anti-state violence, leading to higher fatalities among militants, civilians and security personnel, according to official statistics. Data released by the Islamabad-based Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) shows that combat-related deaths in January 2026 rose by 43 per cent compared to December 2025. During the month, 242 militants were killed, while 73 civilians and 46 security force personnel lost their lives. Twelve militants were injured, while at least 71 civilians and 52 security personnel were also wounded.

### KP Police dismantles militant camps

LAKKI MARWAT: On the clear directives of RPO Banu Region Sajjad Khan and special instructions of DPO Lakki Marwat Nazeer Khan, Lakki Marwat Police carried out a large-scale search and strike operation against Fitna-ul-Khawarij in various areas here, including Nasr Khel Dargah. According to details, a heavy police contingent led jointly by DSP Naurang Circle Saeed Khan and DSP Lakki Shahi Bakht conducted effective search operations in Nasr Khel Dargah, Karam Dargah, border areas of Bannu, Wanda Akhund, Wanda Sher Dil, Atshi Machan Khel, Ghatiti Machan Khel, and other surrounding localities. During the operation, multiple hideouts of Fitna-ul-Khawarij were demolished. – APP

## Maiden visit

# Kazakh president due in Islamabad today

The visit will provide the two sides an important and timely opportunity to undertake a comprehensive review of bilateral relations, discuss new avenues for broadening cooperation, particularly in trade, logistics, regional connectivity, people-to-people contacts, and explore collaboration at regional and international forums

SAIFULLAH ANSAR



03-04, 2026, at the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, comprising senior cabinet ministers and other high-ranking officials, according to a Foreign Office statement.

ISLAMABAD: President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev will undertake his first state visit to Pakistan on February 03-04, 2026, at the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, comprising senior cabinet ministers and other high-ranking officials, according to a Foreign Office statement. During the visit, President Tokayev is expected to meet with the President Asif Ali Zardari, hold talks with the prime minister, and address the Pakistan-Kazakhstan Business Forum. "The visit will provide the two sides an important and timely opportunity to undertake a comprehensive review of bilateral relations, discuss new avenues for broadening cooperation, particularly in trade, logistics, regional connectivity, people-to-people contacts, and explore collaboration at regional and international forums," according to the statement. The forthcoming visit reflects the strengthening bonds between Pakistan and Kazakhstan, their mutual commitment to transforming historic and cultural affinities into robust cooperation, and their common desire for peace and progress in the region, it added.

# Iranian President orders start of talks with the US

Iran said earlier on Monday it was working on a method and framework for negotiations that would be ready in the coming days, with messages between the two sides relayed through regional players

NEWS DESK / DNA

TEHRAN: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian ordered the start of nuclear talks with the United States, the news agency Fars reported on Monday. Following the Iranian authorities' response to anti-government protests that peaked last month, Trump has threatened military action and ordered the dispatch of an aircraft carrier group to the Middle East. While piling pressure on Iran, Trump has maintained he is hopeful of making a deal and Tehran has also insisted it wants diplomacy while vowing an unbridled response to any aggression. "President Pezeshkian has ordered the initiation of nuclear negotiations with the United States," the agency reported, citing an unnamed government source. "The source said Iran and the US will hold talks strictly within the framework of the nuclear issue," Fars added, without specifying a date. The report was also carried by the government newspaper Iran and the reformist daily Shargh. Iran said earlier on Monday it was working on a

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## Israel warns to attack Hezbollah targets

NEWS DESK

JERUSALEM: Israel's military warned on Monday it would soon strike Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon, issuing evacuation warnings for buildings in two villages. The army "will, in the near future, strike military infrastructure belonging to the Hezbollah terrorist organization, in response to its prohibited attempts to rebuild its activities in the area," its Arabic-language spokesman Avichay Adraee wrote on X, telling residents of certain buildings in Kfar Tibnit and Ain Qana "to evacuate them immediately." A convoy of Syrian government security forces moved toward the Kurdish-controlled city of Hasakah in the northeast on Monday, Reuters witnesses said,

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## Briefs

## IGP chairs operations division meeting

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi chaired a general meeting of the Operations Division, with the participation of DIG Islamabad, senior police officers and all station house officers (SHOs) from across the district. A police spokesperson told APP on Monday that the IGP Rizvi conducted a detailed review of the crime situation in the federal capital and issued fresh tasks to officers to further accelerate action against criminal elements. The spokesperson said that the IGP Rizvi directed strict monitoring at all entry and exit points of the city, ordering thorough checking of suspicious persons, motorcycles and vehicles, while emphasizing that officers deployed on checking duties must deal with citizens in a polite and professional manner. He further directed that daily search operations be carried out to curb crime and ensure the arrest of criminals involved in serious offences, illegal weapons and drug peddling. The IGP Rizvi also ordered that the crackdown against illegally residing Afghan nationals be further intensified, and stressed the need to make night monitoring more effective and purposeful across the city. He instructed all patrolling units and officers to maintain visible presence in the field and ensure that police stations provide a people-friendly environment, with prompt redressal of complaints from citizens.

