

## Met army chief with Gandapur, all demands presented: PTI Chairman Gohar

Islamabad (News Desk) PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said on Thursday that he and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur had a meeting with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir.

"If talks have begun, it's a welcoming gesture," Barrister Gohar said while speaking outside Adiala Jail. "All demands have been presented."

He said that the talks took place in Peshawar during the army chief's recent visit there. "Direct talks with the establishment are welcome," he said. "There is a positive development from

the other side." PTI leader Asad Qaiser also told Dawn.com that the development took place. Talking about his participation in Monday's talks between the army chief and provincial politicians in Peshawar, Barrister Gohar said that any meetings he had were with PTI founder Imran Khan's permission and instructions.

He said he met Imran today and briefed him in detail about the Monday talks. "I never disclose the purpose for whatever thing I'm going until I have Khan sahib's specific permission," Gohar added.

"Imran said the meeting was positive and better for the country's stability and that there should be talks and solutions to issues should be found through political processes."

The same was confirmed by Imran's sister Aleema Khan while talking to the media outside Adiala Jail.

Earlier in the day, Gandapur also told reporters that he, along with Gohar, had met Gen Munir. Responding to a question about "backdoor negotiations," the KP CM remarked, "There is no need for backdoor talks when everything is happening out in the

open. Questioned about the matter while talking to journalists, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said that if the meeting occurred then it must have been in accordance with the law.

"Maybe the army chief told the prime minister because when the army chief meets [someone], he informs the prime minister," Iqbal said.

The statements were issued today a week after Gohar had said that his party established "backdoor contacts" with the military before their November 2024 protest but said the "link had now been severed."



Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Omar Ayub hands over a copy of the PTI's written demands during the third round of talks that are ongoing between the opposition and the coalition government, at Parliament House on Jan 16, 2025.

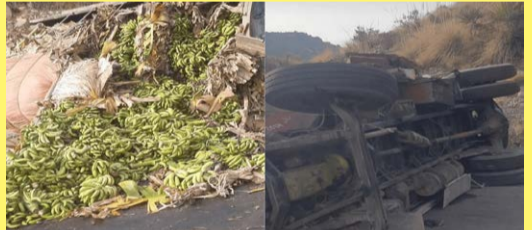
## Suspect arrested for allegedly raping, murdering 4-year-old girl in Gujrat

Gujrat (News Desk) A suspect was arrested on Thursday in the alleged rape and murder of a four-year-old girl in a village in Punjab's Gujrat district, according to the police.

Per a statement issued by the police, the victim and her seven-year-old brother left their home in Khuhar, situated in Gujrat's Sarai Alamgir town, to attend tuition on January 5 but she never returned home.

Upon receiving information about the incident, Sarai Alamgir Station House Office (SHO) Shiraz Haider and Superintendent of Police Abid Hussain filed a case against unidentified suspects under Section 363 (punishment for kidnapping) of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). Meanwhile, Deputy Superintendent of Police Rai Muneer Ahmed arrived in Khuhar and blocked all the roads in and out of the village, according to the police statement. Upon the arrival of the Gujrat district police officer, a search operation was launched. The statement said that the victim's body, stuffed in a sack, was found in an empty plot the next day. Provisions for murder (Section 302) were added to the case, according to a police report dated January 6. Police canvassed the neighbourhood in which the body was found and interrogated and took DNA samples from potential suspects, according to the statement.

## Soldier martyred, four injured as convoy attacked in KP's Kurram: official



Kurram (News Desk) One soldier was martyred while four others were injured when a convoy of vehicles carrying food and medical supplies to Parachinar was attacked at the Bagan area in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lower Kurram on Thursday, according to officials. Clashes stemming from decades-old land disputes claimed at least 130 lives since November, with food and medicine shortages reported due to weeks-long road blockades. A peace agreement was signed on January 1, but the route connecting Parachinar remained blocked. On January 4, a government convoy was attacked near Bagan, injuring Kurram's deputy commissioner and leaving the convoy stranded. Hangu Assistant Commissioner (AC) Saeed Mannan told Dawn.com today that a convoy comprising 35 vehicles had left from Thall and was on its way to Parachinar when it came under fire.

