

Firing on Peshawar-bound train prompts Balochistan govt to take 'emergency measures'

Peshawar(News Desk) Reports of firing at a Peshawar-bound passenger train near Balochistan's Bolan district emerged on Tuesday, but the specifics regarding the attack and casualties have so far not been shared by the government. "There are reports of intense firing at a Jaffar Express [train], which was heading from Quetta to Peshawar, between Pehro Kunri and Gadalar," Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Rind said in a statement. Meanwhile, Controller Railways Muhammad

Kashif said that the train, comprising nine coaches, has around 500 passengers on board. "The train was stopped by armed men in Tunnel No 8. Efforts are being made to contact the passengers and staff," the controller said. "The trains are stuck just before a tunnel surrounding the mountain, while security has also been beefed up on the N-65 Highway," Rana Muhammad Dilwar, district police officer of Kachhi Bolan. According to the government's statement, an emergency has been

imposed at the Sibi hospital, while ambulances and security forces were on their way to the site of the incident. However, Rind added, the officials were facing difficulties in reaching the site due to the rocky terrain. "The railway department has sent more trains to the site to provide rescue," the statement further said. "The scale of the incident and the possibility of terrorist elements are being determined. The Balochistan government has ordered that emergency measures be taken, and all institutions remain active."

The official urged the public to remain calm and avoid paying heed to rumours. An emergency has also been declared at the Civil Hospital Quetta, according to Health Department Spokesperson Dr Waseem Baig. "All consultants, doctors, pharmacists, staff nurses and paramedical staff have been summoned to the hospital," Baig said. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi condemned the incident, saying: "The beasts who fire on innocent passengers do not deserve any concessions."



A delegation of the Pakistan People's Party, led by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on March 10.

Karakoram Highway blocked in Lotar area of Kohistan due to landslide

Karakoram(News Desk) The Karakoram highway (KKH) has been blocked in the limits of the Lotar police station in Upper Kohistan due to a heavy landslide since Monday night, police officials said today. This disconnects Gilgit Baltistan and parts of Kohistan from the rest of the country, leaving hundreds of travelers and families stranded on both sides of the international route.

Last week, the KKH was reopened to traffic after the company executing the Dasu hydropower project in Upper Kohistan district removed a massive landslide that had blocked the road earlier in the week.

Upper Kohistan control room police official Minhajuddin confirmed the road blockade via phone to Dawn.com, while Gilgit Baltistan's Diamer district police officer's assistant Abdul Khaliq also confirmed the blockade. "The Karakoram Highway has been blocked since last night at Lotar area, which is the limits of Upper Kohistan. I just recently contacted an official in Kohistan police who said the landslide is massive."

Pildat suggests reactivating National Security Committee role as premier civil-military forum



ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (Pildat) has called for reactivating and enhancing the role of National Security Committee (NSC) as a premier civil-military forum on security policy deliberations.

The annual performance evaluation of the National Security Committee (NSC) conducted by Pildat for the time frame from March 5, 2024, to March 4, 2025, highlights a disturbing trend in Pakistan's governance structure. The NSC, which was established in 2013 as the primary forum for national security decision-making, did not convene a single meeting during the entire year. The 2024-25, therefore, became the first year since the formation of the NSC when the committee did not meet even once. While the federal cabinet regularly meets, there is no indication either that the Cabinet Committee on Defence which provided such a forum before the creation of NSC, has been re-operationalised. Think tank points out the committee has not met for a year. Historically, the NSC served as the country's principal platform for civil-military consultations on security affairs.

Pakistan to take all necessary measures against terrorist outfits based in Afghanistan: Akram

Islamabad(News Desk) Pakistan has reiterated that it will continue to take "all necessary measures" to protect the country from terrorist outfits in Afghanistan, calling out Kabul for "failing" to address the threat posed to the region. Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been strained due to frequent border skirmishes and Islamabad repeatedly demanding that Kabul take action against the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) for using Afghan soil to launch attacks in Pakistan. Kabul denies the allegations. Speaking

during the UN Security Council (UNSC) briefing on Afghanistan in New York yesterday, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Munir Akram stated: "Pakistan will continue to take all necessary measures to eliminate the terrorist threats to our national security in accordance with our right to self-defence under international law and in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council." He asserted that the Kabul authorities had "failed to address the threat posed to the region and beyond

by other terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaeda, the TTP and Baloch terrorists, including the BLA (so-called Balochistan Liberation Army) and the Majeed Brigade, which are present in Afghanistan." The TTP, with 6,000 fighters, is the largest designated terrorist organisation operating from Afghanistan," the ambassador highlighted. "The banned outfit was perceived as enjoying Kabul's patronage" and was fast emerging as an umbrella organisation for regional terrorist groups, the envoy reiterated his warning from last year.

He said that Pakistan had the evidence against Kabul authorities that they "not only tolerated but are complicit in the conduct of TTP's terrorist cross-border attacks". Akram further stated that the TTP was collaborating with other terrorist groups present in Afghanistan, like the BLA and the Majeed Brigade, adding that the latter sought to destabilise Pakistan's ties with China. "The TTP also receives external support and financing from our principal adversary," the envoy said in an apparent reference to India.



Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb addressing a press conference along with Information Minister Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday

Sugar sent to Afghanistan was not smuggled but exported for first time: finance minister

Islamabad(News Desk) Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said on Tuesday that for the first time, sugar sent to Afghanistan was not smuggled but exported with the help of all law enforcement authorities deployed at the border. While providing updates on the country's economic progress, the

minister said the remittance inflow for Feb 2025 had reached an impressive \$3.1 billion. "We estimate an all-time high remittance inflow of \$36bn by the end of the fiscal year," he said while addressing a press conference along with Federal Information Minister Attaullah Tarar. While expressing gratitude

to the Pakistani diaspora, Aurangzeb acknowledged their invaluable contribution to the nation's economy. "On behalf of the prime minister, the government, and the cabinet, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all our Pakistani brethren and sisters working abroad and sending remittances back home," he said. The finance

minister also shared the results of several independent surveys conducted in the past quarter, including those by Gallup, ICC, Overseas Shapers, Ipsos, PricewaterhouseCoopers and a recent one by the State Bank of Pakistan, all of which showed a noticeable uptick in business and consumer confidence.

Fresh SC Constitutional Bench to hear super tax case from today

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court was reconstituted on Monday to commence hearing on a set of challenges to the imposition of super tax on high earning individuals through Section 4C of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001. The composition was changed after Justice Aminuddin Khan, who was heading the bench, noted that one of the bench members, Justice Aamer Farooq, had already given a decision on the matter when he was chief justice of the Islamabad High Court. The reconstituted bench will comprise Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Mohammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan besides Justice Aminuddin. While counsel representing different industrial entities requested the bench to hear the matter after Eid, the court rejected the plea and declared that the case would be heard daily from Tuesday.

Nadra launches Pakistan's first dematerialised ID card

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra) on Monday launched Pakistan's first dematerialised ID card as it commemorated 25 years of excellence in legal identity management and national database integration. The national identity document will now be integrated as a feature into the Pak ID mobile application, which means that citizens will no longer need to carry physical ID cards. Moreover, digital verification systems will soon be implemented to facilitate authentication for various services under the World Bank-funded Digital Economy Enhancement Project (DEEP). A pilot project for this fully digital identity will be launched on August 14, 2025. A ceremony was held at the Nadra headquarters to mark the silver jubilee of the authority. President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif sent congratulatory messages, appreciating Nadra's remarkable achievements. A commemorative coin issued by the State Bank of Pakistan and a special postage stamp by Pakistan Post were unveiled to mark the historic milestone. President Zardari lauded the authority's role in providing a legal and unique identity to citizens, reinforcing the social contract between the state and its people while transforming public service delivery. He urged Nadra to accelerate its efforts to utilise emerging technologies to improve efficiency.

Talk of canals, terror in KP dominates coalition Iftar

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) In a bid to appease their "annoyed" coalition partner, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday hosted an iftar dinner for the PPP, following President Asif Ali Zardari's address to a joint sitting of parliament. The PPP delegation, led by Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, reportedly expressed their reservations over the controversial project to carve more canals out of the Indus River. The delegation also conveyed to the PM its concerns regarding the deteriorating law and order in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly Kurram district. They also complained about the lack of relief efforts for flood victims in Balochistan. According to a handout from the Prime Minister's Office, PM Shehbaz appreciated the PPP leadership for playing an active and dynamic role in meeting public expectations across all four provinces. He urged political parties to work together to ensure a better future for the federation and the provinces. PM Shehbaz also assured the PPP that their concerns regarding controversial canals, maintaining peace in Kurram district and assisting flood victims in Balochistan, would be addressed soon. Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, who attended the joint sitting of parliament on Monday, expressed ignorance of any grievances the PPP may have with her government. When approached by reporters in the corridors of Parliament House and asked about the PPP's reservations, she said: "Nobody has complained to me about this so far."

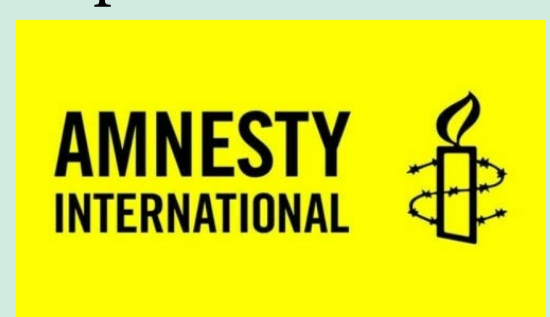
Amnesty calls on govt to drop charges against Ahmadis, protect their places of worship

Islamabad(News Desk) Amnesty International on Monday called on the government to release and drop all charges against all Ahmadi detainees in recent weeks and ensure adequate protection to Ahmadi places of worship. On March 1, Daska (Sialkot) police arrested 22 members of the Ahmadiyya community for offering prayers in their religious place. Then on March 7, over two dozen members of

the Ahmadi community, including children, were taken into "protective custody" by law enforcement personnel as a mob gathered outside its place of worship in Surjani Town, Karachi. Later that day, police registered a criminal case against over two dozen members of the Ahmadiyya community and arrested six of them on the complaint of a Tehreek Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) activist in Surjani Town.

A day ago, Dahrnawala police booked nine people, including seven men who were stated to be members of the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat and two members of the Ahmadiyya community, on charge of torturing a TLP activist to death during a scuffle at Chak 166 Murad in Bahawalnagar. "The disturbing pattern of arbitrary arrests, harassment and violence against the Ahmadiyya community is in violation

of their right to freedom of religion and belief," the global rights organisation said in a post on X. In the past two weeks alone, more than 60 Ahmadis, including children, have been unlawfully arrested in Daska, Sargodha and Karachi in Punjab and Sindh, while Ahmadiyya places of worship have been desecrated in Bahawalnagar and Gujranwala, Amnesty said. "The authorities have filed cases under section 298-



C of the Pakistan Penal Code (Person of Quadiani group, etc calling himself a Muslim or preaching or propagating his faith) which bars the Ahmadiyya community from calling themselves Muslims or preaching their faith.