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Trump threatens to bomb Oman if it gets in way of Iran deal: Report



ANI

US President Donald Trump on Monday threatened to bomb Oman if it "gets in the way" of a deal with Iran on the Strait of Hormuz and called for Iran to surrender.

"If Oman gets in the way, we'll bomb the s*** out of them," Trump told Fox News correspondent Trey Yingst, referring to ongoing talks between Oman and Iran on control of the strait, while Washington is also pursuing its own talks.

Iranian and Omani officials have been talking for weeks on future maritime navigation

arrangements through the shipping route, and the foreign ministry in Tehran said earlier on Monday that the two sides were working on a joint declaration.

However, Trump has repeatedly insisted that the strait — which Tehran effectively closed at the start of the Middle East war on February 28 — is under US control despite traffic remaining throttled.

On Friday, Trump claimed that he would even declare the Strait of Hormuz part of US territory, while Iran retorted that the crucial energy waterway it has blockaded "will remain Iranian".

Prior to the launch of the US-Israeli war against Iran, the strait was considered an open, international waterway. It carries significant portions of global energy shipments, as well as other commodities. Tehran has used its effective seizing of control over the strait as leverage against the US-led attempts to destroy its military and force it to abandon its nuclear power programme.

Iran's coast flanks the north side of the Hormuz, and Oman lies on the south.

Trump also said that Iran should "put up the white flag of surrender," according to Yingst's

post on X on his interview with the president.

Trump insisted that he was in no hurry to reach a deal despite the deep unpopularity of the war among Americans ahead of November midterm elections in the United States, with opposition Democrats seeking to take control of Congress from Trump's Republicans.

Trump told Yingst that there is a direct back-channel between his administration and officials of Iran's Revolutionary Guard. "They're good poker players, but they're dying," he was quoted as saying.

PM seeks urgent completion of Islamabad Technology Park



ANI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has expressed anger over the delay in completing the Islamabad Technology Park and directed authorities to accelerate construction and make the facility operational on a priority basis.

The prime minister chaired a review meeting on ongoing reforms at the National Information Technology Board (NITB) and progress on the construction of the technology park.

The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahad Cheema, Mosaddiq Masood Malik and Shaza Fatima Khawaja, along with senior officials from relevant institutions.

Shehbaz directed the NITB to focus on providing citizens with modern, efficient and accessible digital services.

He said all relevant institutions should work together to ensure government services are delivered in a timely, transparent and convenient manner.

The prime minister said facilitating citizens in accessing government services remained a key government priority and directed authorities to improve digital platforms according to current technological requirements.

He described the transition of federal ministries to e-office as one of the most important reforms undertaken under the government's IT and digitalisation agenda.

The prime minister directed authorities to ensure the use of e-office across all subordinate federal government departments and government-owned institutions.

He also ordered officials to accelerate the digitisation of government institutions and make greater use of modern technology.

Islamabad Technology Park to be outsourced

Shehbaz also directed authorities to complete the digitisation of government property records at the earliest.

Expressing dissatisfaction over the delay in completing Islamabad Technology Park, he ordered the relevant authorities to expedite construction and activate the facility as soon as possible.

The prime minister further directed that operations of Islamabad Technology Park be completely outsourced.

NITB rightsizing completed

Officials briefed the meeting that the rightsizing process of the NITB had been completed and appointments to key positions were being made through a transparent process. The meeting was also informed that all federal ministries had migrated to the e-office system, while efforts were underway to extend the system to other departments and government-owned institutions.

Officials also briefed the prime minister on the latest progress in the construction of Islamabad Technology Park.

No restriction on PTI founder's son travelling to Pakistan: Talal

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior, Talal Chaudhry on Monday told the Senate that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and Bushra Bibi had been facilitated with 84 meetings during their incarceration, while there was no restriction on the PTI founder's sons travelling to Pakistan as both possessed valid National Identity Cards for Overseas Pakistanis (NICOPs).

Responding to a point raised by Senator Mashal Azam, the minister said meetings with prisoners were governed by the jail manual, relevant laws and court orders and could not be conducted outside the prescribed legal framework.

He said a three-member bench of the Supreme Court was scheduled to take up a petition concerning the PTI founder's meetings and medical treatment, adding that the Adiala Jail authorities had submitted a detailed report before the apex court.

The report, he said, contained comprehensive information about the PTI founder's health, meetings, living conditions and medical facilities being provided to him.

Citing the report, Talal Chaudhry said the PTI founder and Bushra Bibi had been provided meetings on 84 occasions.

He said the PTI founder's conditions in jail and medical care had also previously come under consideration before the Supreme Court, which had nominated a person to visit the prison and examine the situation. The nominated person subsequently visited the jail and submitted a report, following which the Supreme Court expressed satisfaction over the findings, he



added. The minister said there was a distinction between dealing with the matter in accordance with law and turning it into a political agenda. He accused PTI of repeatedly spreading rumours about the PTI founder's health and safety and attempting to generate political sympathy around his incarceration. Referring to claims concerning the PTI founder's sons, the minister categorically said there was no restriction preventing them from coming to Pakistan.

He said nearly three years had passed but they had not travelled to Pakistan to meet their father despite visiting other countries during this period.

The minister also reiterated the government's willingness to engage the opposition politically, saying the committee constituted by the prime minister for negotiations remained available and the Speaker's office could facilitate the process.

He urged the opposition to return to political dialogue rather than seek solutions through agitation, saying political differences should be addressed through Parliament and negotiations.

PML-N Wins 25 AJK Seats, Eyes Two-Thirds Majority

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) (PML-N) has announced that it would form the next government in Azad Jammu and Kashmir after securing the highest number of seats in the recently completed election process. Addressing a press conference, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah said PML-N candidates had already won 25 seats and expect their total strength to reach around 33 seats after the allocation of special seats, bringing the party close to a two-thirds majority in the 53-member legislative assembly.

He said the three phases of the election had been completed and voters have given PML-N a mandate to lead the region. According to party estimates, 36 seats were required for a two-thirds majority in the



full house. He expressed confidence that upcoming elections on seven remaining seats could help the party achieve that target. He said elections could not be held earlier on six seats because of the security situ-

ation, while voting on one seat was postponed following the death of a candidate and would now take place through a by-election. PML-N leader linked the election outcome to their campaign message of development and public services. He said party leader Nawaz Sharif had appealed directly to voters in Muzaffarabad and Mirpur, asking them to support PML-N for the future progress of Azad Kashmir and to strengthen its relationship with the federal government. During the campaign, the party also highlighted projects and public initiatives carried out by the Punjab government under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. Leaders said they wanted to implement similar development programs in Azad Kashmir and claimed the election result reflected public support for that vision.

SC Upholds Death Sentence for Ex-Wife's Murder

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has ruled that a woman's decision to dissolve her marriage through lawful judicial procedure is her legal right and that violence against her for exercising this right is contrary to the spirit of the constitutional order.

The court upheld the death sentence of a man who killed his former wife just two days after she obtained a judicial decree dissolving their marriage, and dismissed his jail petition. A three-member bench headed by Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar, comprising Justice Salahuddin Panhwar and Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim, announced its judgment in Jail Petition No. 617/2025. In its detailed judgment, the court observed that convict Waseem Abbas had murdered his former wife, Shehnaz Bibi, in an extremely brutal and premeditated manner. She had filed a suit for dissolution of marriage against him, and the Family Court passed an ex-parte decree in her favour on October 9, 2020.

