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Trump says denuclearisation ‘taking place’ after US negotiators held ‘very good meetings’ with Iran



ANI

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday the United States was getting along very well with Iran and that recent meetings in Qatar had gone well on the denuclearisation of Tehran.

“The denuclearisation of Iran is moving along well,” Trump told reporters. “They’ve had very good meetings, and we’ll see.”

The US and Iran held technical talks in the Qatari capital of Doha on Wednesday as they seek to agree on the flow of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and secure a last-

ing ceasefire, a source with direct knowledge of the talks and an Iranian official said.

Trump’s son-in-law Jared Kushner and envoy Steve Witkoff met the prime minister of Qatar — a mediator in the talks alongside Pakistan — to lay the groundwork for the negotiations, but would not be attending the discussions themselves, the source with direct knowledge of the talks said. “We’re getting along very well,” Trump said, adding Iran has “come a long way.”

“I think they’re fine,” the president added. Indirect talks between

Tehran and Washington have been ongoing since Tuesday night in Doha, a senior Iranian official told Reuters on Wednesday, adding that discussions were focused on the release of Tehran’s funds and the Strait of Hormuz.

“Indirect negotiations began on Tuesday night. Iran held meetings with Qatari and Pakistani officials, who in turn met with the US side. The indirect talks continued on Wednesday, focusing on Iran’s frozen assets and the Strait of Hormuz,” the official said.

Iran’s Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi has reacted strongly to a

post in which Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said Iran’s supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, was “marked for death.”

“The terms of the Islamabad MoU are crystal clear and public for all to see,” Araghchi said. “POTUS has committed the US to muzzling its pets in Tel Aviv. If they ignore their master, Iran will school them.”

In quotes shared by Israeli media on Monday, Katz described the Iranians as “good merchants” trying to extract concessions in negotiations and said Israel would not allow Iran to produce nuclear weapons.

PM directs intensified preparedness ahead of monsoon season



ANI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Wednesday, directed federal and provincial authorities to intensify preparations for the upcoming monsoon season, ordering the establishment of a national emergency response mechanism and stressing that coordinated action is essential to mitigate the growing risks posed by climate change.

Chairing a high-level meeting to review monsoon preparedness and climate resilience, the prime minister said Pakistan remained among the countries most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and stressed that effective and comprehensive cooperation between the federation and the provinces was critical to address climate-related disasters. The prime minister also approved the formation of an ‘Emergency Response Committee’ which would be headed by the minister for Planning and Development.

The committee, comprising the NDMA and representatives of relevant federal ministries, will work in close coordination with the provincial authorities and hold weekly meetings throughout the monsoon season to monitor preparedness and response efforts, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister also asked the minister for finance to complete advance arrangements for an emergency fund that could be mobilized in the event of severe monsoon-related disasters.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Finance Muhammad

Aurangzeb, Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari, Minister for Climate Change Musadik Malik, Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Minister for Law Azam Nazeer Tarar, Adviser to the PM on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah, Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani, Chairman WAPDA, chief secretaries of all provinces and senior officials from relevant government departments.

As part of the preparedness measures, the prime minister directed the federal minister for Climate Change and the chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to undertake emergency visits to all provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan during the current week to assess and finalize monsoon preparedness.

He further emphasized that projects financed by the international development partners should also focus on strengthening the institutional and technical capacity of national and local institutions and departments.

Highlighting the government’s commitment to water security, the prime minister mentioned an allocation of additional Rs330 billion in the current fiscal year’s federal budget to accelerate the completion of major water infrastructure projects.

Recalling the lessons learned from previous flood emergencies, the prime minister directed all the relevant institutions to implement a comprehensive flood mitigation roadmap.

Judicial panels formed for high court additional judge appointments

ANI

LAHORE: Following approval by Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi, interview committees have been formed for the appointment of additional judges in all high courts across the country.

A notification issued by Chief Justice Yahya Afridi, in his capacity as chairman of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan, stated that Chief Justice Lahore High Court Justice Aalia Neelum, being the senior-most chief justice, will be a member of all committees. According to the notification, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi has been appointed chairman of the interview committee for the appointment of additional judges in the Lahore High Court. The committee includes Chief

Justice Lahore High Court Justice Aalia Neelum, Chief Justice Islamabad High Court Justice Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar, Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan, Senator Farooq H. Naek, Senator Syed Ali Zafar and Muhammad Ahsan Bhoon. The same committee will also conduct interviews for additional judge appointments in the Islamabad High Court. For the Sindh High Court, Justice Amir Farooq has been appointed chairman of the interview committee.

The committee members include Chief Justice Sindh High Court Justice Zafar Ahmed Rajput, Chief Justice Lahore High Court Justice Aalia Neelum, Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan, Senator Farooq H. Naek, Senator Syed Ali Zafar and Muhammad Ahsan Bhoon.

Mohsin Naqvi arrives in Riyadh on official visit, received by Saudi counterpart

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control, Mohsin Naqvi, arrived in Riyadh on an official visit to Saudi Arabia, marking another step in the strengthening of bilateral ties between the two countries.