Reiterating the force's commitment, Rizvi said that the protection of citizens' lives and property remains the top priority of Islamabad Police, and all available resources would continue to be utilized to maintain peace and order in the federal capital.—APP

## F-6 Khidmat Markaz temporarily closed

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) on Monday issued an important advisory for citizens, informing that the F-6 Khidmat Markaz has been temporarily closed. An ITP official said that citizens seeking licensing-related services can visit the Traffic Headquarters Islamabad or the Assan Sahulat Khidmat Markaz, G-9, to avail themselves of the required facilities without inconvenience. The official added that the public will be informed in due course about the reopening of the F-6 Khidmat Markaz. Citizens were being advised to plan their visits accordingly and use alternative service centers for timely facilitation.—APP

## Tributes paid to Intizar Hussain

ISLAMABAD: Renowned Urdu writer Intizar Hussain was remembered on his 10th death anniversary, where literary figures and admirers paid rich tribute to his life and enduring contributions to Urdu literature, highlighting his unique narrative style and lasting influence. Born in Bulandshahr, British India, in 1925, Intizar Hussain rose to prominence through his novels, short stories, poetry and non-fiction, earning wide recognition for his distinctive literary voice, media channels reported. He was honoured with several national and international awards, including the Sitara-i-Imtiaz from the government of Pakistan and France's Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters. His notable works include Basti, Khali Pinjar, Hindustan Se Aakhri Khat, Aagay Samander Hai, Shehr-e-Afsos, Janam Kahanian, and Wo Jo Kho Gaya. Intizar Hussain passed away in Lahore on this day in 2016, leaving behind a lasting legacy in Urdu literature.—APP

## Spanish envoy leaves Pakistan prematurely after controversial tenure

A senior representative of one of Pakistan's leading daily newspapers approached him with a name card, a customary gesture of introduction. The ambassador glanced at the card and returned it to the journalist without acknowledgment. The act was seen as humiliating, and those nearby who had intended to introduce themselves quietly withdrew. That moment set the tone for his reputation in Islamabad, where many found him distant and unwelcoming

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Spanish ambassador to Pakistan José Antonio de Ory Peral has departed nearly a year before completing his expected three-year term, leaving after just under two years in office. His early exit has raised eyebrows within diplomatic circles, though many in Islamabad's media and political community have expressed relief at his departure. Traditionally, Spanish ambassa-

dors in Pakistan have been regarded as approachable, warm, and popular figures, but this envoy proved to be an exception. From the beginning of his tenure, he was perceived as unusually cynical and aloof. One incident at a reception early in his posting left a lasting impression. A senior representative of one of Pakistan's leading daily newspapers approached him with a name card, a customary gesture of introduction. The ambassador glanced at the card and returned it to the journalist without acknowledgment. The act

was seen as humiliating, and those nearby who had intended to introduce themselves quietly withdrew. That moment set the tone for his reputation in Islamabad, where many found him distant and unwelcoming. Diplomatic insiders suggest that his demeanor often offended those who attempted to engage with him, with even a simple handshake sometimes interpreted as unwelcome. This stood in stark contrast to the easygoing nature of his predecessors, who were known for building strong ties with Pakistani society and the

press. Rumors circulated early on that he, who had intended to introduce himself, and his premature departure appears to confirm those perceptions. Interestingly, news of his exit has been met with sighs of relief among journalists and officials who had struggled to connect with him. While the reasons for his early departure remain unclear, his tenure will likely be remembered as one of the most unusual and strained in the history of Spanish diplomacy in Pakistan.

## 50 garbage containers handed over to GMC

Sealed garbage containers would be placed in public and residential areas. Door-to-door waste collection will be arranged by solid waste management personnel, he explained

ISLAMABAD: In order to keep Gwadar city neat and clean, the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) has handed over 50 large-sized garbage containers to the Gwadar Municipal Committee (GMC). These garbage containers will be placed in the area of the newly renovated Gwadar's oldest business center "Mullah Fazal Chowk". The containers were handed over by GDA Superintendent Engineer Naeem Baloch and Gwadar Municipal Committee Chairman Majid Johar, according to a Gwadar Pro's report on Monday. A GDA official told Gwadar Pro that provision of these 50 large-sized garbage containers aims to prevent the vicinity of "Mullah Fazal Chowk" from getting littered. They will help enhance the beauty of city, he added. Later, Gwadar Smart Environment Sanitation System and Landfill Project will also yield a positive impact. It will help lift, recycle and dump all kinds of residential and commercial waste through state-of-the-art SOPs and modern machinery. A GMC official told Gwadar Pro that solely Gwadar city generates more than 20 tons of waste per day in 2025 compared to 5 tons per day in 2010 in the backdrop of steady uptick in commercial activities and a increasing number of housing units. Currently, the majority of solid waste is dumped in the open at undeclared landfills or open grounds in Gwadar. Although most of the components of solid waste are inert yet useful for reuse and recycling, others may prove highly hazardous and fatal to the general public," he added. The project aims to establish a smart sanitation and solid waste management system to ensure sustainable development in Gwadar City. The project includes mechanical cleaning and manual cleaning services for which sprinkler trucks and sweeper trucks would be deployed. It also includes a container collection system, a manual collection system, and transportation system. Sealed garbage containers would be placed in public and residential areas. Door-to-door waste collection will be arranged by solid waste management personnel, he explained.—APP