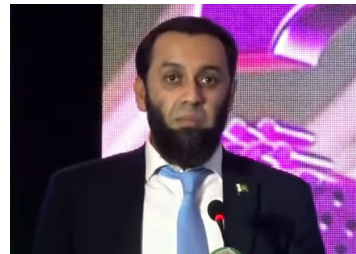
Two days later, on October 11, the convict, along with his accomplices, entered her parents' house and shot her dead.

Govt believes in technology integration with financial services for cashless economy: Tarar

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday reiterated the government's commitment for integration of technology and financial services to promote financial inclusion, ensure transparency, and eventually establish a cashless economy.

Addressing the launching ceremony of Z-Wallet, the minister highlighted the government's vision to provide citizens with accessible, convenient, and integrated financial ser-



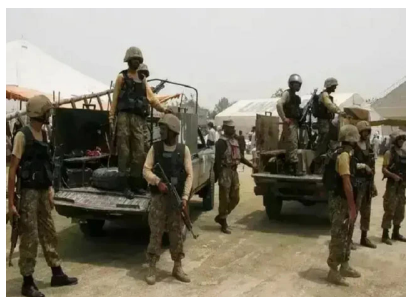
vices driven by modern technology. He said the launch of initiative with a collaboration between Zindagi, Zong, and JS Bank is a reflection the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif who is leading every way of the step going towards technological integration and cashless economy. The prime minister has also constituted a high-powered committee on cashless economy, which he chaired by himself, he added. The minister recalled the launch of first IT board in Punjab during the tenure of PM Shehbaz as Chief Minister of Punjab. The Punjab IT board was the first public organization based on technology. He said the first video conferencing services in the public sector was also introduced by PM Shehbaz Sharif who, during his tenure as CM Punjab.

Six terrorists killed in separate IBOs in Balochistan

ANI

RAWALPINDI: Six terrorists were killed in two separate intelligence-based operations in Balochistan on Monday, with four killed in an operation in the border area between Ziarat and Harnai and two others in Killi Zaik, according to security sources. In the latest operation, security forces acted on intelligence regarding the presence of terrorists in a mountainous area between Ziarat and Harnai. During surveillance, the presence of three to four terrorists was confirmed inside an abandoned house, security sources said. After confirming their presence, security forces surrounded the hideout and effectively targeted it, killing four terrorists. A search and sanitisation operation was underway in the area, while security forces continued operations against terrorist elements, the sources said. In a separate operation earlier on Monday (today), two terrorists were killed and three others injured in an intelligence-based operation in Balochistan's Killi Zaik area, state-run Radio Pakistan reported citing security sources. The operation was carried out after security forces received information



about the presence of terrorists between Killi Zaik and Kaghli, around 12km north of Baseema Camp, the sources said. The federal government last year officially designated all terrorist groups operating in Balochistan as 'Fitna al-Hindustan', accusing India of sponsoring a proxy war through these outfits. Fitna al-Khawarij is the state-designated term for the banned outfit Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The high-tempo intelligence-driven operations were conducted as part of the ongoing "Radd-ul-Fitna-3" campaign, which the military's media wing has described as a counterterrorism operation aimed at eliminating Indian proxies.



Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Program Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

Pir Muhammad Amin-ul-Hasnat Shah calls on Chairman Senate

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Former Minister of State for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Pir Muhammad Amin-ul-Hasnat Shah, called on Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani at his residence on Monday. The meeting provided an opportunity for an in-depth exchange of views on the overall political, social and religious situation in the country, with particular focus on promoting interfaith harmony, tolerance and social cohesion.

Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani underscored the vital importance of interfaith harmony, mutual respect and tolerance in promoting peace, brotherhood and unity in society. He said that fostering understanding and harmony among followers of different faiths and



schools of thought was essential for ensuring peace, stability and national cohesion, as well as for creating an environment conducive to economic development and prosperity. The Chairman

Senate paid tribute to Pir Muhammad Amin-ul-Hasnat Shah for his valuable political, social and religious services. He said that Pir Amin-ul-Hasnat had rendered significant services for the wel-

fare of the people and played an effective role in promoting religious harmony, tolerance and social cohesion. His contributions, he added, would always be remembered and held in high esteem.

Pir Muhammad Amin-ul-Hasnat Shah also highly appreciated the political, social, democratic and religious services of Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani. He said that Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani had made valuable contributions to the promotion of democracy, constitutional values and the development of the country, which would always be remembered with respect and appreciation.

The two leaders also emphasized the need for continued collective efforts to promote peace, stability, interfaith harmony, tolerance and national unity in the country.

Governor Kundi urges early start of Chashma Lift Canal project

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday stressed the need for the early execution of the Chashma Lift Canal Project, describing it as a long-standing demand of the people of the province and a project of national importance for Pakistan's agricultural and economic development.

The Governor expressed these views during a meeting with Federal Secretary for Climate Change and Water Resources, Owais Manzoor Sumra and Additional Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Mehr Ali Shah.

The meeting discussed the Chashma Lift Canal Project, other ongoing water sector initiatives and water-related issues facing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Governor Kundi said the Chashma Lift Canal Project should be launched without further delay, adding that its completion would not only benefit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but also contribute significantly to the country's agricultural growth and economic prosperity. The participants also exchanged views on the Kachi Canal Project and reviewed proposals aimed at the efficient use of water resources, water conservation and addressing future water challenges. The Governor announced that an important event on the Indus Waters would be organised at the Governor House in Peshawar, where experts, representatives of relevant institutions and other stakeholders would be invited to deliberate on water-related issues and explore sustainable solutions. The meeting agreed that ensuring the efficient and equitable utilisation of the country's water resources was essential for national development and the long-term stability of the agricultural sector.

No unjustified challans to be issued by Motorway Police: Aleem Khan

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Monday assured goods transporters that no unjustified challans would be issued by the Motorway Police, while stressing strict compliance with axle-load, speed and other prescribed traffic regulations.

Addressing a reception hosted by the All Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance in his honour following the successful conclusion of negotiations between the government and transporters, the Federal Minister said all commitments made to the transporters would be fulfilled at all costs, said a press release.

No unjustified challans to be issued by Motorway Police: Aleem Khan

The transporters accorded a warm welcome to Abdul Aleem Khan upon his arrival at the reception, showering flower petals and chanting slogans in his support. President of the Goods Transporters Alliance Malik Shehzad Awan presented him a traditional Sindhi Ajrak and thanked the government for accepting their demands. Addressing the reception, Federal Minister for Communications

Abdul Aleem Khan said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had assigned him the special task of chairing the Committee constituted to resolve the transporters' issues which had successfully completed its mandate. Abdul Aleem Khan appreciated the sincerity and sense of responsibility demonstrated by the leadership of the Goods Transporters Alliance. He said that negotiations continued for 9 days, with the two sides holding discussions for several hours each day and ultimately reaching a successful agreement. He termed the successful negotiations a highly commendable development.

Federal Minister for Communications said that transporters play a vital role in the national economy and that their cooperation is essential for the country's development. Abdul Aleem Khan assured the transporters that not a single unjustified challan would be allowed by the Motorway Police. He said that if a vehicle was not vio-



lating any traffic rules, there was no question of issuing a challan.