Upon his arrival at King Khalid International Airport on Tuesday evening, the Pakistani interior minister was warmly received by Saudi Arabia’s Minister of Interior, Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif. The high-level reception reflects the close and longstanding relationship between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, particularly in the areas of security cooperation, counter-



terrorism, and law enforcement. The visit is expected to provide an opportunity for both sides to discuss matters of mutual interest, including enhancing collaboration in internal security, combating narcotics trafficking, and expanding institutional cooperation between the two interior ministries. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have maintained strong strategic ties for decades, with both countries regularly engaging at the highest levels to deepen cooperation across political, economic, security, and defense sectors.

The visit by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi is seen as part of ongoing efforts to further strengthen bilateral coordination and reinforce the longstanding partnership between the two brotherly nations.

IHC bars action against three Afghan women in citizenship case

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday restrained authorities from taking adverse action against three Afghan women married to Pakistani citizens while hearing a petition challenging the exclusion of time spent in Pakistan under Proof of Registration (PoR) cards from the calculation of lawful residence for citizenship purposes.

Justice Muhammad Asif issued notices to the federal government and the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports, directing them to submit replies, and sought assistance from the attorney general at the next hearing.

Representing the petitioners, Barrister Umar Ijaz Gilani told the court that the three Afghan women had been married to Pakistani citizens for more than a decade and that

their children are Pakistani nationals. He said the women had applied for Pakistani citizenship under Section 10 of the Pakistan Citizenship Act, 1951, which governs citizenship applications by foreign women married to Pakistani citizens.

However, the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports required them to first prove they had lived in Pakistan for at least five years on valid visas and passports.

Pakistan, Canada Reaffirm Commitment to Strengthening Bilateral Cooperation



BY: Hurish Shah:

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Canada to Pakistan, Tarik Ali Khan, called on Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Deputy Prime Minister and

Foreign Minister, in Islamabad on Thursday.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed Pakistan-Canada bilateral relations and reaffirmed their shared commitment to fur-

ther strengthening cooperation in areas of mutual interest. They also discussed ways to enhance collaboration and deepen engagement for the mutual benefit of both countries.



Karachi: President Asif Ali Zardari in a meeting with Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah and Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti at Bilawal House.



Islamabad: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, addressing FBR leadership and field formations at FBR Headquarters, Islamabad, for successfully achieving the revised annual revenue collection target for FY2025-26.

Gilani Reaffirms Commitment to Strengthening Pakistan-Bulgaria Relations



BY: Hurish Shah:

ISLAMABAD--- Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Wednesday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations with Bulgaria during a meeting with Irena Genadieva Gancheva at Parliament House.

The Chairman Senate congratulated Ambassador Gancheva on the successful completion of her diplomatic assignment in Pakistan and appreciated her efforts in promoting the longstanding friendship between the two countries.

Gilani said Pakistan and Bulgaria enjoy cordial relations based on mutual respect and cooperation, describing Bulgaria as an important partner in Europe. He welcomed Bulgaria's full membership of the Schengen Area, congratulated the country on adopting the Euro, and reiterated Pakistan's support for Bulgaria's aspirations to join the

OECD. Recalling more than six decades of diplomatic relations, he stressed the need for enhanced political engagement through high-level exchanges and institutional dialogue. He also called for the early convening of the third session of the Pakistan-Bulgaria Inter-Governmental Commission on Economic Cooperation and appreciated Bulgaria's continued support for Pakistan's GSP Plus status.

Highlighting the importance of parliamentary diplomacy, Gilani called for greater interaction between Parliamentary Friendship Groups and lawmakers of both countries to further strengthen legislative cooperation and people-to-people contacts.

The Chairman also briefed the Ambassador on the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference (ISC), saying Pakistan has played a constructive role in promoting regional peace and international dialogue, including facilitating engage-

ment between the United States and Iran. He said Pakistan's peace initiatives have earned international recognition.

Gilani further highlighted the Senate's initiatives for women's empowerment, minority rights, youth engagement, and educational outreach, reaffirming his commitment to inclusive governance. He also paid tribute to Benazir Bhutto for her contributions to democracy and women's empowerment.

Ambassador Gancheva appreciated Pakistan's efforts to promote peace, stability, and diplomatic engagement. Concluding the meeting, Chairman Senate thanked the Ambassador for her valuable services in strengthening Pakistan-Bulgaria relations and expressed Pakistan's desire to expand cooperation with Bulgaria and the European Union in trade, education, youth development, women's empowerment, and other areas of mutual interest.

AFD, EU Delegation Commend Progress of Faisalabad Surface Water Project

BY: Special Correspondent:

FAISALABAD: A high-level delegation from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the European Union (EU) visited the under-construction Surface Water Treatment Plant and transmission line projects in Faisalabad, expressing satisfaction with the pace and quality of work. During the visit, officials reviewed project progress and received briefings on its construction and technical features. Managing Director WASA Faisalabad, Saqib Raza, said the project will provide clean and safe drinking water to millions of residents upon completion. The delegation praised WASA's performance, expressed confidence in the project's timely completion, and described it



as a major step toward strengthening urban infrastructure and ensuring sustainable access to safe drinking water.

Abu Bakar Bin Talat to Lead RISJA; Zulfiqar Baig Senior Vice President, Ambreen Ali General Secretary



BY: Hurish Shah:

ISLAMABAD--- The Rawalpindi Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA) has unanimously elected its new office-bearers for the 2026-27 term, with all candidates returned unopposed, reflecting the unity, confidence and consensus among the association's 60 members.