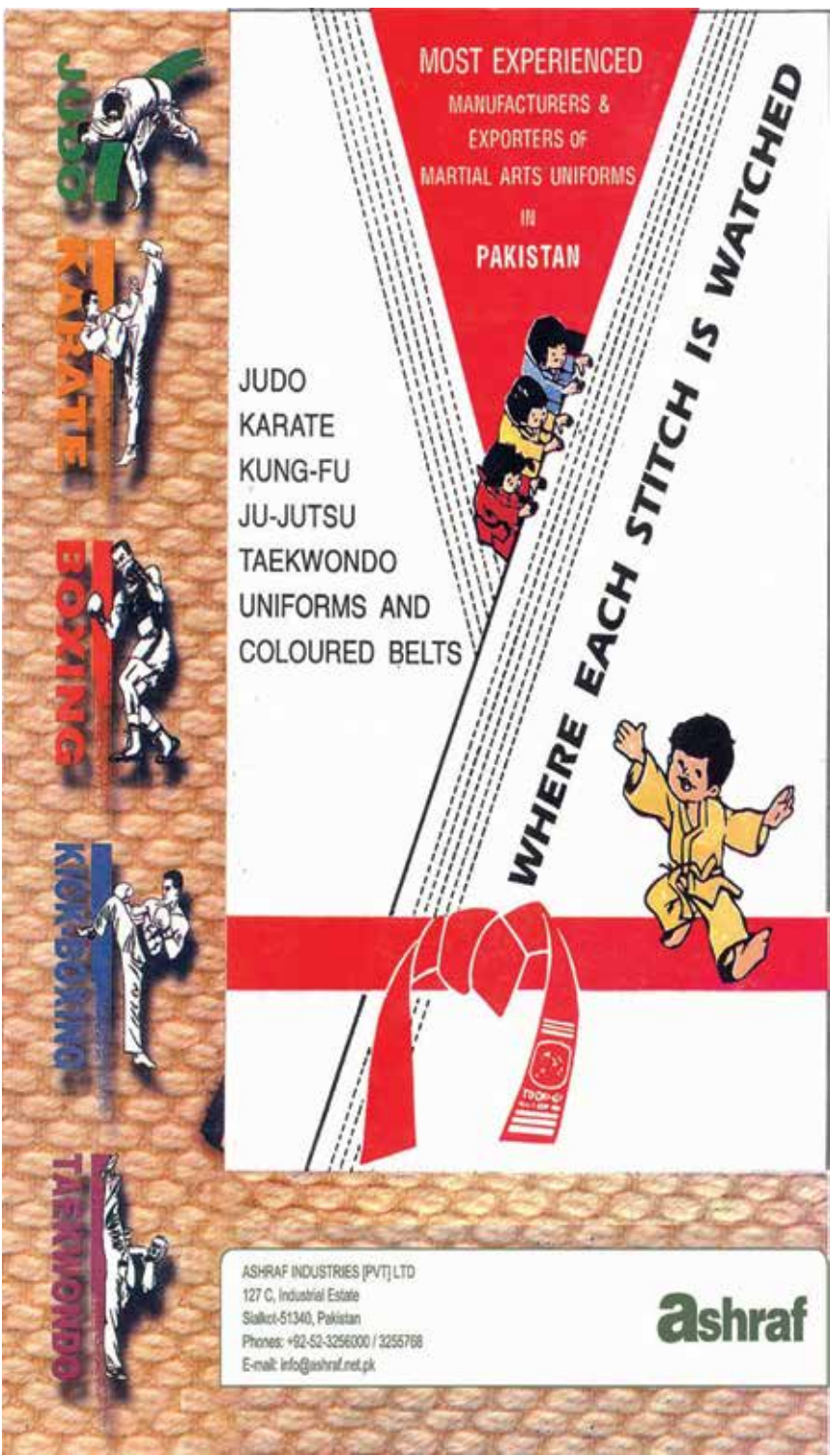
## Spousal dispute case SC allows father to meet daughter