He added that compliance with prescribed limits regarding vehicle weight, speed and other regulations would be ensured at all costs. He urged transporters to strictly comply with the axle-load policy, saying that adherence to the prescribed limits was in their own interest.

Loading vehicles beyond the permissible weight not only damages the vehicles but also causes serious loss to roads.

He said it was the Government's responsibility to take decisions in the best interest

of the country and ensure their effective implementation. Abdul Aleem Khan said that, if necessary, he would personally stand on the roads and review the problems being faced by transporters. He added that the Secretary Communications, Chairman NHA and Inspector General of Motorways Police had already been directed to visit highways and assess transporters' problems on the spot so that appropriate solutions could be identified.

Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan further said that complaints regarding weigh stations on highways would be addressed immediately while arrangements were also being made for the issuance of driving licences to drivers through the Motorway Police. He said important policies had been formulated to transform the Motorway Police and the National Highway Authority into more public-friendly institutions.

On the occasion, President of the Goods Transporters Alliance Malik Shehzad Awan thanked the Government, particularly Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan for taking a personal interest in resolving the transporters' problems.

Pakistan can learn from Indonesia's zero-terrorist attack milestone: Expert

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan can draw valuable lessons from Indonesia's experience in countering violent extremism, particularly its whole-of-society approach that has helped the country maintain a sustained period without terrorist attacks, an Indonesian counter-extremism expert said on Monday. Dr. Noor Huda Ismail, Visiting Fellow at RSIS Singapore and founder of the Institute for International Peace Building, Indonesia, made the remarks while delivering a distinguished lecture organized by the Consortium for Asia Pacific and Eurasian Studies (CAPES), said a press release. Dr. Ismail emphasized that Pakistan and Indonesia have lived through different versions of the same challenge of extremism in society despite the prevalence of traditional religious education, young and highly connected populations, and direct experience of terrorism. He noted that Indonesia's counter-extremism journey gradually adopted a whole-of-society approach in four steps: counterterrorism, deradicalization, prevention, and community resilience.

Annual Bari Imam Urs underway; ADCG reviews security, parking, food facilities for visitors

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The annual Urs of Bari Imam is continuing in the federal capital, with the district administration overseeing arrangements for visitors arriving at the shrine. During a visit to the site, Additional Deputy Commissioner General (ADCG), Sahibzada Yousaf reviewed security measures, food services, parking facilities, lighting and other arrangements to ensure smooth management of the event. According to the district administration, organized facilities have been put in place at the Bari Imam shrine to facilitate visitors attending the annual Urs. Yousaf visited the shrine and inspected various areas to assess the arrangements being provided.

During the visit, he reviewed security measures and examined the procedures in place for visitors entering and leaving the shrine premises. He inspected the entry and exit gates and checked the screening

process being carried out for visitors. The ADC General also visited the langar khana, where free meals were being provided to visitors. He reviewed the food distribution process and checked the quality of the meals being served during the Urs. Special attention was given to facilities available for visitors during evening hours. Sahibzada Yousaf reviewed lighting arrangements around the shrine and examined seating areas established for people attending the gathering. Officials briefed him on measures taken to manage crowds and maintain visitor movement within the premises.

The inspection also included a review of parking facilities established for visitors. The ADCG directed officials to ensure that parking areas remained properly managed to avoid inconvenience for people arriving at the shrine. He also inspected washroom facilities and instructed the concerned authorities to maintain cleanliness standards throughout the event.

Railways upgrades running rooms for guards, loco pilots in Khanewal

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi has taken another major step towards improving facilities for Pakistan Railways' frontline staff with the successful completion of the upgradation of the guards running room and loco pilots running room in Khanewal.

Following the successful upgradation of the running rooms in Rawalpindi, the facilities in Khanewal have also been comprehensively renovated and upgraded on modern lines, said a news release.

The development marks the first comprehensive modernization and uplift of running rooms in the 79-year history of Pakistan Railways, providing guards and loco pilots with modern, comfortable and improved facilities. The initiative has been undertaken with the special attention of Hanif Abbasi, who has made the welfare and better working conditions of railway guards and loco pilots a priority.

ISSI-PAIDAR marks Morocco's Enthronement Day, underscores strong bilateral ties

ANI

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with Pakistan Africa Institute for Development and Research (PAIDAR), on Monday organized an event to commemorate Morocco's Enthronement Day.

The Chief Guest on the occasion was Mohamed Karmoun, Ambassador of Morocco to Pakistan, and the Guest of Honor was Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan, Additional Foreign Secretary (Africa), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, President PAIDAR; Syed Adil Gillani, Ambassador of Pakistan to Morocco; Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman, BoG, ISSI; Ambassador Moin Ul Haque, Director General ISSI; and Dr. Amina Khan; Director, CAMEA also spoke on the occasion, said a press release.

In his welcoming remarks, Ambassador Moin ul Haque highlighted the rich history and long-standing friendship between Pakistan and Morocco. He also acknowledged Morocco's rich civilizational heritage and its remarkable transformation and modernization under the visionary leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI.

Ambassador Mohamed Karmoun highlighted Morocco's remarkable economic and social progress under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, particularly in



industry, tourism, renewable energy, and investment. He also underscored the historic and brotherly Morocco-Pakistan relationship, built on more than seven decades of mutual respect, trust, and cooperation. He noted the growing political and institutional engagement between the two countries, including high-level exchanges and coordination at international forums, and reaffirmed Morocco's commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation and advancing shared development goals. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed highlighted the historic and enduring bonds between Pakistan and Morocco, recalling Pakistan's support for Morocco's independence struggle and Morocco's pivotal role in the establishment of the OIC. He also praised Morocco's rich history, cultural heritage and renowned hospitality, reaffirming the strong and

lasting friendship between Pakistan and Morocco.

Ambassador Syed Adil Gillani highlighted the historic and brotherly Pakistan-Morocco relationship, noting the growing momentum in bilateral ties through high-level exchanges in 2026 and expanding cooperation in trade, agriculture, investment, education, security, and tourism. He emphasized Morocco's important regional and African role and its significance for Pakistan's 'Engage Africa' policy, while underscoring close coordination between the two countries at multilateral forums. Ambassador Hamid Asghar highlighted Morocco's successes in peace and security, tourism, FDI and infrastructure, especially highlighting the success of its tourism sector with 18 million tourist arrivals and \$14 billion tourism revenue last year.

Kayani reaffirms government's commitment to cashless economy

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Railways and Finance, Bilal Azhar Kayani on Monday reaffirmed the government's commitment to advancing a cashless economy and accelerating digital financial inclusion across the country. He expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of JS Bank that called on him to discuss key strategies for expanding digital financial services and supporting the national vision for a digitally

empowered economy, according to a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance. The delegation was led by Basir Shamsie, President and Chief Executive Officer JS Bank, and included Noman Azhar, Chief Officer of ZINDIGI - JS Bank, and Atif Ishaque, Chief Business Officer of ZINDIGI - JS Bank. During the meeting, the delegation commended the government's ongoing policy efforts and initiatives aimed at promoting cashless business models and driving formal financial adoption across sectors.