The election process was conducted by the Election Committee headed by Shehryar Khan, with Rana Farhan Aslam, Shakir Abbasi and Asim Jilani serving as committee members.

According to the results, Abu Bakar Bin Talat was elected President, Zulfiqar Baig Senior Vice President, while Asghar Ali Mubarak and Zahid Awan were elected Vice Presidents. Ambreen Ali was elected

General Secretary, Zeeshan Qayyum Senior Joint Secretary, Owais Latif and Aqeel Anjum Joint Secretaries, and Nasir Abbas Naqvi Finance Secretary. The Governing Body comprises Faheem Anwar Khan, Gabriel D'Souza, Owais Abbasi, Kiran Khan and Asim Riaz.

Speaking on the occasion, President Abu Bakar Bin Talat and General Secretary Ambreen Ali thanked the members for their confidence and pledged to uphold the association's traditions of professionalism, unity and integrity while working for the welfare of sports journalists. They also reaffirmed their commitment to promoting ethical sports journalism and strengthening cooperation among members.

RISJA Chairman Shakeel Ahmed Awan and Patron-in-Chief Abdul Muhi Shah congratulated the newly

elected leadership, saying the uncontested elections reflected complete trust, stability and consensus within the association.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists President Afzal Butt, National Press Club President Abdul Razak Sial, Secretary Furqan Rao, Finance Secretary Abid Abbasi, PRA Secretary Naveed Akbar, former NPC President Tariq Chaudhry and other senior journalists congratulated the newly elected office-bearers and expressed confidence that the new leadership would further strengthen RISJA and safeguard the rights of sports journalists.

Established in 1986, RISJA is the only registered organization of sports journalists in the twin cities, dedicated to promoting sports journalism, professionalism and the welfare of sports journalists.

53 Government Shops in Shahpur to Be Auctioned for Lease Under Transparent Process



BY: ANI Correspondent:

SARGODHA---Commissioner Sargodha Division, Hafiz Shoukat Ali chaired a meeting of the Retention Committee to review the leasing of 53 government-owned shops and other

public properties in Tehsil Shahpur through public auction under the Board of Revenue policy. He directed officials to complete the auction process on time, ensuring full transparency, merit, and compliance with all legal requirements. The

Commissioner said the initiative aims to ensure effective use of government assets, increase public revenue, and strengthen public confidence. Relevant administrative officers also reviewed the arrangements and progress of the proposed auction.

Salam Project equips Saudi youth to become global ambassadors of Kingdom's values: CEO Dr Bar

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Salam Project for Cultural Communication is equipping young Saudi men and women with the knowledge, practical skills and leadership capabilities needed to represent the Kingdom effectively on the global stage, helping strengthen Saudi Arabia's international image through intercultural dialogue and civilized communication.

Speaking to Al Ekhbariya TV, Chief Executive Officer of the Salam Project for Cultural Communication, Dr Abraar Abdelmonem Bar, said the Global Leadership in Communication Program is a unique initiative that focuses on cultural communication and enhancing the international perception of Saudi Arabia rather than serving as a conventional leadership training course. She said the program is designed as a comprehensive learning journey that combines knowledge with practical application, enabling participants to develop a deep understanding of Saudi Arabia, its national achievements, values, cultural identity and humanitarian contributions before equipping them with the practical tools required to represent the Kingdom professionally at international platforms. Dr Bar explained that the program is intended to prepare partici-

pants to present Saudi Arabia in a manner that reflects its true image and growing global role, while strengthening their awareness of the Kingdom's national identity and cultural heritage. She said one of the program's distinguishing features is its emphasis on real-world experience rather than purely theoretical instruction. Participants engage directly with experienced diplomats, local and international experts, allowing them to gain practical insights into global communication, diplomacy and cross-cultural engagement. According to Dr. Bar, the program also includes specialized educational content, interactive enrichment sessions, field visits and applied projects that enable participants to acquire the knowledge, confidence and communication skills required to become effective representatives of Saudi Arabia. She said graduates complete the program with a comprehensive understanding of the competencies needed to leave a positive and lasting impression while representing the Kingdom in international forums. The Salam Project for Cultural Communication is a Saudi national initiative dedicated to promoting intercultural dialogue, strengthening mutual understanding among nations and preparing Saudi youth for constructive global engagement.

Petition challenges NHA's 50% penalty on non-M-Tag, low-balance M-Tag vehicles

ANI

ISLAMABAD: A petition has been filed in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday challenging the National Highway Authority's (NHA) decision to impose a 50% additional toll surcharge on vehicles without an M-Tag and those with insufficient M-Tag balances. The petition, filed by lawyer Muhammad Jalal Haider, names the Ministry of Communications, the National Highway Authority and other officials as respondents. The petitioner asked the court to declare the NHA's May 30, 2025 notification unlawful and order the authority to refund all amounts collected under the disputed surcharge. According to the petition, the notification introduced an additional 50% charge on vehicles using the motorway network without an M-Tag or with inadequate M-Tag balances. The petitioner argued that Section 10 of the NHA Act authorizes the authority to collect tolls but does not empower it to impose penalties on either category of motorists. It contends that the surcharge has no legal basis and exceeds the powers granted to the authority under the law.

The petition further alleges that the measure violates Articles 4, 18, 24 and 25 of Pakistan's Constitution, which relate to the protection of law, freedom of trade, property rights and equality before the law.