## PTI presents 'charter of demands' in 3rd round of talks with govt

Islamabad (News Desk) The PTI finally presented its 'charter of demands' to the government in written form on Thursday, as the third round of negotiations between the two began. Talks between the government and the PTI commenced in the last week of December to bring down political temperatures, but despite weeks of negotiations, the dialogue process has hardly moved forward on major issues — the formation of a judicial commission and the release of PTI prisoners. Today's meeting kicked off under the NA speaker's

oversight and was attended by six people, including three PTI leaders, from the opposition, while eight represented the government. Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Omar Ayub, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, PTI MNA Asad Qaiser, Sunni Ittehad Council chief Hamid Raza, Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen chief Senator Raja Nasir Abbas Jafri and PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja attended from the opposition. Meanwhile, those representing the government included Deputy Prime Minister

and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, PML-N Senator Irfan Siddiqui, PPP MNAs Raja Pervaiz Ashraf and Naveed Qamar, prime minister's political aide Rana Sanaulah, and MQM-P MNA Dr Farooq Sattar. PML-Z's Ijazul Haq and Balochistan Awami Party's Nawabzada Khalid Hussain Magsi were also present as part of the government committee. During the meeting, the PTI formally presented its demands in written form. The three-page document, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, was signed by the six opposition members who attend-

ed today's huddle. According to a joint press release issued afterwards, the government committee would present its formal stance on the opposition's demands within seven working days. The date of the next meeting would be decided after consulting both the committees, the statement said. The opposition put forward two main demands — (i) the formation of two judicial commissions, and (ii) "support" of the federal and provincial governments in bail, sentence suspensions, and acquittals of "political prisoners" identified by the PTI.

## 'Anomaly' about trials under army act baffles SC judge

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) Supreme Court Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail on Wednesday expressed surprise at an apparent anomaly in the Pakistan Army Act 1952 (PAA), observing that despite the presence of Sections 2(1)(d)(i) and (ii) that allowed the court martial of civilians, terrorists involved in crimes such as kidnapping a soldier for ransom, would still not face a military trial. Justice Mandokhail made these remarks as the seven-member Constitutional Bench took up the intra-court appeals against the Oct 23, 2023 judgement that nullified the military trials of civilians accused of involvement in the May 9 violence. Sections 2(1)(d)(i) and 2(1)(d)(ii) of the Pakistan Army Act allow the court martial of civilians otherwise not subject to the act if they are accused of seducing or attempting to seduce any army officer from duty or allegiance to the government or committed offence in relation to any work of defence.

## Missing persons issue a big challenge, law minister tells Senate

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) Amid growing concerns in the upper house of parliament over the worsening law and order situation in two provinces, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar on Wednesday informed the Senate that the issue of missing persons was a major challenge for the prime minister and his cabinet. "We believe that the state of Pakistan should function under a democratic dispensation," he said, after JUI-F parliamentary leader Kamran Murtaza raised the issue in the Senate. The minister assured that everything possible within the legal framework would be done. He said the commission on missing persons had been reconstituted, consisting of a retired Supreme Court judge with an unblemished record. He emphasised that maintaining law and order is the responsibility of the provinces, although federal forces can be requisitioned by them under Article 245 of the Constitution. Earlier, Senator Kamran Murtaza, speaking on a point of public importance, expressed alarm over the increasing incidents of enforced disappearances in Balochistan, saying that, rightly or wrongly, security forces and agencies are held responsible for these incidents. He noted that in retaliation, national highways in the province are being blocked. Stressing that the use of force cannot resolve the issues, he called for the development of a mechanism to improve the situation. "Balochistan and its people are distancing themselves from you, and public support is growing for those who are not with you," he added.