Pakistan leads on gender responsive budgeting though ranks last on gender gap index: Experts

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has made significant strides in Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) though it ranks last on gender parity globally, said experts at a session, which examined the country's fiscal gender gaps, policy framework and implementation bottlenecks.

The session, organized by the Gender Working Group, was held at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here, said a press release.

In her keynote speech, Dr Fareeha Armughan, co-chair of the Gender Working Group and Head of Center for Evidence Action Research, SDPI said Pakistan is ahead of its time on gender responsive budgeting and, despite persistent stereotypes, is outperforming several Western countries in this area. She highlighted the contradiction at the heart of Pakistan's position, i.e. women comprise 49.3 per cent of the population, yet the country



ranked 148th out of 148 on the Global Gender Gap Index 2025. Pakistan has achieved 56.7 per cent parity across economic, educational, health and political indicators, she said. She clarified that GRB is not a segregated budget for women but is built on three pillars such as gender analysis, responsive allocation and accountability and includes women's participation in budget consultations. The approach draws legal backing from Articles 25, 34 and 37-A of the

Constitution, alongside Pakistan's national and international commitments on gender equality, she said.

Dr. Armughan identified six thematic pillars of GRB: gender-based violence, women's economic empowerment, social protection, climate change, social services and policy design, anchored by the National Gender Policy Framework 2022. Institutional oversight includes a parliamentary caucus of women legislators and a parliamentary standing committee.

PM's dialogue offer to opposition still stands: Tariq Fazal

ANI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Monday informed the Senate that the government was ready for dialogue with the opposition, saying Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's offer for talks still stood and had not expired.

Responding to a point of order raised by Senator Mohsin Aziz, the minister said dialogue within Parliament remained the only viable way to resolve political differences and move the democratic system forward. He recalled that during this year's budget session, the prime minister had personally approached the Leader of the Opposition and proposed that the government and opposition should sit together and discuss their differences. Following the prime minister's initiative, he said, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political and



Public Affairs, Rana Sanaullah Khan, the government's parliamentary leadership and he himself had visited the opposition leader's chamber to take the process forward. Tariq Fazal said discussions were held over identifying a mutually acceptable venue where the prime minister, his team and representatives of the opposition could meet. He said the government had offered a venue in Parliament and also conveyed to the opposition

that it could suggest any place of its choice within the Parliament House.

The minister said there was no precondition or pre-determined agenda for the proposed talks. He urged the opposition to develop consensus within its own ranks, nominate its representatives and decide a time and venue so that the dialogue could proceed. He said previous protests in the federal capital had created difficulties for residents and disrupted normal life. While acknowledging the opposition's constitutional right to peaceful protest, he said exercise of that right should not infringe upon the constitutional rights of other citizens.

Residents of the capital, he said, also had the right to travel freely to schools, colleges, hospitals, workplaces and businesses without facing blockades and disruption.

Dr Tariq Fazal urged the opposition to adopt a clear course, saying if it wanted dialogue, the government remained ready to engage.

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Opinion

3

Two years of sheer hell, and it is not finished

YOSSI MEKELBERG

At last, negotiators in Sharm El-Sheikh have agreed an end to this period of the most horrific bloodshed in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since 1948. Albeit it will only be a long haul toward a return to normality. Yet aside from indulging in some cautious optimism, it is perhaps also time for some initial reflection within both societies. How did they get into such a catastrophic nightmare? Benjamin Netanyahu's recent triumphalist speeches and statements, often utterly contradictory, are the legacy of his long, much too long, time as Israeli prime minister. It is a legacy that will take years to overcome and rectify, not only for the Palestinians and others in the region, but also for Israel and its own people. Netanyahu's premiership is not over yet but is nearing its end; it is just a matter of time, and how much more damage he is prepared to inflict on everything and everyone within his orbit, until he exits the political stage for good. If anything should have hastened the end of his career, it was the utter failure to anticipate and prevent the Hamas-led attack on Oct. 7,

2023, and his reported paralysis for the first few days that followed it as he realized that the greatest security failure in Israel's history had taken place on his watch. But neither he nor his lieutenants in this worst-ever government in Israeli history have been of a mind even to acknowledge their colossal failure, never mind apologize for it, do the decent thing by resigning, and subject themselves to the judgment of the people by calling a general election and establishing an independent inquiry into Oct. 7. At no previous point in Israel's history has the nation been so internally divided and so internationally isolated, as it stands accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity. It will take more than a single general election to rectify the damage caused by the increasingly reckless actions of this sixth Netanyahu government. It began its term in office by legitimizing the most abhorrent elements in Israeli politics, the ultranationalist-messianic groupings, resulting in an unabated attack on the very foundations of Israel's democracy. Moreover, to appease the settler elements in his government, the prime minister allowed settlements to expand and

settler violence to run rampant with impunity. This government has left Israeli society divided, battling not external enemies but those who are trying to destroy the soul of the country from within. It has also delivered to Israel's enemies a message of weakness, mixed with no hope for ending the occupation of Palestinian land, which proved to be a lethal combination. The events of Oct. 7 were horrific and inexcusable but they cannot justify, in any shape or form, Israel's appalling response. Great leaders bring out the best in their societies and make them better places to live. Populist leaders of Netanyahu's breed exploit the weaknesses, fears, and prejudice among their own people to create the worst possible version of their societies, thereby allowing them to control the narrative even as, in the case of the Israeli prime minister, the narrative keeps changing to suit personal needs. Unsurprisingly, the attack by Hamas traumatized Israelis, and some kind of response to it was inevitable and justified. But nothing can justify the nature of a response that has left more than 67,000 people dead, most of them

civilians and many of them children, and a territory of scorched earth, razed to the ground. The war in Gaza has raged for two years, not out of any strategic considerations but to ensure Netanyahu's political survival and prevent his corruption trial from concluding. In pursuit of this goal he has been prepared to prolong the war indefinitely, sacrificing the hostages and his soldiers, and ensuring that the self-proclaimed notion of the Israeli military the "most moral army in the world" rings more hollow than ever. This has all been said many times before, but when the war comes to an end, the question for Israelis will be how they will climb out of the deep, dark abyss. There is no magic formula for this, but part of the necessary soul searching must be to admit that there are trends within Israeli society that have weakened it as a liberal democracy, and that there has always been a tension, though not one that could not be resolved, between the concepts of being Jewish and being democratic. The occupation of Palestinian land and depriving its people of their political and human rights has not yet eroded the idea of

what Israel aspires to be. But the occupation and the daily oppression of Palestinians has led to the country being held captive by a small group of settlers: messianic, delusional extremists with autocratic tendencies who believe the answer to all security challenges lies in the use of force and force alone. The resultant conditions of constant insecurity have been exploited by a populist-opportunistic leader who has presented himself as a savior. As an initial part of the healing and reflection process, a state inquiry into the failures of Oct. 7 must be established. It must have the power to investigate all aspects of the events leading up to that disastrous day, and everything that followed, including all ministerial decisions. It must not tolerate any cover ups. Only when this groundwork allows the truth to emerge can Israel also begin to start asking itself how it allowed a government of extremists and incompetents to lead it into a war that was more about revenge and the political survival of a ruling coalition, than ensuring the failures of Oct. 7 can never happen again.