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court, while hearing a case relating to a dispute between a husband and wife, on Monday directed that the father be allowed to meet his daughter, giving priority to the welfare of the child. During the hearing, the child's father informed the court that his daughter was present in the courtroom and that he wished to meet her. Responding to the father's request, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhal remarked that such cruelty should not be inflicted. Justice Mandokhal observed that children suffer the most in disputes between spouses and that this issue frequently arises in such cases. The court directed that the father be allowed to meet his daughter inside the courtroom. Following the court's remarks, the meeting between the father and the daughter was arranged in the courtroom. Subsequently, the Supreme Court adjourned further hearing of the case.—APP

## PEC launches structural health assessment system

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), in collaboration with KnK Japan-Pakistan, the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), and GIZ Pakistan, has launched a pioneering Structural Health Assessment (SHA) system at the Capacity Development for Climate-Resilient Infrastructure (CD-CRI) event in Islamabad.

The digital platform will support engineers in assessing and strengthening public infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, and other essential infrastructure, particularly those vulnerable to climate change impacts and disaster risks. The SHA system enables data-driven decision-making to reduce structural vulnerabilities and enhance resilience against climate-induced hazards and disasters. By transforming risk-prone structures into resilient ones, the initiative represents a significant step toward safer infrastructure and sustainable development across Pakistan. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between PEC, NDRMF, and KnK Japan-Pakistan to ensure nationwide adoption and long-term sustainability of the system. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman PEC, Engr. Waseem Nazir said, "Resilience is not merely a project outcome; it is a national commitment. Through this initiative, PEC is equipping engineers with modern tools to safeguard lives, infrastructure, and communities against escalating climate and disaster risks."—APP



## Balkan states crucial to Türkiye

DR. SİNEM CENGİZ

SINCE the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, the Balkan region has been a priority for Türkiye because of its geopolitical proximity and historical and cultural ties. Through its economic and political influence, Türkiye has placed the region within its area of particular interest. As a result, relations with Balkan states have begun to occupy an important place in Ankara's foreign policy agenda. Since this region's history has been marked by conflict, fragmentation and chronic instability, Türkiye maintains a calculated and balanced policy toward each Balkan country. As part of this policy, Türkiye has launched a diplomatic initiative, the Balkan Peace Platform, which held its second meeting in Istanbul last month. The meeting brought together the foreign ministers of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said that the platform has quickly become an important mechanism for deepening dialogue, emphasizing Türkiye's role as a unifying actor. While global attention is often focused on regional developments from Gaza to Iran and from Sudan to Yemen, the Balkan region may not appear to be a priority for many. However, despite being a peripheral region, the Balkans has become an arena where several actors, including Türkiye, Israel, Iran, Russia and the Western powers, seek to expand their sphere of influence. Each of these actors has different motivations toward the region, which connects Europe, the Middle East, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. In recent years, with increasing tensions due to the Gaza war and Iran-Israel conflict, the Balkan states have been gaining prominence. For instance, Kosovo President Vjosa Osmani was among the leaders of 20 countries who signed up to the U.S-led Board of Peace. Meanwhile, Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama was last month received at the Israeli Knesset, meeting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. A few days later, Netanyahu received Republika Srpska President Ana Trisic-Babic and former President Milorad Dodik. Since the Gaza war erupted, Israel has been trying to force closer ties with the Balkan states. Israeli President Isaac Herzog has paid historic visits to Albania and Serbia. Israel is particularly trying to gain impetus in the Balkans by expanding its military and economic ties. Tel Aviv's defense partnership with Serbia has paved the way for Israel's growing footprint in the region. In addition to defense ties, Israel sees the Balkans as a space useful for intelligence purposes against its opponents in the region, particularly Türkiye.

## Qamar Bashir



Iranian authorities claimed that, working with Russian and Chinese technical expertise, they eventually traced the signal pathways behind these systems. Uplinks and downlinks were identified. Devices were seized. The digital bridge between alleged external coordinators and internal operatives was disrupted. As a result, Tehran argued, the momentum of street-level unrest declined, and the information battlefield tilted back in favor of the state. Overlaying these tactical maneuvers was a deeper ideological framing articulated by Iran's leadership. In speeches delivered by the country's supreme authority portrayed confrontation not merely...

