



Musadik Malik meets Chinese green finance expert, discusses climate collaboration



'Not a nation that bows': Bilawal hails Pakistan's victory against India during Marka-i-Haq



Govt prioritises dignified delivery of aid through digital system: Minister Imran Shah

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Tuesday 05 May 2026

Ziqquad 17, 1447

A.H VOI No: 06

Issue No. 86

Pages 4 Rs. 20

UAE's Fujairah says fire breaks out at petroleum complex after Iranian drone attack

PEAK POINT

DUBAI: Authorities in the United Arab Emirates' Fujairah said on Monday that a fire broke out at the Fujairah Oil Industry Zone following what they described as a drone attack originating from Iran. Civil defence teams were deployed immediately to contain the blaze, Fujairah Media Office said in a statement. The UAE Defence Ministry said in a post on X, "The UAE has intercepted three missiles fired from Iran over its territorial waters, with a fourth missile crashing into the sea." The statement added that, "The Ministry of Defence affirmed that the sounds heard in different parts of the country are a result of air defence systems engaging threats." "The ministry urged the public to obtain information from official sources

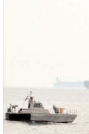
and comply with all public safety procedures when warning messages are issued to the public," it said. There was no immediate comment from Iran. Iran said it had forced a US warship to turn back from entering the Strait of Hormuz on Monday, although US Central Command quickly denied a report of a missile strike. A senior Iranian official told Reuters Iran had fired a warning shot and that it was unclear whether the warship had been damaged. Iran's Fars News Agency said two missiles hit a US warship in the Strait of Hormuz. However, the US Central Command said in a post on X that no US Navy ships had been struck. US Central Command, in a statement on X, said that, "US Navy guided-missile destroyers are currently operating.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani in a meeting with Mr Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Republic of Kazakhstan to Islamic Republic of Pakistan at Parliament House.

Two missiles hit US warship trying to enter Strait of Hormuz, Iranian news agency says

PEAK POINT



IRAN: Iran's navy said on Monday it had prevented the entry of enemy warships into the Strait of Hormuz by issuing a "swift and decisive warning", according to state TV.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has vowed to 'forcefully stop' ships violating Hormuz regulations. The reported attack comes after President Trump said the US will begin "Project Freedom" on Monday to "guide" stranded ships out of the Strait of Hormuz. The semi-official Fars news agency said a US warship had been hit by two missiles while sailing near the port of Jask at the southern entrance to the strait and turned back from its attempt to transit the strait.

US Central Command said it would support the effort with 15,000 military personnel, more than 100 land and sea-based aircraft, along with warships and drones, according to Al Jazeera. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said officials are reviewing a US counter-proposal to end the war, according to IRNA News Agency. "The US message was received through Pakistan, and I will not discuss the details.

FO says 22 crew members on Iranian ship seized by US have been evacuated to Pakistan

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) said on Monday that as a "confidence-building measure" by the United States, 22 crew members on an Iranian ship that was seized by US forces had been evacuated to Pakistan. The statement came hours after American outlet ABC News reported that an Iranian ship

seized by the US after it "failed to comply" with the blockade imposed by the country on Iranian ports had been transferred to Pakistan for repatriation. "US forces completed the transfer of 22 crew members of M/V Touska to Pakistan for repatriation," the report quoted US Central Command Spokesperson Captain Tim Hawkins as saying. "Six other passengers were already transferred to a regional country for repatriation last week," he said. According to the report, Iranian state media identified the six as family members of some of the crew. "Custody of Touska is currently being transferred back to its original ownership after the ship was intercepted and seized when attempting to violate the US naval blockade against Iran last month," Hawkins said. Subsequently, FO Spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said on the social media platform X, "As a confidence-building measure by the United States of America, twenty-two crew members held aboard the seized Iranian container ship, 'MV Touska', have been evacuated to Pakistan." "The individuals, who were flown to Pakistan last night, will be handed over to the Iranian authorities today," he said. "The Iranian ship will also be backloaded to Pakistani territorial waters.