—Arab News

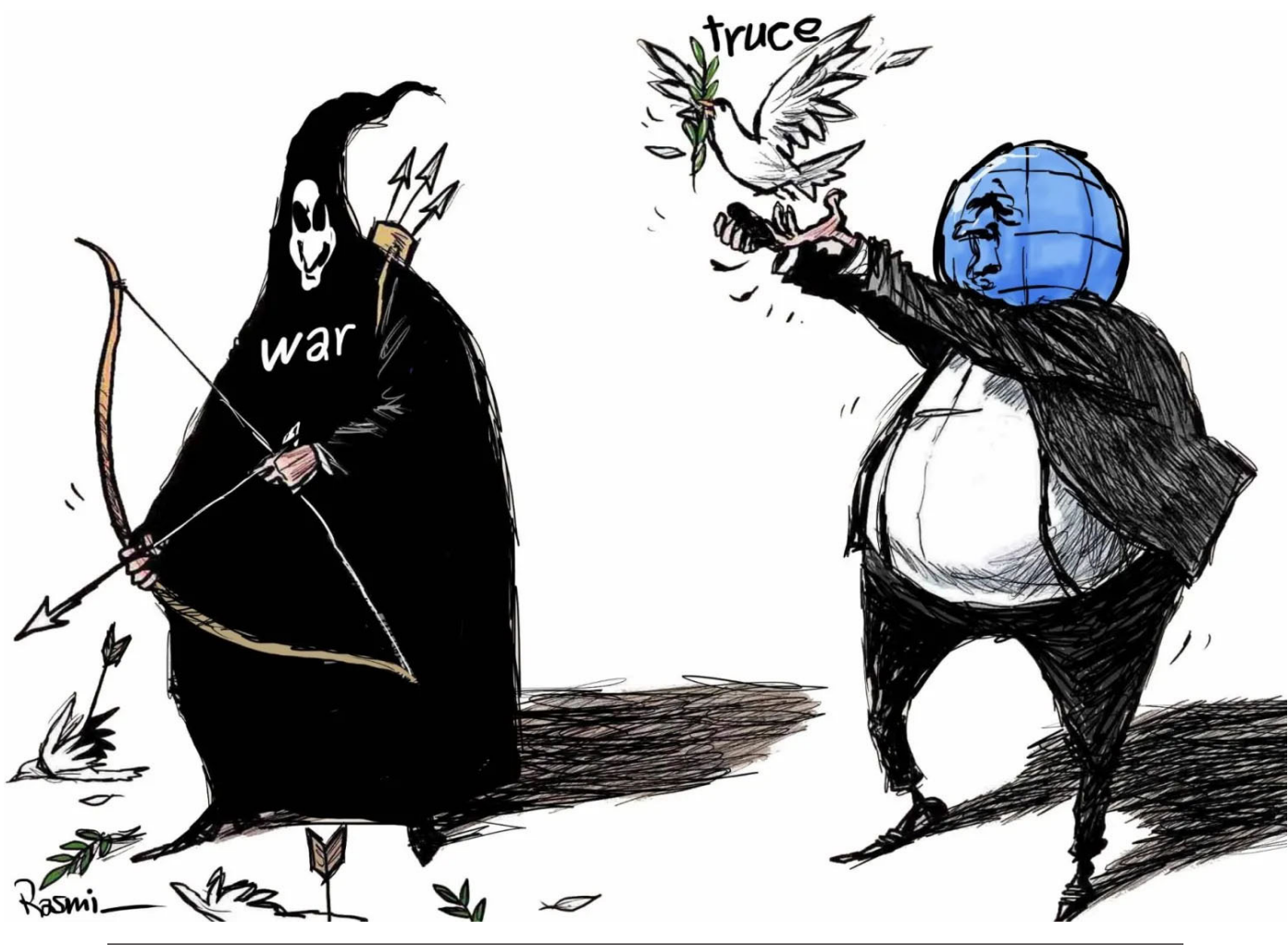
What if Israel breaks the ceasefire?

DR. DANIA KOLEILAT KHATIB

Israel and Hamas agreed to a ceasefire during talks with American, Turkish, Qatari, and Egyptian mediators. The first phase involves Israel stopping the bombing and withdrawing from Gaza to an agreed line. Hamas, in turn, will return all hostages within 72 hours of the agreement. The question we must ask ourselves now is what prevents Israel from resuming its bombing campaign once the hostages are returned? And what can Arab and Islamic countries do to prevent such a scenario, which some might say is probable? From the Hamas point of view, the hostages are the only card the group holds that provides leverage over Israel. It is also important to note that two years of war has greatly weakened the group. However, the situation on the ground pushed everyone to converge on US President Donald Trump's plan; Gaza was undergoing a genocide, people were starving, and an immediate solution was needed. There is little reason to believe that the ceasefire will successfully progress to the next phase, however. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu needed to accept the ceasefire because the pressure on his government was increasing, not only internationally but domestically as well, with the plight of the hostages providing fuel for opposition parties. However, we should not forget that during the past two ceasefire agreements, Israel recovered some of the hostages and then resumed its genocide. We have also to remember that once the war ends, Netanyahu will face accountability. There has been no proper investigation into the Hamas-led Oct. 7 attacks. Some news outlets have recently alleged that forces surrounding Gaza were ordered to stand down at the time. If this is true, and if Netanyahu really allowed all this to help him avoid his own domestic woes, what will happen to him? In addition to the potential repercussions of Oct. 7 there is the matter of the corruption charges he faces. There is also the issue of his fragile coalition government, which is torn between those who believe that Orthodox Jews, who currently are exempt from the national military service most Israelis are obliged to complete, should be conscripted and those who believe they should not. The war pushes all such issues into the background. Once he gets the hostages back, scoring a point against the opposition and appeasing the Israeli public, will he

resume the war in Gaza? Maybe. Maybe he will return to pounding the territory. Or maybe he will open another front in the West Bank. Or Lebanon. Or Iran. Whatever might happen, the most important thing right now is to make sure the ceasefire holds in Gaza, and to that end Trump is expected to maintain the pressure on Netanyahu to move beyond the first part of the agreement. When Trump was asked about this, he said the most important issue was to get the hostages home, and "then we will see." This, however, prompted a sense of deja vu; ceasefire agreements in November 2023 and January 2025 proved to be short-lived. In addition, pressure is not equivalent to guarantees. Israel can apply counterpressure to the US. It has a powerful political lobby working at full steam. This raises the question of what should Arab and Islamic countries be doing? What is their Plan B? What kind of pressure can they exert on Israel to ensure Netanyahu does not stray from the ceasefire? Turkiye has already said it will send forces to monitor the early stages of the truce. However, there are still no details about subsequent phases. Arabs and Muslims should heed the advice of Colombian President Gustavo Petro, who in a speech to the UN General Assembly last month, called for the creation of an international force in Gaza through the General Assembly Resolution 377, also known as the "Uniting for Peace" resolution. Israel should be made aware that if it does not comply with the peace plan and withdraw from Gaza, Arab and Islamic countries will push for action under Resolution 377, which potentially can override the power of veto held by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council by taking a resolution to the General Assembly for a vote on collective measures, including the use of armed force when necessary. There might be pushback to the suggestion. Israel might react to such a threat with cynicism. United for Peace had been effective in the past when backed by a superpower, either the Soviet Union or the US. Here, Arab countries might allude to China, which seeks to play a bigger role in the Middle East and was the mediator and the security guarantor for the Saudi-Iran deal. Would the US like to see its allies increasingly warm to China? Not really. Empty threats will not work. Arab and Islamic countries need to start organizing.