## Defeat, Disappointment and Proxy Terrorism

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



Pakistan's assertions in this regard are grounded in evidence, not rhetoric. Detailed intelligence, material links, and operational trails pointing to Indian involvement and facilitation have repeatedly been placed before the international community. The use of Afghan territory by terrorist elements targeting Pakistan is equally well-documented

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It is no coincidence that as Turkish-Israeli relations have worsened due to the Gaza war, Israel has been using its lobbying power in the West to influence Balkan states that need Western backing. Israel's outreach comes at a time when it faces international isolation due to the Gaza conflict. Although the Balkan region might be seen as Europe's periphery, Israel aims to build legitimacy by showcasing to the world that its leaders can still travel abroad and receive other leaders in their offices. Despite being peripheral, the Balkans has become an arena where several actors seek to expand their sphere of influence. For leaders of small and fragile Balkan states, hosting international dignitaries or participating in global treaties can be seen as an opportunity to enhance their international standing. However, it is also important for them to align with the "right side of history," since it is clear that, with so few leaders — even in Europe — willing to meet Netanyahu, receiving or visiting him will bring no tangible gain. The Balkan states' stance toward Israel and its war in Gaza has been varied. Albania established diplomatic relations with Israel only after the fall of its communist regime in 1991. Before that, Tirana supported the Palestine Liberation Organization. However, as US influence in Albania increased after 1991, political support for the Palestinians diminished. Today, Albania is strongly allied with Israel, believing that closer relations can boost its influence with the White House. While Serbia has provided humanitarian aid to Gaza, it also supplied arms to Israel — deliveries that President Aleksandar Vucic halted after Israel attacked Iran last year. Since then, Serbia has been pursuing a cautious policy, concerned over a potential spillover of the Iran-Israel conflict to the Balkans. Meanwhile, Montenegro and North Macedonia have adopted a low-profile diplomatic stance.

Kosovo, the only Balkan state to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and open an embassy there, has been trying to be part of the Gaza ceasefire efforts, as seen in its role as one of the signatories of the Bosnian Peace. Bosnia-Herzegovina is deeply divided due to its internal political structure. While Bosniak political forces are pro-Palestinian and sympathetic toward Türkiye, Bosnian Serb leaders are vocal in supporting Israel, as seen from their leaders' visit to the country. Türkiye has long sought to prevent external actors from using the Balkans to advance their own agendas. In the past, Ankara opposed Iranian and Russian influence in the region. Today, Israel has emerged as another actor attempting to leverage Balkan dynamics for its destabilizing objectives in the Middle East. While Israel lacks the capacity to establish a strong presence in the Balkans, it will likely exploit any opportunity to minimize support for the Palestinian cause and gain allies against Ankara. Türkiye already enjoys strong political ties with Balkan states, built on shared culture and history, and can further deepen these partnerships. The Balkan Peace Platform is an excellent initiative in this regard. Ankara can also leverage its position within NATO, especially with Balkan members, the alliance, to encourage regional states to pursue balanced foreign policies regarding Middle East issues and reduce Israel's leverage in this area

## How Iran Dismantled Mossad's Hidden Network

THE confrontation that reshaped the intelligence and military balance in the Middle East unfolded between June 3 and June 15, 2025, when Israel and the United States staged a coordinated campaign against Iran that combined external strikes with what Tehran later described as a deeply embedded internal operation. It was not merely a clash of aircraft, missiles, and naval deployments. Iranian officials and regional analysts argued that it was a war prepared from within, built on years of covert penetration by Mossad, Israel's world-renowned intelligence service. According to these accounts, networks of cultivated insiders had facilitated the smuggling of drones, communications equipment, and light weapons into Iranian territory. The aftermath, now firmly in the past, triggered what Tehran called the largest counterintelligence operation in its modern history, marked by mass arrests, the exposure of alleged cells, the seizure of weapons depots, and the dismantling of clandestine communication networks. By mid-June, the guns fell silent, but the intelligence war had merely shifted into a deeper and more complex phase. That next phase began after the Davos meetings concluded on January 23, when President Donald Trump ordered the movement of a U.S. armada and flotilla of warships toward the Persian Gulf, positioning them to encircle Iran. The global media and defense circles immediately framed the deployment as the prelude to an imminent strike. Aircraft carriers, submarines, and long-range bombers dominated headlines. Markets trembled. Global capitals braced. Yet, at the moment when an attack was most widely anticipated, it did not come. Instead, Washington paused. According to defense analysts, this postponement was not hesitation, but calculation. The delay itself became a strategic instrument designed to induce nervousness and anxiety within Iran's defense and political leadership, compelling them to move, displace, and conceal what they valued most—missile units, nuclear materials, command centers, and senior civilian, religious, and military figures. As these movements unfolded, analysts argued, they created precisely what intelligence services seek: patterns. Satellites tracked convoys. Signals intelligence monitored encrypted communications. Human networks reported shifts in routines and locations. In this reading, the attack was deliberately deferred so that Iran's own efforts to protect its assets would expose them. Each relocation became a data point. Each new "safe place" became a coordinate. When the moment came, these analysts claimed, targets would already be locked—ready for B-2 bombers, F-35