HEC signs MoU with university to host nutrition courses on NAHE's national learning platform

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan, and the Aga Khan University (AKU) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to host the IGNIT3 online nutrition courses on the Learning Management System (LMS) of HEC's National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE). The agreement formalises a collaboration aimed at strengthening the capacity of university faculty engaged in nutrition and nursing disciplines across the country. The MoU was signed by Dr Salim Virani, Professor and Vice Provost Research, AKU, and Dr Noor Amna Malik, Managing Director, NAHE. Under the partnership, AKU has provided seven SCORM-compliant nutrition courses for hosting on the NAHE LMS, covering foundational nutrition

concepts, assessment, and management of malnutrition, and intersectoral issues, climate change, and gender. The courses are designed for faculty cadres including Lecturers, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, Professors, Demonstrators, Instructors, Senior Instructors, and Directors. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr Niaz Ahmad Akhtar, Chairman HEC, appreciated AKU team for their support and asked for such collaborations on strategic matters. He also asked for integrating such content in the curriculum. Prof. Dr Zia ul Haq, Executive Director HEC, acknowledged the role of AKU leadership and staff for providing content and support. He emphasized on creating awareness among the masses about Nutrition issues. He further added that in future these courses can be offered at universities for students.

PTA hosts SATRC working group meeting on telecom policy, regulation, services

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), in collaboration with the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), on Wednesday inaugurated a two-day meeting of the SATRC Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services (PRS).

The meeting, being held from July 1 to 2, has brought together delegates from all SATRC member administrations — Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka — along with representatives of the APT Secretariat and local stakeholders, according to a news release.

The event is the first meeting under the SATRC Action

Plan Phase X (SAP-X), which was endorsed at SATRC-26 held in Islamabad in 2025. Delivering his opening remarks virtually, Dr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity, appreciated the PTA for hosting the meeting and reaffirmed the APT's commitment to regional cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and capacity building among member administrations. Dr. Khawar Siddique Khokhar, Member (Compliance and Enforcement) of the PTA and Chair of the SATRC Working Group on Policy, Regulation and Services, highlighted the importance of the meeting in advancing the objectives of SAP-X and strengthening regional cooperation through forward-looking policy and regulatory initiatives.

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Opinion

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US shift in Syria signals new era in ties with Turkiye

DR. SINEM CENGIZ

Since 2015, US support for the Syrian Democratic Forces in Syria has bedeviled relations between Washington and Ankara. Regardless of which administration occupies the White House, this issue has continued to plague Turkish-American relations. Ankara has long maintained that successive US administrations have disregarded the security concerns of a NATO ally, opting instead to partner with forces affiliated with an organization Turkiye designates as terrorist in the fight against Daesh. This perception has led Ankara to launch three military operations in northern Syria to eliminate the elements it considers threats to Turkish security and stability.

Washington's policy of supporting the SDF — formed from the Syrian affiliates of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK — even led Ankara to enhance its cooperation with Russia. For many years, Moscow has weaponized the PKK, which was ideologically attractive to Russia due to its Marxist-Leninist

roots, for its own geopolitical interests. Moscow also provided the PKK affiliates with a large amount of military support to help fight Daesh in Syria. Yet, when the PKK affiliates reached out to Russia to back the establishment of an autonomous Kurdish region in northeastern Syria, the Kremlin declined to offer support. The positive track in Turkish-Russian ties influenced Moscow's strategic calculus toward the SDF, but concerns over US and Western dominance in Syria also played a role.

Then, the SDF turned to Israel for support. This was not surprising, since Israel was the only country in the region to openly support the independence referendum held by the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq in 2017. Israel wanted to use the SDF to undermine Turkiye, the new leadership in Damascus, and regional states that support Palestinian rights. However, the Israeli backing of the SDF for its own geopolitical interests has also failed. As a result, the status quo won in Syria, and the US, which was once the main backer of the SDF, played a critical role in this.

After the Syrian army pushed back SDF forces during a recent military operation, Syrian President Ahmad Al-Sharaa announced that a truce had been reached with the SDF in northeastern Syria. According to the ceasefire agreement, the SDF will hand over control of all the areas it had held for a decade, including oil and natural gas fields, and its forces will be integrated into the Syrian national security structure.

US Ambassador to Ankara and Special Envoy for Syria Tom Barrack said that his country no longer needed the SDF as the “primary ground force” in the fight against Daesh in Syria, and that its original purpose had “come to an end.” Barrack's shuttle diplomacy played a great role in reaching this agreement which was delayed since March 10 last year. Turkiye and Syria have accused Israel of backing the SDF, and during talks in Paris between Israeli and Syrian officials, Israel was urged to stop encouraging the SDF to delay integrating.

Three key factors related to Turkish, Syrian, and US roles have played a part in reaching the current situation. First, since late 2024,

Ankara has been pursuing a “terror-free Turkiye” strategy to end the long-standing conflict with the PKK. This process is not only confined to Turkish territory but aims to extend beyond its borders, including Syria. As the SDF delayed steps toward implementing its agreement with Damascus, Turkiye moved closer to considering a new military operation against the SDF. The prospect of such an operation, in turn, pressured Washington to reconsider its SDF policy. Without an operation, Turkiye instead used the threat of military action as a diplomatic tool to pressure the US.