—Arab News



LA-35: Beyond Electoral Defeat, the Crisis of Party Organization and Accountability



By: Rana Farooq Ashraf
Published By ANI

My recent meeting with Chaudhry Muhammad Asif Gujar, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) candidate for the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative

Assembly constituency LA-35, shed critical light on the structural fault lines plaguing grassroots political organization. During our detailed discussion, Mr. Gujar shared the core points of the comprehensive electoral report he recently submitted to PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at Zardari House, Islamabad. Having personally accompanied him across Daska during the thick of the campaign, many of the operational failures and administrative bottlenecks he highlighted were not mere hearsay to me; they were glaring realities I witnessed firsthand on the ground.

At the heart of Asif Gujar's report lies a fundamental question that transcends simple electoral arithmetic: what was the actual role, efficacy, and accountability of the party's organizational machinery? Constituency LA-35 is a sprawling and geographically diverse territory encompassing the tehsils of Daska, Sambrial, and Pasrur in Sialkot District, alongside parts of Gujranwala and Hafizabad. In a constituency of this scale, a candidate's electoral viability cannot rest solely on personal outreach or individual stamina. It demands meticulous strategic planning, synchronized coordination among district, tehsil, and city wings, the active mobilization of ideological cadres, robust election-day management, and continuous, unyielding contact with voters right up to the closing hours of polling.

According to the candidate's findings, the Sialkot district organization fell woefully short of fulfilling these foundational responsibilities. Serious and probing questions must be directed, first and foremost, toward District President Azhar Dayal. In a constituency directly absorbing three major tehsils of Sialkot, basic organizational prudence dictated that the district president maintain a constant, working liaison with the candidate, convene regular weekly reviews, delegate clear mandates to tehsil chapters, and spearhead foolproof polling-day preparations. Yet, the ground reality presented a starkly different picture. Regular meetings were sidelined, tehsils were left without clear directives, comprehensive polling-station planning was non-existent, and, most damagingly, the district president himself remained conspicuously absent from the core campaign trail.

A stark contrast, however, emerged at the local level in Daska. The PPP tehsil and city presidents in Daska immersed themselves fully in the candidate's campaign, galvanized local workers, and discharged their structural duties with admirable dedication. This local resilience underscores a vital political truth: even under constrained resources, a motivated and sincere grassroots organization can substantially fortify an electoral bid. Unfortunately, legitimate



grievances regarding organizational indifference or apathy echoed from Sambrial, Gujranwala, and Hafizabad as well, where local dynamics were mishandled and brushed aside under the guise of routine political differences.

Yet, the most sensitive, confounding, and alarming chapter of the LA-35 election narrative revolves around the final, decisive days of the campaign. Approximately forty-eight hours prior to polling, a major public rally was scheduled to take place in Daska, with Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan down to address the gathering. At a juncture when a political campaign must marshal its final reservoirs of momentum, energize the voter base, and deliver a resounding closing message, the abrupt and mysterious cancellation of such a high-profile event is by no means a trivial administrative glitch.

The report explicitly points toward Hasan Murtaza's alleged intervention behind the sudden termination of the Governor's participation and the subsequent collapse of the rally. A thorough, transparent inquiry is urgently required to establish at what level this decision was engineered, what motivations dictated it, and how profoundly this engineered disruption demoralized the candidate, local organizers, and the ideological workers on the ground.

This specific controversy forces open a much broader, systemic question that has lingered within party ranks for years: why does Hasan Murtaza's name perpetually surface amidst internal organizational disputes, arbitrary decision-making, and persistent political friction?

This discontent is no longer isolated to a single constituency or a localized by-election. Across the provincial party structure, a profound sense of alienation has taken root among veteran, loyal, and ideologically driven workers. A persistent grievance shared across party echelons is that long-term political struggle, personal sacrifice, and genuine grassroots connectivity are routinely sidelined. Workers who have stood by the party through its most difficult historical trials feel systematically margin-

alized, while key administrative levers are tightly locked within an insular grip. When capable, popular, and active regional leaders are boxed out of the decision-making apparatus, the natural consequence is political stagnation and organizational decay.

The time has arrived for the party high command to initiate a rigorous, objective assessment of Hasan Murtaza's administrative role, his appointment mechanisms, and his overarching influence on electoral strategies across Punjab. If administrative choices and organizational directives can withstand open scrutiny, transparency will vindicate them. However, if evidence points toward an abuse of authority, systematic favoritism, the sidelining of sincere workers, or the deliberate subversion of grassroots campaigns, immediate corrective discipline must be enforced. The party cannot afford to let its structural machinery remain hostage to individual gatekeeping.

The Pakistan Peoples Party is not the fiefdom of any single individual; it remains an enduring trust founded upon the blood of martyrs, the sacrifices of its ideological workers, and the collective aspirations of the masses. The post-election realities of LA-35 must not be brushed aside as a routine electoral loss. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari must demand a comprehensive, unvarnished accounting of organizational performance across Sialkot, Sambrial, Daska, Pasrur, Gujranwala, and Hafizabad. Every actor involved in the final phase of decision-making must be held to account.

Ultimately, the lesson of LA-35 is stark: the blame for electoral setbacks cannot be conveniently offloaded onto the candidate alone while organizational architects of failure sit shielded from inquiry. True organizational strength flows from accountability, inclusion, and respect for the party's bedrock—its workers. The central leadership must now decide whether institutional standards of justice and merit will apply universally, or if unchecked administrative power will permanently eclipse the voices of those who keep the party alive in the field.

The great potential for North Africa in future global supply chains

HAFED AL-GHWELL

North Africa is undergoing a quiet yet profound economic realignment. The region, traditionally a crossroads of civilizations, is swiftly repositioning itself as a central hub for the next chapter of global industry, fueled by the worldwide demand for critical minerals. While sub-Saharan Africa dominates mineral production, accounting for 70 percent of the world's cobalt and significant shares of platinum and manganese, North Africa's power lies not in the volumes of its own reserves but in its unparalleled geographic and strategic positioning. It is an indispensable link between the mineral-rich south, the manufacturing and refining centers of Asia, and the insatiable consumer markets of Europe. Africa today is no longer a silent partner in global trade and critical minerals dialogue but an assertive architect of the continent's own resource destiny. The Democratic Republic of Congo's export bans on raw cobalt, and Zimbabwe's levies on unprocessed lithium, for instance, are some of the ways in which Africa is moving away from simple extraction to the creation of local value. Such strategic moves create a wealth of opportunities for North Africa that are likely to be harnessed via sophisticated economic gateways already being built in the region. Thus, with an estimated \$266 billion in critical mineral exports from Africa in 2024, and likely more than that in the future given accelerating demand, the logistical race to transport, process, and ship these resources is intensifying. At present, Morocco, Egypt, and Algeria are accelerating their strategic investments in an attempt to capture this flow. Morocco's Tanger Med port, for example, now one of the most advanced in Africa, is handling trade volumes that increasingly rival those of southern European hubs. Simultaneously, Egypt is transforming the Suez Canal Economic Zone into a magnet for foreign capital,