squadrons, or Tomahawk missiles launched from submarines hundreds of miles away. Tehran, however, rejected the notion that it was merely a subject of this strategic chess game. Iranian officials emphasized that, in the wake of June and throughout the tense weeks that followed the January naval deployment, the country had dramatically expanded its counterintelligence posture. With technical and advisory support from Russia and China, Iran claimed to have shifted its focus beyond human networks to the digital and satellite-based systems allegedly used to coordinate covert activity and unrest inside the country. One of the most striking claims to emerge from this period involved the discovery of large numbers of Starlinked satellite based communication devices, often described in regional reporting as "starlink kits." These systems were designed to bypass Iran's domestic telecommunications infrastructure and link operatives directly to external command centers. Through these channels, real-time instructions could be transmitted—where to assemble, which facilities to target, how to provoke security forces, and how to frame events for international audiences once clashes occurred. The method, as it was later described, followed a tightly engineered pattern. Small groups would initiate acts of vandalism or violence in public spaces. When security forces intervened, they would be fired at by sophisticated automatic weapons to trigger confrontations. Images and reports of these clashes would then be rapidly amplified across global media platforms as evidence of state repression. The objective was not simply to destabilize Iran internally, but to construct a moral and political narrative that could justify renewed external pressure or even direct military action. Iranian authorities claimed that, working with Russian and Chinese technical expertise, they eventually traced the signal pathways behind these systems. Uplinks and downlinks were identified. Devices were seized. The digital bridge between alleged external coordinators and internal operatives was disrupted. As a result, Tehran argued, the momentum of street-level unrest declined, and the information battlefield tilted back in favor of the state. Overlaying these tactical maneuvers was a deeper ideological framing articulated by Iran's leadership. In speeches delivered by the country's supreme authority portrayed the confrontation not merely as a geopolitical struggle, but as a test of spiritual endurance. When the world turned against the Muslim community, he told followers, divine support alone is sufficient. This religious narrative provided a form of resilience that could not be neutralized by satellites, sanctions, or surveillance. At the strategic level, another current shaped West-

ern and regional calculations: Iran's steadily advancing missile and nuclear capabilities, whether acknowledged, denied, or deliberately left ambiguous. The June 2025 exchange also exposed the limits of Israel's and America's ability to achieve decisive results without risking serious retaliation. Iran was not an isolated state on the periphery of global politics. It stood at the intersection of major power interests. Russia and China openly opposed a war that could reduce the strategic map of the region. Turkey publicly accused Israel of pushing the United States toward a conflict that would destabilize the entire Middle East. Within NATO, enthusiasm for opening another major front appeared limited. Meanwhile, Washington faced pressures far beyond the Persian Gulf. From the Caribbean to South America, shifting alliances and growing resistance to U.S. influence demanded diplomatic and strategic attention. The prospect of managing simultaneous crises across multiple theaters introduced caution into decision-making circles, as military assets and political capital were stretched across competing priorities. Hovering over all these calculations was the narrow corridor of the Strait of Hormuz. Any disruption there would send shockwaves through global energy markets and supply chains, with consequences reaching far beyond the region. Iran's post-June and post-January campaign to loosen Mossad's alleged grip—through mass arrests, technological countermeasures, and strategic partnerships—which signaled Iran's determination to contest every layer of the intelligence battlefield, from the streets of its cities to the orbit above its skies. The United Nations, often dismissed as powerless, remained, in principle, the only forum capable of conferring collective legitimacy on any lasting settlement. Its strength lay not in its bureaucracy, but in the willingness of member states to honor its resolutions and arbitration. If that willingness continued to erode, the world risked sliding from a rules-based order into a raw contest of power. For now, June's firestorm belonged to history, and January's naval chessboard defined the present. Beneath the visible movements of fleets and leaders, the silent war of spies, signals, and counter-signals continued to shape the future—reminding the world that in the modern age, the most decisive battles are often fought far from the front lines, in the hidden spaces between information, perception, and power.

— Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)

Former Press Minister,

Embassy of Pakistan to France

Former Press Attaché to Malaysia

Former MD, SRBC

Macomb, Michigan

## Pakistan will leave no stone unturned for Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFARON, Engineer Amir Muqam on Monday invited all stakeholders and citizens to show solidarity with the Kashmiri people, reaffirming that Pakistan will continue to raise the Kashmir issue at every forum until the Kashmiris are granted their rightful rights. Ahead of February 5, the Minister, in a special video message on PTV, underscored that the abrogation of Article 370, which forcibly revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status has deepened the suffering of the Kashmiri people and made it imperative for the nation to stand united in defending their rights. Amir Muqam urged everyone to actively participate in initiatives and demonstrations expressing solidarity with Kashmiris. He called on the nation to stand together, reinforcing that Pakistan will continue to

raise the Kashmir issue at every international forum and pursue all possible avenues until the Kashmiri people are granted their legitimate rights. Reaffirming Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the Kashmiri cause, the minister stated that the country will go to every extent to support Kashmiris and will not relent until justice and self-determination are achieved. He emphasized that the Kashmiri unity and citizen engagement remain crucial in highlighting the plight of Kashmiris and keeping their struggle at the forefront globally. He also highlighted Pakistan's recent historic success in the "Marka-i-Haq conflict against India and called for the same spirit of determination and advocacy to be shown for the Kashmiri people, urging the nation to stand united in their struggle for justice and rightful rights.—