Second, the determination of the Al-Sharaa government also played a significant role. Since the ousting of Bashar Assad, Al-Sharaa has pledged to bring all Syrian territory under the authority of the new government, including areas administered by the SDF. By pursuing the unification of Syria under a single leadership, he emerged as a more favorable partner for the US under President Donald Trump. This development also benefits Syria as it restores territorial unity because single army and administration was the essential

element of post-war state recovery. It addresses not only Syria's stability, but also the security of neighboring countries, particularly Turkiye and Iran, which are concerned over Kurdish separatism.

In the face of firm and converging Turkish and Syrian positions against the SDF, the Trump administration signaled a willingness to move forward in Syria in coordination with Damascus and Ankara. With the shifting US position and Trump's support, Ankara and Damascus emerged as the winning sides of the recent agreement. Trump, having Al-Sharaa and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan as partners in Syria, made it clear that he had no further interest in maintaining a separate role for the SDF in Syria.

In Syria, the US directly instrumentalized and supported the SDF under the pretext of partnership in the fight against Daesh. It provided arms, training, financial support, and even protection. However, the SDF used this backing to establish an autonomous enclave, with separate civilian and military institutions.

—Arab News

Gaza: A step forward or a recycling of the crisis?

DR. ABDELLATIF EL-MENAWY

Once again, Gaza has returned to the center of international debate, not through an announcement of peace but through a proposal for management. Under US President Donald Trump's 20-point peace plan for Gaza, accompanied by strong American messaging and dense organizational language, an old dilemma has resurfaced in a new form: Is the world finally searching for an exit from the Gaza war or merely redesigning the mechanisms used to contain it?

At first glance, the plan, which is now entering its second phase, appears ambitious. It speaks the language of coordination, stability, reconstruction and post-war governance. It suggests international oversight, regional participation and an administrative framework that would, in theory, prevent Gaza from sliding back into chaos once the fighting subsides. Yet beneath this polished surface lies a deeper, unresolved tension — one that has haunted every previous attempt to “solve” Gaza without confronting its political core.

The idea of international or quasi-international management of Gaza is not new. Variations of it have surfaced repeatedly over the past two decades, particularly after each major escalation. What changes are the labels, the actors involved and the institutional architecture. What remains constant is the underlying assumption: that Gaza can be stabilized administratively while its political status remains suspended.

This is precisely where skepticism begins.

The proposed framework appears less like a peace initiative and more like an advanced crisis-management model, designed to control fallout, distribute responsibility and prevent total collapse. It focuses on how Gaza might be governed, rather than why it has repeatedly reached this state. In doing so, it risks treating the symptoms of the conflict while carefully avoiding its causes.

At the heart of Gaza's tragedy is not merely destruction, humanitarian collapse or security breakdown. It is a persistent political vacuum — the absence of a credible, agreed-upon political horizon for Palestinians in Gaza that is connected to the broader Palestinian question.

Any proposal that isolates Gaza from the West Bank or treats it as a standalone administrative problem implicitly reinforces fragmentation. Even if unintentionally, such approaches risk normalizing the idea that Gaza can be governed indefinitely without resolving issues of sovereignty, representation, borders or occupation.

This is why many observers view the latest concept with caution. It may offer order without justice, calm without resolution and stability without legitimacy.

The strong American endorsement of the proposal reflects a growing impatience in Washington. After months of war, humanitarian catastrophe and international pressure, there is a clear desire to move from active conflict to controlled aftermath. From this perspective, the priority is preventing Gaza from becoming an ungovernable space that destabilizes the region.

However, urgency is not the same as strategy.

By emphasizing managerial solutions, the US appears focused on preventing immediate deterioration rather than investing in the difficult, politically costly work of redefining the conflict's parameters. This may be understandable in the short term — but history suggests it is insufficient in the long run.

For regional players, the proposal presents a dilemma. Participation offers influence and a chance to shape outcomes, but it also carries significant risks. Any regional or international body involved in governing Gaza without a clear political mandate could quickly find itself blamed for failures it did not cause and unable to make decisions it does not control.

There is also a deeper concern: Does international management become a substitute for political accountability? If so, Gaza risks becoming a permanent international trusteeship in everything but name — managed, monitored and funded but never truly resolved.

The most troubling aspect of the proposal is the possibility that it represents not a breakthrough but a repackaging of stalemate. By focusing on mechanisms rather than meaning, structures rather than solutions, the international community may once again be choosing the path of least resistance.

This would not be the first time Gaza has been “saved” from collapse only to be returned, months or years later, to the same cycle of destruction. Each iteration becomes more complex, more institutionalized and paradoxically harder to dismantle.

—Arab News



India's Water Politics Turn the Indus Treaty into a Test of International Law



BY:Amna Abbasi
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Pakistan's International Seminar on the Indus Waters Treaty in Islamabad exposed a troubling reality: India's decision to keep the treaty “in abeyance” is being seen in Pakistan not as a routine policy disagreement, but as an unlawful attempt to convert water into a political weapon. The speakers at the seminar argued that the Indus Waters Treaty has no recognized basis in international law or treaty practice. They warned that when a state begins treating shared rivers as leverage, it is not defending security; it is undermining the legal order that keeps conflict from escalating.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said the treaty is still valid, binding, and operative, and cautioned that any attempt to interfere with Pakistan's allocated waters would threaten regional peace and security. His remarks reflected a broader concern in Pakistan: the Indus Basin is not merely a water source, but the backbone of agriculture, livelihoods, hydropower, and food security for millions of people. From Pakistan's perspective, India's posture is not a technical disagreement over river management, but a direct challenge to downstream survival.