Pakistan Navy rescues Indian crew from distressed vessel in Arabian Sea: security sources

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Navy has launched a humanitarian rescue operation in the Arabian Sea to assist a distressed merchant vessel, security

sources said on Monday. Pakistan Navy personnel are providing emergency assistance to six Indian and one Indonesian crew member aboard the MV Gautam, the security sources said, adding that the vessel was sailing from Oman to India when it developed a technical fault at sea. They said that the Maritime Rescue and Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Mumbai contacted Pakistani authorities for assistance after the incident.

Following the emergency request, the Pakistan Navy deployed a ship of the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency named PNS Kashmir to carry out the rescue operation. Security sources said the affected crew members are being provided with food, medical assistance and technical support onboard. They added that the Pakistan Navy remains fully prepared and committed to responding effectively to any emergency.

IHC rules buyers of apartments at One Constitution Avenue have no ownership rights

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday issued a detailed judgment in the One Constitution Avenue case, upholding the cancellation of the lease of the multi-billion-rupee project. It ruled that buyers of luxury apartments in the development do not have ownership rights and may instead pursue legal remedies against the builder for recovery of their investment. In a detailed judgment, IHC Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar dismissed a set of petitions filed by M/s BNP (Pvt) Limited—the developer of the project.

£190m case: IHC rejects Imran, Bushra's appeals seeking suspension of sentences

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court has fixed the main appeals of the PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi in the £190 million case for hearing on May 7, while rejecting a request to prioritise pleas seeking their release on bail.

A division bench comprising IHC Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar and Justice Muhammad Asif decided to proceed with hearing the main appeals filed by the former premier and his wife against their convictions in the £190m case.

An accountability court in Islamabad had earlier sentenced the PTI founder to 14 years' imprisonment with a fine of Rs1 million, while Bushra was awarded seven years' imprisonment

along with a fine of Rs500,000. Counsel had argued that the suspension pleas should be



The court rejected a request to take up the sentence suspension pleas first, which sought the duo's release on bail pending a decision on the main appeals. It subsequently disposed of those applications as "infructuous", observing that the main appeals had already been fixed for hearing, making separate consideration unnecessary. The defence

heard in advance to secure interim relief before detailed proceedings began.

On the other hand, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) maintained that once the main appeals had been scheduled for hearing, the sentence suspension applications could not be entertained separately, and should not be prioritised ahead of the

Chairman Senate, Kazakhstan envoy discuss bilateral cooperation

PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin on Monday discussed matters of mutual interest, including political and parliamentary cooperation, trade and economic collaboration, and regional connectivity.

During the meeting, the Chairman of the Senate commended the ambassador's active contribution to strengthening Pakistan-Kazakhstan relations.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to its longstanding and cordial ties with Kazakhstan, grounded in mutual respect, shared values, and a common vision for regional peace and prosperity.

The Chairman of the Senate termed the recent state visit of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to Pakistan a landmark development that has elevated bilateral relations to the level of a strategic partnership. Highlighting the importance of parliamentary diplomacy, he underscored the need to strengthen institutional linkages between the legislatures of both countries.



SPORTS



Pakistan Women crush Zimbabwe by 168 runs in ODI series opener



PEAK POINT KARACHI: The Pakistan Women's Cricket Team defeated Zimbabwe Women's Cricket Team by 168 runs in the opening match of their three-match ODI series at the National Stadium Karachi on Monday.

Pakistan, batting first, posted a commanding total of 330 for 5 in their allotted 50 overs.

In reply, Zimbabwe were bowled out for 162, falling well short of the target.

Beloved Biza was the standout performer for Zimbabwe, scoring 53 runs, but lacked support from the rest of the batting lineup.

Pakistan's bowling attack delivered a disciplined performance, with captain Fatima Sana, alongside Aroob Shah and Tasmia Rubab, claiming two wickets each to dismantle the opposition.

In the final overs, Najvi Alvi provided the late surge with an explosive, unbeaten 56 off just 30 balls, pushing Pakistan to a strong finish.

Opener Gul Feroza scored 50 before being dismissed, while Captain Fatima Sana remained not out on 11.

Pakistan also benefited from 43 extras as Zimbabwe's bowling struggled to contain the batting onslaught.

For Zimbabwe, Precious Marange was the standout performer, claiming 3 wickets for 39 runs in her 10-over spell.