## Gilani arrives in Cambodia on official visit

The warm reception accorded to the Chairman Senate reflects the cordial relations between Pakistan and Cambodia and the importance attached to parliamentary engagement between the two countries

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani arrived in Phnom Penh on Monday on an official visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia. Upon arrival, he was received by the 5th Commission of the Senate, Ngoun Sokeng, Director General of Protocol and International Relations; and Zabeeruddin Babar Tahseem, Ambassador of Pakistan to Cambodia.

Chairman of the 1st Commission of the Senate and Chairman of the Cambodia-Pakistan Senate Friendship Group; Dr Chhiv Viseang, Chairman of the 5th Commission of the Senate; Ngoun Sokeng, Director General of Protocol and International Relations; and Zabeeruddin Babar Tahseem, Ambassador of Pakistan to Cambodia.

As a gesture of courtesy, Ambassador Zabeeruddin Babar Tahseem and Ngoun Sokeng boarded the aircraft to personally welcome the Chairman of the Senate and his delegation, according to a news release received here. The Chairman of the Senate is accompanied by a parliamentary advisory delegation comprising Senator Zaraqa Su-

harwardy, Senator Abid Sher Ali, Senator Zamir Hussain Ghumro and Misbah Khar, Adviser to the Chairman of the Senate. The warm reception accorded to the Chairman Senate reflects the cordial relations between Pakistan and Cambodia and the importance attached to parliamentary engagement between the two countries.—APP







## Briefs

KP govt  
implements  
strict  
monitoring  
for Tirah  
funds

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Information Shafi Jan on Monday shared details of the funds allocated by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government for the relief and rehabilitation of families affected in Tirah Valley. He said the provincial government has earmarked Rs4 billion to facilitate the affected families.

Up to January 31 an amount of Rs920 million has been spent on transportation and food arrangements for the displaced families during their journey. Shafi Jan stated that the provincial government has compiled a fully auditable record of all expenditures.

The record includes verification by the district administration and local elders along with signatures and CNIC details of the beneficiaries.

He further informed that Rs2.40 billion has been allocated under the compensation package and monthly assistance for the affected families. Payments will be made through digital channels after NADRA registration and verification. The relief amounts will be transferred directly into the bank accounts of the affected families. — APP

Dollar slide  
raises new  
risks for  
Pakistan

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: As the US dollar risks weakening against other major currencies, Pakistan faces the prospect of higher external debt liabilities, with multilateral and bilateral loans accounting for 56% of its roughly \$92 billion external debt stock, The News reported. Pakistan's external debt and liabilities have hovered around \$130 billion in recent years, largely due to a stronger dollar versus currencies such as the euro, Japanese yen (JPY) and British pound (GBP).

In the last few days, the US dollar started weakening, raising the possibility that Pakistan's external debt-to-GDP ratio is likely to explode in this quarter if the recent trends in currencies persist. However, the Ministry of Finance in the Debt Policy Statement, going to submit before the parliament, stated that external debt increased by 6% YoY to stand at \$91.8 billion as of the end June-25, reflecting an increase of \$5 billion. During Q1-FY-26, it declined slightly by 0.4% (\$0.35 billion) to stand at \$91.4 billion at the end of September 2025.

## Aurangzeb reaffirms stability, stronger FX

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday reaffirmed the government's commitment to sustaining macroeconomic stability, strengthening foreign exchange buffers, and enhancing investor confidence. He reiterated this during a meeting with a delegation of Wafi Energy Pakistan Ltd, which signaled a potential investment of up to USD 100 million in Pakistan over the next two to three years, a news release said. The delegation, led by Javid Akhtar Chief Finance Officer Asad Group (Board Member), included Zubair Shaikh, Chief Executive Officer and Zarrar Mahmud Chief Finance Officer of Wafi Energy Pakistan Ltd.

The interaction provided an opportunity to review the company's current operations, future investment outlook, and matters relevant to the oil marketing and energy sector. During the meeting, the Finance Minister emphasized that sustained macroeconomic stability remained the cornerstone of the government's economic strategy and was essential for maintaining investor confidence. He noted that improvements in foreign exchange availability were a direct outcome of broader macroeconomic discipline and reforms, and that strengthening external buffers will enable smoother facilitation of legitimate business transactions, including dividend repatriation and cross-border payments. The Finance Minister observed that improving macroeconomic indicators were already translating into greater confidence among both domestic and foreign investors, and underscored that such developments represent fundamental elements of a healthy investment climate. He highlighted that local investor participation played an important role in further encouraging foreign investment inflows.