targeting a place in the global hydrogen market and capitalizing on its position as a maritime crossroads. Algeria, meanwhile, is linked to Mauritania's vast untapped potential for lithium, manganese, uranium, phosphates, and rare-earth elements via the Tindouf-Zouerate Highway infrastructure project. Algiers also remains the sole Mediterranean node of the Trans-Saharan Highway, which links six African countries that together represent more than a quarter of Africa's total gross domestic product and population. These developments are part of a wider infrastructure rush that includes projects such as the Trans-Maghreb highway, connecting Morocco to Egypt via Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya, as well as new road corridors designed to bind North Africa into a cohesive and efficient trade network ready for the demands of the economies of the future. This transformation has not gone unnoticed by global powers. The US depends entirely on imports of 12 critical minerals, and outsources more than half of its supplies for another 28. Washington perceives this reliance, particularly on China, as a structural weakness, driving a search for secure alliances. China, which processes 85 percent of the world's critical minerals and more than 90 percent of rare earths, is entrenching its influence through direct investments in projects such as lithium operations in Mali and copper ventures in Zambia, backed by decades of strategic engagement across 44 African countries. Saudi Arabia has committed \$10 billion to African mining over the next five years, while the UAE is channeling capital into port and processing assets in copper-rich Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In this contest, North Africa emerges as a strategic intersection, a zone in which all these external ambitions meet, providing access and opportunity without yet falling under the control of a single power.

—Arab News

FIA Assistant Director Legal Malik Siraj-ur-Rehman Jasra Ties the Knot

BY: ANI Correspondent:

SARGODHA -- Malik Siraj-ur-Rehman Jasra, Assistant Director Legal at the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Islamabad, has entered into wedlock.

A dignified wedding ceremony was held in Sargodha, attended by prominent personalities from various walks of life. The guests congratulated Malik Siraj-ur-Rehman Jasra on the new chapter of his life and extended their best wishes and prayers for a happy, successful and prosperous future.

Malik Siraj-ur-Rehman Jasra is the son of renowned senior lawyer of Khushab district, Malik Muhammad



Waris Jasra, and the younger brother of Malik Saif-ur-Rehman Jasra, a prominent young lawyer at the Lahore High Court.

Consulate General of Indonesia Celebrates 81st Independence Day in Karachi



BY: ANI Correspondent:

KARACHI -- The Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Karachi commemorated the 81st Anniversary of Indonesia's Independence together with the Indonesian community and their families in Sindh Province. The celebration featured a solemn flag-hoisting ceremony, followed by a reception with Indonesian cultural performance, and a culinary bazaar.

The event was also attended by Pakistani government representatives, ASEAN and other diplomatic missions and business partners. The Government of Pakistan was represented by H.E. Mr. Irfan Soomro, DG of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Liaison Office (FALO) in Karachi, as

Chief Guest. Also present were the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Consul Generals from Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Sri Lanka, and Honorary Consul Generals of Ethiopia, Morocco, Yemen and the Philippines. Prizes for the community were generously supported by IBM, PIBCN, Emirates Airline, Polani Travel, Westbury Group, PIBF, Indomie, Mehran Enterprises, M.H. Panhwar Farms, and Intiaz Supermarket, reflecting the close friendship between KJRI Karachi and its local partners.

In his remarks, the Consul General of Indonesia, H.E. Mr. Mudzakir, highlighted the longstanding brotherly relations between Indonesia and Pakistan and reaffirmed Indonesia's commitment to strengthening coop-

eration in trade, investment, education, culture, tourism, and people-to-people relations.

As Chief Guest, H.E. Mr. Irfan Soomro recalled the close ties established by the founding fathers of both countries and emphasized that this historical bond remains an important foundation for advancing economic cooperation, business linkages, and closer relations between the peoples of Indonesia and Pakistan.

The distinguished guests conveyed their appreciation and admiration for the flag ceremony and the showcase of Indonesian culinary and cultural offerings. They further expressed the hope that bilateral relations between the two nations will be further enhanced across multiple sectors in the future.

Zamindar Action Committee Protests Fertilizer and Irrigation Water Shortages in Sibi, Warns of Highway Blockade

BY: ANI Correspondent:

SIBI --- The Zamindar Action Committee staged a protest and sit-in outside the Deputy Commissioner's office in Sibi against the shortage of fertilizer and non-availability of irrigation water. The protest was led by Sardar Ibrahim Khan Barozai, with a large number of farmers from different areas of Sibi participating.

The protesters demanded the immediate restoration of fertilizer

supplies and ensured provision of irrigation water to agricultural lands. Farmer leaders said crops have entered a critical stage, particularly cotton, which is currently at the flowering stage and urgently requires timely fertilizer and water.

Sardar Ibrahim Khan Barozai said valuable water is being wasted due to the lack of cleaning of the channel receiving water from Nari Dam, preventing adequate water from reaching agricultural lands. He called on

the government and Irrigation Department to clean the channel on an emergency basis and restore the flow of water. The farmer leaders warned that if their demands were not accepted, they would block the highway and expand their protest. They stressed that the livelihoods of thousands of families depend on agriculture and urged the government to immediately resolve the issues of fertilizer supply, irrigation water and the damaged channel.

Murree: Major PCNF Operation Drug Dealer Arrested, Hashish and Ice Recovered

by : Hurish Shah / ANI

Rawalpindi --- The Punjab Counter Narcotics Force (PCNF) Murree has intensified its crack-down against drug trafficking, arresting a suspected drug dealer and recovering a substantial quantity of narcotics. According to details, the Punjab Counter Narcotics Force carried out a special operation in various areas of Murree to prevent the smuggling and distribution of drugs. During the operation, the team arrested a key suspect who was allegedly attempting to supply narcotics in the area. According to a PCNF spokesperson, 1,052 grams of hashish and 50 grams of crystal ice were recovered from the possession of the arrested suspect. The suspect was shifted to the relevant police station for further investigation.



Authorities have launched an investigation to identify his accomplices and uncover the wider drug-supply network. The PCNF spokesperson said that Drug-Free Punjab, Healthy and Safe Punjab is the force's mission. He added that the force is working around the clock to keep tourist

destinations such as Murree free from the menace of drugs. The spokesperson further stated that those involved in poisoning the younger generation with drugs will not be given any concession, and operations against such elements will be intensified.

Punjab Highway Patrol Gujranwala: Public Safety, Welfare and Zero Tolerance for Corruption

BY: ANI Correspondent:

GUJRANWALA --- Regional Officer Punjab Highway Patrol Gujranwala, SP Mian Muazzam Ali, in a special interview, said that Pakistan is a great blessing from Allah Almighty and the result of the sacrifices of our elders. On the occasion of the 79th Independence Day, he urged citizens to fulfill their responsibilities with sincerity and integrity for the safety, development and prosperity of the country. He said the Punjab Highway Patrol's foremost priority is to ensure the safe travel and protection of the lives and property of citizens using the highways. Timely response, public assistance, law enforcement and quality service remain the force's key responsibilities.

SP Mian Muazzam Ali said special



attention is also being given to the welfare, education and training of the families and children of martyrs, Ghazis and dedicated officials. He added that officers and personnel who demonstrate outstanding performance are regularly encouraged and

motivated.