Former law minister Ahmer Bilal Soofi made the legal point more sharply. He argued that “abeyance” is not a recognized legal status under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties or international water law. A treaty can be suspended or terminated through lawful procedures, but not through an invented political formula that tries to avoid responsibility while preserving pressure. That distinction matters, because if India's approach is accepted, any state could weaken its treaty obligations whenever it finds compliance inconvenient.

The seminar also brought out a deeper strategic concern: water insecurity is being turned into a tool of coercion. Former foreign minister Hina Rabbani Khar described India's conduct as part of a shift from rule-making to rule-breaking, warning that the move damages not just bilateral relations but the wider credibility of treaty-based cooperation. Former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said the Indus Basin is Pakistan's lifeline and that restricting water flow should be treated as a national security threat, not as an ordinary diplomatic issue. Those arguments reflect a growing consensus in Pakistan that water can no longer be separated from sovereignty and civilian security.

The myth of Africa's ‘leapfrog moment’

HAFED AL-GHWELL

A seductive idea has taken hold in boardrooms, climate summits, and venture capital decks: Africa will vault over the messy stages of development that defined Europe and East Asia. No smokestacks. No sprawling factory towns. No fossil fuels. Just a clean jump into digital services, renewable energy and critical minerals, with smartphones where assembly lines once stood. The story flatters modern sensibilities. It also flatters outside investors who prefer tidy narratives to stubborn facts.

Africa does hold assets the world urgently needs. Lithium, cobalt, manganese, graphite, copper, and rare earths sit beneath its soil. Solar radiation and wind reach levels Europe can only envy. Cities such as Nairobi, Lagos, Kigali, and Accra host young coders, logistics startups, and fintech firms that would look at home in Berlin or Bangalore. Services exports already make up about a quarter of the continent's total exports, and they have grown far faster than goods trade since the mid-2000s. Productivity in tourism, business services, agro-processing, and ICT often exceeds that of traditional farming several times over, with job growth that in some countries rivals or even exceeds manufacturing. Manufacturing itself, by contrast, has hovered around 11 percent of the gross domestic product for more than a decade, less than half

the share seen in East Asia during its takeoff.

Potential is real. The conclusion that Africa can therefore skip the hard work of building factories, power grids, transport networks, and mass employment systems is not. “Leapfrogging” works best when the old system is narrow, self-contained, and easy to replace. Landlines fit that description. Electricity systems, industrial supply chains, and urban labor markets do not. Development is not an app update.

Historically, manufacturing did the heavy lifting because it combined three features that services rarely match at scale; the ability to employ large numbers of moderately educated workers, rapid productivity gains through learning by doing, and strong links to exports that earn foreign currency. East Asia did not grow rich on code alone. It grew rich by moving hundreds of millions from farms into factories, then up the value chain.

Africa's manufacturing share remains low for structural reasons that digital enthusiasm does not erase. Electricity is unreliable or absent for hundreds of millions of people. Transport costs within many countries exceed the cost of shipping to Europe. Ports remain congested. Firms face fragmented markets despite recent progress on continental free trade. None of these obstacles vanish because a country installs fiber-optic cables or launches a fintech incubator.

—Arab News

EU's future may well depend on Marine Le Pen appeal verdict

MOHAMED CHEBARO

With Europe under fire for its lack of support for Ukraine and grappling with the prospect of losing Greenland to President Donald Trump — a shift that could spell the end of NATO — an appeal court in Paris could give the coup de grace to the future of the EU as a bloc, if Marine Le Pen's appeal against a conviction relating to the embezzlement of European Parliament funds by her party succeeds.

It is not only the French far-right fire-brand's political future that hangs in the balance, but also the fate of France's Fifth Republic and that of Europe, too. Either Le Pen or her protégée Jordan Bardella, head of the patriotic French movement National Rally, will run for president of France regardless of the court decision. Right-wing skeptics have been on the rise across the Continent but have so far been kept at bay in major European countries such as France and Germany. But with their numbers growing, Le Pen's legal troubles might not be sufficient to shift the vote away from a populist movement bent on winning the keys to the Elysee Palace. Meanwhile, France's mainstream political parties appear fragmented and in disarray, with none seeming to offer an appealing alternative to National Rally's plan to radically change the country's direction with anti-immigration and US-style “France first” policies and a euroskeptc agenda. Le Pen is seeking to overturn a March ruling that found her guilty of misusing EU funds in the hiring of staff from 2004 to 2016. However, with no new political coalition or movement, the success or failure of the appeal is unlikely to dent her chances or those of her party in winning the presidency 500 days from now.

Recent opinion polls suggest that Le Pen's legal troubles have had little impact on National Rally's fortunes. Instead, the party's appeal has been growing across the board, especially among young and

older voters. A poll by Le Monde showed that 40 percent of respondents believed that National Rally would improve the situation in France when it came to security, reindustrialization, quality of public services, and the cost of living.