Kudakwashe Chigora and Nomvelo Sibanda picked up one wicket each.

With the victory, Pakistan take a 1-0 lead in the ODI series.

The second match is scheduled to be played on May 6.

PCB unveils PSL 11 Team of the Tournament



PEAK POINT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday announced the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 11 Team of the Tournament, naming Babar Azam skipper after a title-winning campaign. The Team of the Tournament comprises three players each from Peshawar Zalmi and Hyderabad Kingsmen, two apiece from Lahore Qalandars and Islamabad United, and one player each from Multan Sultans and Quetta Gladiators. The selection was made by a five-member panel drawn from the commentary team. The jury also finalised the Emerging Team of the Tournament, recognising the standout young performers of the season. A total of 44 matches were played from March 26 to May 3 across Lahore and Karachi. Babar Azam, who lifted his third PSL title as a player and first as captain, finished as the leading run-scorer with 588 runs. Opening the innings, he also claimed the Hanif Mohammad Cap and equalled the record for most runs in a single PSL season, matching Fakhar Zaman's tally from 2022. His campaign featured two centuries in four matches against Quetta Gladiators and Islamabad United. Peshawar Zalmi are further represented by Kusal Mendis and Suyyan Moqim. Mendis scored 550 runs, including four half-centuries and a century, while also contributing eight dismissals behind the stumps.

Pakistan ITF C'ship kicks off at PTF Tennis Complex



PEAK POINT ISLAMABAD: The McDonald's Pakistan ITF Championship 2026 (ITF M-15 Leg-2) kicked off here at the PTF Tennis Complex on Monday. A total of 86 men's players from 22 countries are participating in this prestigious international event. The participating nations include Pakistan, Russia, Sweden, Malaysia, Great Britain, Italy, Lithuania, Canada, Poland, Greece, Germany, Japan, and Reguig (Algeria), hold-

ing an ATP ranking of 844, is the top seed of the tournament. Qualifying – 1st Round Results: Sardam Ali ul-Haq (PAK) beat Qureshi, (RUS) 6-1, 6-1; Zia-ud-din Tufail, (TUR) 6-1, 6-1; extended their best performance to date as Ahmad Nael Qureshi (PAK) beat Ned Smith (GBR) 7-5, 6-4; and expressed gratitude to the sponsors for making the event possible. Observers say the results reflect deeper structural issues. While regional counterparts such as Thailand and Indonesia have made steady progress through sustained

FIFA faces World Cup broadcast crisis as India's Reliance offers \$20mn, China deal unannounced



PEAK POINT NEW DELHI: Millions of soccer fans in the world's two most populous nations may not be able to watch the World Cup that starts next month, due to a deadlock over broadcast rights in India and no official decision in China. India, a Reliance-

Disney joint venture has offered \$20 million for 2026 World Cup broadcast rights, a fraction of FIFA's ask, which was not acceptable to soccer's global governing body, two sources told Reuters on Monday.

FIFA rights for India, Reuters request for a third source with direct knowledge said. Disney, a joint venture There has also been no led by billionaire deal announcement Mukesh Ambani's for China, which FIFA Reliance, did not say accounted for respond to requests 49.8% of all hours of for comment, and neidue to a deadlock over viewing on digital and ther did Sony. social platforms glob- lack of a confirmed India and no official Sony held talks but ally during the 2022 broadcast agreement decision in China. FIFA did with India or China is World Cup. FIFA did with India or China is India, a Reliance- make an offer for not respond to a unusual at this stage.

Pakistan finishes last at Asia/Oceania Junior Tennis Qualifiers, Raising Alarm Over Youth Development