Regarding corruption and public dealing, he made it clear that corruption, bribery, misuse of authority and misbehavior with citizens will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Every official is bound to treat citizens with respect, ethics and justice, while strict departmental action will be taken against anyone violating these principles without discrimination.

In his message to the youth and the force, SP Mian Muazzam Ali urged them to love Pakistan, respect the law and make honesty, hard work and integrity the guiding principles of their lives.

He said the Punjab Highway Patrol is always ready for public service, safe highways and the rule of law, adding that public trust is its greatest asset and will be maintained at all costs.

NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq Holds Meetings with KP and GB Assembly Speakers to Strengthen Parliamentary Cooperation



BY: Hurish Shah/FT

ISLAMABAD --- Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq held separate meetings with Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Babar Saleem Swati and Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Imran Nadeem at Parliament House.

The meetings focused on parliamentary affairs, legislation, institutional strengthening, democratic values and matters of mutual interest. The leaders agreed to further enhance coordination, linkages and

parliamentary cooperation among federal, provincial and other legislative institutions.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq emphasized the importance of consultation and exchange of experiences among legislative institutions, saying strong parliamentary institutions are essential for democratic stability. He also highlighted the Speakers' Conference as an effective platform for promoting parliamentary cooperation.

During the meeting with Babar Saleem Swati, the KP Assembly

Speaker appreciated the National Assembly Secretariat's cooperation and Sardar Ayaz Sadiq's efforts to strengthen parliamentary linkages.

In his meeting with Imran Nadeem, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq congratulated him on assuming the office of Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly and expressed his best wishes. Imran Nadeem appreciated the National Assembly Speaker's role in ensuring orderly proceedings and promoting cooperation among legislative institutions.

NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq Expresses Grief Over Passing of Former MNA Begum Nafisa Khalid

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD --- Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the passing of former Member of the National Assembly Begum Nafisa Khalid, who was also the maternal grandmother of National Assembly Special Secretary (Special Initiatives) Syed Shamoon Hashmi.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq paid rich tribute to the deceased for her valuable political, parliamentary and social services, saying her contributions to strengthening democracy and promoting democratic values in the country would be remembered for a long time.

The Speaker said the death of Begum Nafisa Khalid was a great loss to her family and loved ones. He

extended heartfelt condolences to Syed Shamoon Hashmi and other members of the bereaved family and expressed solidarity with them in their hour of grief.

He prayed to Allah Almighty to grant the departed soul the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous and give the bereaved family strength and patience to bear the irreparable loss.

Ishaq Dar Addresses Graduation Ceremony of 45th Specialized Diplomatic Course at Foreign Service Academy

BY: ANI Correspondent:

ISLAMABAD--- Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar addressed the graduation ceremony of the 45th Specialized Diplomatic Course (SDC) at the Foreign Service Academy, Islamabad, and inaugurated Phase-I of the Academy's renovated premises.

Congratulating the graduating officers and their families, Ishaq Dar highlighted the Foreign Service Academy's vital role in preparing generations of Pakistani diplomats. He noted that, besides training Pakistan's Foreign Service, the Academy has also trained more than 1,600 diplomats from 122 countries.

The Deputy Prime Minister emphasized that knowledge, sound judgment and strong character are essential for advancing Pakistan's interests across political, economic,



technological, educational and people-to-people spheres.

Ishaq Dar thanked the Government of the People's Republic of China for its generous support and funding for the renovation project, describing it as another reflection of the close and enduring Pakistan-China friendship.

He urged the graduating officers to serve Pakistan with professionalism, integrity and compassion, keeping the country's national interests at the heart of their diplomatic responsibilities. He also wished them success in their future careers.

US-Pak Joint Investigation Declared Bahawalpur Tragedy a Conspiracy, Conspirators Must Be Exposed: Ijaz-ul-Haq

NU; ANI Correspondent:

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Muslim League-Zia (PML-Z) Chief and Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Muhammad Ijaz-ul-Haq has stated that the joint US-Pakistan Air Force investigation commission had officially declared the Bahawalpur tragedy an international conspiracy.

He demanded to know who made four consecutive calls to compel General Zia-ul-Haq and his companions to travel to Bahawalpur, and who subsequently prevented their post-mortems.



He expressed these views while addressing a seminar held at a local hotel in Rawalpindi on Monday, organized to mark the 38th death anniversary of former President General Zia-ul-Haq and the martyrs of the Bahawalpur plane crash.

Addressing the gathering, which he noted represented people from across Pakistan, the PML-Z chief reiterated that the joint investigation report ruled out any technical faults in the aircraft. "The questions of who sent General Zia and his companions to Bahawalpur and who stopped the post-mortems still demand answers today," he said. He lamented that despite the formation of the Bandial, Shujaat, and Shafi commissions to investigate the tragedy, their findings were never made public.

Highlighting the former president's legacy, Haq said General Zia-ul-Haq safeguarded the country's ideology by making the Objectives Resolution (Article 2A) a substantive part of the Constitution, thereby establishing the sovereignty of Allah and ensuring no laws could be enacted repugnant to the Quran and Sunnah. He added that General Zia laid the foundational stones of Pakistan's nuclear program and successfully brought it to fruition.

Stressing the need for administrative reform, he warned that if democracy is to be stabilized in the country,

local government elections must be ensured and corruption eradicated. Failing to devolve power to the grassroots level through strong local bodies, he cautioned, would yield disastrous consequences for the entire system.

Recalling General Zia's swift administrative actions, Haq shared an anecdote: "General Zia once noticed in the morning newspaper that onion prices had doubled. He immediately warned the Finance Secretary not to come to the office the next day if the prices weren't normalized. By the time of Tahajjud [pre-dawn prayers] the next day, a message arrived confirming prices were back to normal. Is there any ruler today who takes such prompt action for public relief?"

Speaking at the occasion, PML-N MNA Shakir Bashir Awan stated that General Zia's wisdom and strategy forced the superpower across the northwestern border to its knees, leading to its fragmentation and the emergence of independent Islamic states. He praised Zia's "Cricket Diplomacy" for dissipating the clouds of war with India and emphasized his pivotal role in making Pakistan's defense impregnable.

Former Provincial Minister Dr. Anwar-ul-Haq recalled the day of the Bahawalpur tragedy as incredibly difficult but noted that the massive pub-

lic participation in the funeral gave the bereaved families immense courage. He praised the discipline of Pakistan's armed forces and noted General Zia's dual role in enforcing Islamic laws and strengthening the military.

Sajjada Nashin of Chura Sharif, Pir Sahibzada Hasnain, described General Zia as a leader of the Muslim Ummah, noting that the streets of Rawalpindi and Islamabad were choked with people during his funeral prayers.

MPA Chaudhry Ghulam Murtaza credited Zia's governance style with elevating the country, stating that history bears witness that enemies trembled when General Zia displayed his might.

PML-N leader Sajjad Khan remarked that General Zia remains alive in the hearts of the Pakistani people even after 38 years. He credited Zia for tasking Dr. A.Q. Khan with the nuclear program, which ultimately made Pakistan a nuclear state.

Col. (Retd.) Javed Mujtaba stated that the purpose of non-party elections during the Zia era was to introduce new grassroots leadership. He urged Ijaz-ul-Haq to strive for a Pakistan where a common man can easily contest elections and where free healthcare and education are accessible to all.