Like many populist parties in Europe, Le Pen's National Rally has been benefiting from toxic social media and a narrative of despair directed from the US toward Europe's mainstream parties. A third of voters also said that National Rally is the only party that could do things differently, while not specifying how. Meanwhile, a growing number of voters favor tougher rules for overseas-born residents in relation to housing, welfare, and employment.

For the past 15 years, Le Pen has been trying to bring the far right into the political mainstream in France. Recent geopolitical changes mean there has never been a more favorable time for such a drive, with Europe as a bloc, as well as its democratic liberal values, besieged and under attack. While the past stigma of racism and antisemitism persists, National Rally's disdain of EU as a bloc — a posture that echoes the Make America Great Again stance in the US — resonates with a larger section of voters in France, and indeed the rest of Europe.

The case against Le Pen for misusing EU funds is now a matter for the Paris appeal court, which might clear her after 13 weeks of deliberation or uphold the previous verdict. But whatever the court's finding, Le Pen and Bardella are likely to emerge stronger, appearing to be the victims of a witch hunt, and capable of rallying even more support.

The question facing France and the EU is what Le Pen or Bardella will do with a win — whether they will be able to deliver better living standards and boost economic growth and not just deliver more “patriotic posturing” while worsening the socioeconomic malaise in the country.

—Arab News

NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq Congratulates Abu Bakar Bin Talat-Led New RISJA Body

BY: Hurish Shah

ISLAMABAD--- Has congratulated the newly elected office-bearers of the ,led by .

In his message, the Speaker felicitated Abu Bakar Bin Talat on his

election as President, as Senior Vice President and as General Secretary, along with the other newly elected office-bearers.

Ayaz Sadiq said sports journalists play a vital role in promoting sports and creating positive aware-

ness among youth. He expressed confidence that the new RISJA leadership would uphold professional and ethical journalism while working for the welfare of sports journalists and the promotion of sports in Pakistan.

DC Murree, CNF Director Vow Joint Action to Eliminate Drug Menace

BY: ANI Correspondent:

MURREE--- -Newly appointed Director of the Counter Narcotics Force (CNF), Colonel Murad Ali, called on Deputy Commissioner Murree, Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi, at his office to discuss measures aimed at curbing drug trafficking and strengthening anti-narcotics efforts in the district.

During the meeting, both officials reviewed strategies to combat drug-related crimes, protect the youth from the growing menace of narcotics, enhance coordination among law enforcement agencies, and formulate a joint plan for effective enforcement.

Deputy Commissioner Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi congratulated Colonel Murad Ali on his appointment and expressed his best wishes. He emphasized that eliminating narcotics is the need of the hour and assured the district administration's full support in the fight against drug

trafficking.

Colonel Murad Ali reaffirmed the Counter Narcotics Force's commitment to continuing indiscriminate action against drug traffickers. He also announced that awareness campaigns would be launched in educational institutions and other

sectors to educate young people about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

Both officials pledged to work in close coordination to make Murree a drug-free district and ensure a safer and healthier environment for its residents.



Livestock Department Awards Internship Certificates to Selected Veterinary Graduates in Faisalabad

BY: Special Correspondent:

FAISALABAD--- The Livestock and Dairy Development Department Punjab distributed nomination certificates to selected veterinary graduates and para-veterinary officials under the Punjab Chief Minister Internship Program 2026-27 at a ceremony held at the Civil Veterinary Hospital Faisalabad.

Director Livestock Faisalabad Division Dr. Haider Ali Khan, Additional Director Dr. Rubina Anjum and Deputy Director Dr. Sohail Ahmad Anjum said the internship program would equip young professionals with practical skills, enhance their professional capacity and create better employment opportunities while strengthening veterinary services across Punjab.



University of Balochistan Holds Startup Challenge Cup, Honors Winning Startups



BY: Special Correspondent:

CHAMAN--- The Business Incubation Center (BIC) at the University of Balochistan organized the Startup Challenge Cup Seed Grant Competition along with the graduation ceremony of Business Incubation Program Cohort-I (August 2025-June 2026).

Startups presented their busi-

ness plans before a jury comprising representatives from BankIslami, TDAP, the Women Chamber of Commerce, the Artisans Association of Pakistan, and the university. Chief Guest Prof. Dr. Syed Muzammil Bukhari congratulated the graduating startups and encouraged them to expand their businesses and generate employment.

Appreciation shields and graduation certificates were distributed to jury members, mentors, volunteers, and participating startups. In the Seed Grant Competition, Rizen Bliss secured first place, Montoly Toks finished second, and Zarlix claimed third. The winners received seed grants of Rs. 200,000, Rs. 160,000, and Rs. 140,000, respectively, along with Gold, Silver, and Bronze trophies.

Pakistan Tannery Association Hosts Luncheon in Honour of Bahria University Rector



BY: ANI Correspondent:

KARACHI--- Dr. Danish Aman hosted a luncheon in honour of Vice Admiral Abid Hameed at Hafiz Tannery, bringing together business leaders, educationists, sponsors, and donors to strengthen collaboration between academia and industry.

The luncheon also recognized the generous contributions of sponsors,

well-wishers, and donors supporting deserving and talented students admitted to Bahria University who face financial challenges in paying their tuition fees.

Participants discussed ways to enhance academia-industry collaboration, promote skill development and innovation, and build stronger partnerships to support Pakistan's industrial and economic growth.