## Two cops injured in attack on Shangla police checkpost: officials

Islamabad (News Desk) Two cops were injured in a late-night attack by terrorists on a police checkpost in the Puran tehsil of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Shangla district, police said on Thursday. Aloch Station House Officer (SHO) Bakht Zeb Khan told Dawn.com that over a dozen assailants attacked the checkpost late at night, however, the police personnel on duty thwarted the attack which forced the assailants to flee. The SHO said, "Two cops were injured when they retaliated against the terrorists." Rescue 1122 spokesperson, Rasool Khan Sharif confirmed to Dawn.com that two police personnel were injured in the attack, adding that they were shifted to the Pir Muhammad Khan Shaheed Hospital and were referred to the Saidu Teaching Hospital in Swat for any further treatment. After hearing about the attack, a Dawn.com correspondent said that local political leaders from different parties called on local residents to come out against the attackers and fight alongside them. They led the group equipped with weapons to the police checkpost, however, the assailants had already fled the area. The country has lately witnessed a sharp uptick in the number of attacks targeting security forces, other law enforcement agencies, and security checkpoints, particularly in Balochistan and KP. Police checkpoints in remote areas of Shangla district are noted to be vulnerable to terrorist attacks due to their location in isolated regions surrounded by forests.



Foreign Office Spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan addresses media in maiden weekly press briefing

## FO says Wakhan Corridor part of Afghan territory, denies reports of annexation

Islamabad (News Desk) Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan, in his maiden weekly press briefing on Thursday, rejected reports of the annexation of the Wakhan Corridor and said that it was a part of Afghanistan. The Wakhan Corridor is a thin, mountainous strip in Afghanistan's northeastern Badakhshan province which extends up to the

relatively small border with China's Xinjiang province. It also separates Tajikistan from Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan region. "I have seen this endless speculation. Wakhan is part of Afghan territory. Afghanistan is a neighbouring country. We recognise its sovereignty and territorial integrity," the newly appointed spokesperson said. "There is no question

of Pakistan having designs on one of its neighbours. I deem it speculative and totally erroneous actually." Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been strained due to frequent border skirmishes and Islamabad repeatedly demanding Kabul take action against the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) for using Afghan soil to launch attacks

in Pakistan. Kabul denies the allegations. The spokesperson added that the two countries understood the importance of relations and wanted to nurture good ties, however, he reiterated that "the key issue remained terrorists seeking sanctuary on Afghan soil." He said both countries were in contact on the matter "through an ongoing multilayered engagement".

## 22 terrorists killed, 18 injured in Khyber district's Tirah valley since Dec 14: ISPR

Tirah (News Desk) Security forces have killed 22 terrorists and injured 18 others in various intelligence-based operations (IBOs) across the Tirah valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Khyber district since December 14, the military's media wing said on Thursday.

A statement issued from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said: "Of late, numerous terrorist incidents have occurred in general area Tirah,

Khyber district against security forces as well as the innocent civilians, resulting in several casualties." Subsequently, the ISPR said security forces were conducting extensive IBOs in the area against terrorists, due to which 22 were "successfully neutralised" and 18 injured since Dec 14.

The ISPR added that the IBOs would continue till peace in the area was restored and the terrorists were eliminated. "Security

forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country," it concluded. On Tuesday, an encounter took place in the general area of Tirah valley, where security forces "successfully neutralised two terrorists."

Armed terrorists, affiliated with various groups, are understood to have gradually moved out of the plains of Tirah valley, taking refuge in vacant houses in the hilly terrain,

as security forces fortified their positions in key locations of the valley. Sources in the region had told Dawn that the situation in most parts of the valley was calm, with no major terror-related incident reported last month. They said the armed terrorists, who were frequently seen in different parts of Tirah valley, had either returned to Afghanistan or shifted to the bordering Orakzai district, with some opting to



"settle down" in partially damaged houses in the peripheral hilly areas to avoid public attention. The sources had said terrorists had shifted to Sanda Paal,

Dray Naghari and Daroota villages before taking refuge in empty houses. They said those areas were vacated by residents in November in anticipation of a military.