PEAK POINT KUCHING, MALAYSIA: Pakistan's Under-14 boys' team endured a dismal campaign at the World Junior Tennis Asia/Oceania Final Qualifying tournament, finishing 16th out of 16 teams after failing to secure a single victory. The result has triggered widespread concern within the country's tennis community, with critics questioning the effectiveness of the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) and its youth development programs. The week-long competition exposed glaring deficiencies in Pakistan's junior setup. Drawn into Group A,

the team suffered comprehensive 3-0 defeats against stronger sides including Japan, India, and Vietnam, failing to win even a single set. The early losses relegated Pakistan to the lower-tier playoffs, where the struggles continued. Despite showing marginal improvement, Pakistan fell 2-1 to New Zealand and Uzbekistan in subsequent ties, highlighting a lack of tactical maturity and match-closing ability. The campaign concluded with a 2-0 defeat to Sri Lanka, confirming Pakistan's position at the bottom of the standings. Observers say the results reflect deeper structural issues. While regional counterparts such as Thailand and Indonesia have made steady progress through sustained



grassroots investment, Pakistan's junior pipeline appears to have stagnated. Analysts point to insufficient training systems, limited exposure to competitive tennis, and inconsistent talent identification as key factors behind the decline. The performance has intensified scrutiny of the PTF, which has frequently highlighted developmental progress in recent years. Critics argue that such claims are not supported by results on the

international stage, especially at the junior level, where foundational growth is critical. "This outcome is not just disappointing—it is a warning sign," said a former national coach, speaking on condition of anonymity. "Without serious reforms in coaching, scouting, and player development, Pakistan risks falling further behind." Calls for accountability are growing louder, with stakeholders urging a comprehensive overhaul of the federation's approach. Suggestions include increased investment in grassroots programs, hiring qualified international coaches, and creating structured pathways for young players to compete regularly at higher levels. As the dust

World Junior Tennis Competition Boys	
Asia Oceania Final Qualifying	
Kuching Malaysia 28 th April to 3 rd May 2026	
Final team standings	
1.	Japan
2.	Australia
3.	Thailand
4.	Indonesia
5.	India
6.	Kazakhstan
7.	Hong Kong, China
8.	Sri Lanka
9.	Chinese Taipei
10.	China
11.	Vietnam
12.	New Zealand
13.	Uzbekistan
14.	Singapore
15.	Sri Lanka
16.	Pakistan

settles in Kuching, the message from the tournament is clear: without immediate and meaningful change, Pakistan's tennis future may continue to decline, leaving the country struggling to remain competitive in an increasingly demanding regional landscape.



N-45 bidding declared void as senate panel slams NHA over delays, alleged manipulation and transparency failures

NADEEM TANOLI
ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Economic Affairs took strong action against the National Highway Authority (NHA), declaring the bidding process for the N-45 Chakdara Chitral Road project null and void after identifying serious irregularities, procedural violations, and prolonged delays in execution of the foreign funded project. The committee, chaired by Saifullah Abro, expressed deep concern that the N-45 project, initiated in 2021, remains stalled despite loan agreements already in place, raising questions over governance, accountability, and financial discipline within the NHA. Members observed that delays have extended up to five to six years, terming them "criminal" and demanding a formal inquiry to fix responsibility on officials involved. The project, financed through a Korean Exim Bank loan, is divided into three sections. The Chakdara Timergara segment (38 km) has its PC-1 submitted but awaits approval, while the Akhgram Dir section remains in advanced design stages.

The most critical Kalatak Chitral section (47.98 km), valued at approximately \$93.7 million, faced major setbacks after a single bid by a Korean firm was found to be over 224% higher than the engineer's estimate, forcing authorities into a re-bidding process. However, the committee revealed that even the re-bidding phase is marred by controversy. It emerged that NHA submitted a bid evaluation report to the Korean bank on April 15, 2024 just two days after the committee meeting held on April 13, where concerns over manipulation were formally raised. Lawmakers alleged that this move was an attempt to bypass parliamentary oversight and secure external approval without addressing transparency issues. The committee further criticized NHA for failing to conduct proper pre qualification of bidders, violating basic procurement rules and the Terms of Reference (ToRs) agreed with project consultants. It was disclosed that technical verification of foreign firms' experience had not been completed prior to bid evaluation, and required documents were not shared with the committee despite repeated

directives. Members also questioned the absence of the project consultant during key meetings, noting that the consultant responsible for technical evaluation and procurement support was not involved in critical stages of the process. This raised further doubts about the integrity of the procurement framework. Serious concerns were also raised regarding the timing of verification activities. Evidence presented before the committee showed that multiple verification letters were issued by NHA only after the committee flagged irregularities, rather than before the bidding process, undermining the credibility of due diligence procedures. The committee rejected NHA's reliance on confidentiality clauses to withhold information, clarifying that parliamentary oversight bodies have full authority to review procurement records. Members stressed that lack of transparency indicates potential concealment of wrongdoing rather than procedural compliance. In response, the committee directed NHA to cancel the current bidding process and initiate a fresh, transparent tender within 30 days