The event provided an opportunity for networking and the exchange of ideas aimed at future cooperation between the business and education sectors.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Zahid Hameed presented an Ayat-ul-Kursi frame to Rector Vice Admiral Abid Hameed as a token of appreciation for his services and commitment to higher education.

FGEHA Cancels 13 More Plots in F-14, F-15 as Crackdown on Defaulters Continues



BY: Hurish Shah:

ISLAMABAD--- The Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) has intensified its drive against defaulters by cancelling the allotments of 13 additional plots in Sectors F-14 and F-15, reaffirming its commitment to ensuring the timely completion of the housing project.

Working under the leadership of Federal Minister for Housing and Works Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Secretary Housing and Works Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Mahmood, and Director General FGEHA Captain (Retd.) Zafar Iqbal, the Authority is accelerating development work to transform the two sectors into modern, environmentally friendly residential communities. Regular meetings, field visits

and administrative measures are being undertaken to expedite development, address allottees' concerns and ensure the provision of basic civic amenities.

According to the Authority, the latest action follows the earlier cancellation of six plots belonging to defaulters who had failed to clear their dues since 2016. Acting on the recommendations of a special committee constituted by the Executive Board, FGEHA has now cancelled the allotments of 13 more allottees who did not pay their outstanding installments despite repeated notices. The Authority said the decision was taken in accordance with the law and on the principles of transparency and merit to remove financial hurdles affecting the project's progress.

FGEHA has warned that scru-

tiny of allotment records is still underway and that allottees who continue to default on their payments despite multiple opportunities will face cancellation of their allotments without any further grace period. Legal action will also be initiated against persistent defaulters in accordance with the relevant rules.

The Authority reiterated that the timely completion of Sectors F-14 and F-15 and the early handing over of plots to genuine allottees remain its top priorities. It also thanked those allottees who paid their outstanding installments on time, stating that their cooperation has helped maintain the pace of development. FGEHA reaffirmed its resolve to uphold transparency, merit and public interest while completing the project at the earliest.

Punjab Police Deport Over 35,700 Illegal Foreign Nationals



BY: ANI Correspondent, :

GUJRANWALA-- 'Punjab Police have deported 35,719 foreign nationals, including Afghan nationals residing illegally across the province, as part of the ongoing repatriation drive being carried out under the government's policy.

According to a Punjab Police spokesperson, the repatriation process is continuing across the province, including Lahore, while 72 illegally residing foreign nationals are

currently being held at designated holding points before their deportation.

The spokesperson said those repatriated include more than 14,000 men, 7138 women and 14,529 children. Among them, 11,047 possessed Proof of Residence (PoR) documents, 11,135 were Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders, while 13,537 were foreign nationals residing illegally without valid documentation.

Inspector General of Police Punjab

Abdul Kareem said security remains on high alert across the province and that Punjab Police is ensuring the repatriation of all illegally residing foreign nationals. He added that the repatriation process is being carried out in accordance with the government's policy and relevant international laws.

The Punjab Police reiterated its commitment to maintaining law and order while ensuring the repatriation process is conducted in a lawful and orderly manner.

PPP Suffers Major Political Setback as Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Resigns

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- Former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas, has resigned from the basic membership of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) following differences over the allocation of party tickets for the upcoming AJK elections. He has submitted his resignation to PPP Chairman .

According to sources, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas had applied for party tickets from the Central Bagh, Pachtot and Neelum constituencies. However, differences over the allocation of tickets for Central Bagh and Pachtot remained unresolved despite efforts by the party's central leadership, the Governors of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Chaudhry Riaz and other senior leaders to broker a compromise.

Former AJK minister Ali Shan Soni has also resigned from the party's basic membership. Sources said Sardar Tanveer Ilyas is expected to announce his future political course soon, including whether he will join

another political party or contest the elections as an independent while leading his own political group.

His spokesperson has confirmed his resignation from the Pakistan Peoples Party



Close Political Associates of Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Also Resign from PPP

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD---Former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan's close political associates--former Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Sardar Imtiaz Khan, former Kashmir Council Member Sardar Adnan Sayab Khalid, and Political Adviser Sardar Iftikhar Rashid--have also resigned from the basic membership of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

According to sources, the three leaders submitted their resignations

in view of the prevailing political situation and party policies. Their departure is being seen as a significant political development that may lead to further realignments in Azad

Kashmir's political landscape. However, none of the leaders has yet made a formal announcement regarding their future political plans.



CCD Rescues 178 Missing, Kidnapped Children in One Year

BY: Special Reporter ANI;

LAHORE--- Under the supervision of CCD Anti-Kidnapping for Ransom Cell Lahore In-charge Sohail Zafar Chattha, the Crime Control Department (CCD) has rescued 178 kidnapped, missing and runaway children during the last year and safely reunited them with their families.

According to the department's one-year performance report, the children were recovered from various locations in Lahore, including Data Darbar, the Railway Station and major bus terminals. The rescued children belonged to

legal action was taken against them. The Anti-Kidnapping for Ransom Cell carried out the operations in coordination with the Edhi Foundation, the Child Protection Bureau and other relevant agencies. The CCD urged the public to report serious crimes against children, including kidnapping, trafficking, sexual exploitation, harassment and forced labour, assuring that strict action would be taken against those involved.

The department said that under the vision of the Punjab government, child abuse, exploitation and child labour remain a zero-tolerance priority.