The discussion also covered the role of public-private partnership models and structured finance as effective mechanisms for delivering large-scale infrastructure projects. Aurangzeb noted that successful experiences at the provincial level demonstrate the potential of such models and emphasized the need to further encourage structured finance solutions and stronger engagement with the banking sector to support infrastructure development. The delegation informed the minister that Wafi Energy Pakistan Ltd has benefited from improved operating conditions amid greater macroeconomic stability and shared its intention to expand its retail and storage footprint over the coming years as part of a broader growth strategy.

The delegation reiterated its confidence in Pakistan's economic outlook and highlighted growing interest among international and regional stakeholders in expanding engagement with Pakistan. The delegation briefed the Finance Minister on Wafi Energy Pakistan's current operations in the country and shared that the company operates an extensive nationwide retail network, supported by ongoing investments in modernization and efficiency. It was noted that improved macroeconomic conditions and greater predictability in the operating environment have enabled the company to resume and scale up investment activity following recent business integration. The delegation further informed that Wafi Energy Pakistan was considering potential investment of up to \$100 million over the next two to three years to expand its retail footprint and storage capacity, with a focus on network growth, infrastructure development, and technology-driven improvements. The delegation stated that these investments were aimed at strengthening supply resilience, improving service standards, and contributing to long-term growth of energy sector in Pakistan.

## Thailand hands over the ASEAN Committee chairmanship to Indonesia

H.E. Lt. Gen. (Rtd.) Chandra Warsenanto Sukotjo, Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan, assumed the role of ACI Chair for the first half of 2026. The handover ceremony was witnessed by H.E. Mr. Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, Additional Secretary (Asia-Pacific), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan



## DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Thailand to Pakistan, in his capacity as Chair of the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad (ACI), presided over the ACI Heads of Mission Meeting No. 01/2026 at the Royal Thai Embassy. The meeting reviewed ACI's activities over the past six months and addressed organizational matters related to upcoming initiatives. Diplomats from ASEAN member states discussed ways to further strengthen cooperation and visibility of ASEAN in Pakistan. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Thai Ambassador formally handed over the chairmanship of ACI to Indonesia. H.E. Lt. Gen. (Rtd.) Chandra Warsenanto Sukotjo, Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan, assumed the role of ACI Chair for the first half of 2026. The handover ceremony was witnessed by H.E. Mr. Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, Additional Secretary (Asia-Pacific), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan. The transition marks Indonesia's leadership in coordinating ASEAN's diplomatic engagements in Islamabad, continuing the Committee's mission of fostering regional cooperation and strengthening ties with Pakistan.

Kremlin  
confirms  
war talks in  
Abu Dhabi

MOSCOW: Russia has confirmed that a new round of talks with Ukraine and the United States in Abu Dhabi on ending the four-year war will start Wednesday, after they were postponed from this weekend. Moscow blamed a scheduling issue for the delay, a day after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky also said the negotiations would take place in the UAE capital on Wednesday and Thursday. "They were indeed originally planned for this past Sunday. But additional coordination of the schedules of the three parties was needed," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters "Now, on Wednesday-Thursday, the second round will indeed take place. It will be held in Abu Dhabi. We can confirm that," he added. The talks will take place less than two weeks before the fourth anniversary of Moscow launching its full-scale offensive against Ukraine. They are expected to focus on the crucial issue of territory, with neither side so far showing any sign of a breakthrough. — APP

## Construction of guest house in diplomatic enclave: plea dismissed

The court observed that the determination of expenses incurred by the company fell within the jurisdiction of the trial court and that the Supreme Court would not interfere at this stage



ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a petition filed by a private construction company regarding the construction of a guest house for the Chief Minister and Governor of Balochistan in the Diplomatic Enclave. The case was heard by a two-member bench comprising Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan. During the hearing, counsel for the private company argued that the caretaker Chief Minister of Balochistan had inaugurated the project, but the notification for its construction was later withdrawn. He submitted that the company had submitted an advance bank guarantee for the mobilisation of equipment and that the

present petition concerned the return of that guarantee. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail observed that the matter was already pending before the trial court for arbitration. He remarked that the government was not absconding and was very much present, adding that the bank guarantee was valid until June 30, 2026. The judge further noted that it was a caretaker government and it was possible that the relevant authorities had hurriedly installed the project's foundation plaque. He also remarked that large investors were usually involved in such projects. Justice Mandokhail recalled that the Islamabad High Court had also issued a stay order in the matter. The court observed that the determination of expenses incurred by the company fell within the jurisdiction of the trial court and that the Supreme Court would not interfere at this stage. Subsequently, the Supreme Court dismissed the petition of the private construction company and directed the trial court to decide the case independently, without being influenced by the Supreme Court proceedings.



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