using a single stage two envelope procedure to ensure proper technical and financial evaluation. Beyond procurement issues, lawmakers highlighted broader structural problems in NHA operations, including delays in foreign funded projects across the country, manipulation of tender processes, and over invoicing practices leading to significant financial losses. The committee was informed that procurement timelines for such projects can extend up to 350 days, but members argued that administrative inefficiencies and weak oversight are the real causes of delays. It was emphasized that loans begin accruing financial impact from the date of signing, making delays costly for the national exchequer. The NHA provided updates on ongoing works, including progress on N-55 and the Peshawar Northern Bypass project (30.2 km), where construction is underway with varying completion levels across segments. Officials stated that design changes due to flood impacts and irrigation concerns have increased project costs, with total expenditure now expected to rise beyond the initially

approved Rs27 billion. Despite these updates, the committee maintained that systemic issues in planning, procurement, and execution continue to undermine infrastructure development. To address these concerns, the committee constituted a sub-committee led by Syed Waqar Mehdi to conduct a comprehensive review of all foreign funded projects, including NHA schemes. The sub-committee will assess delays, financial implications, and identify officials responsible for mismanagement. The chairman warned that officers found responsible for project delays and irregularities should face strict penalties and be barred from holding senior positions in the future. The committee also reiterated its earlier recommendation to establish a dedicated monitoring desk within the Economic Affairs Division to oversee tendering processes and prevent manipulation. Lawmakers argued that placing an independent observer during bid openings could eliminate up to 90% of corruption in foreign-funded projects.

CDA seals offices of two illegal housing societies in Islamabad

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has initiated legal action against two illegal housing societies in Zone IV of the federal capital, sealing their offices for violations of planning and development laws. According to a press release issued on Monday, the civic agency sealed the site and public dealing offices of Shaheen Town, located on Lehtar Road, and Islamabad Green Paradise in the first phase of the operation. The CDA said the action was taken over the unlawful sale and purchase of plots in violation of Sections 49-C, 46 and 46-B of the CDA Ordinance, 1960, as well as Clause 5(1) and (3) of the ICT Zoning Regulations, 1992, and Clauses 40 to 42 of the Planning and Development Regulations for Private Housing Schemes, 2023. It added that the authority had repeatedly warned the public through newspaper advertisements to avoid investing in illegal housing schemes and to verify that developers had obtained a no-objection certificate (NOC) from the CDA before purchasing plots. The CDA said citizens could check the legal status and approved layout plans of housing schemes on its official website.

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Out with the old

Zarrar Khuhro
I KNOW you've heard this before but the old is really, truly and comprehensively dead now and the new is literally being born before our eyes, with its little head, crowned in blood, passing the geopolitical cervix. You can mourn the passing of the old and/or celebrate the coming of the new, but know that this is as natural a process as death and birth themselves; everything comes with an expiry date: be it people, nations, empires or international organisations. One of those organisations, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Companies, was dealt a body blow when its third largest oil-producing member, the UAE, acrimoniously exited the cartel, pledging to go its own way and pump oil unhampered by the Saudi-led OPEC's quotas, which Abu Dhabi has long bristled at. The UAE has been building its oil production capacity for years now and certainly has made the calculation that they are better off going their own way and exporting all the oil they want before the inevitable global energy transition takes place. While this has been promoted by some quarters as a boon for a global economy choked by the closure of Strait of Hormuz and the US blockade, the fact is that there is no way for this excess oil to reach the global markets anytime soon; the Fujairah bypass is indeed working but that's a drop in the global barrel at best. Nor are the UAE's only motivations financial or economic; the timing of the move, coming as it does during the war on Iran and in the backdrop of rising UAE-Saudi tensions, makes it clear that this is yet another manifestation of the UAE's 'never back down but rather double down' approach to foreign policy. By exiting OPEC, to the approval of US President Donald Trump, the UAE has clearly signalled that it sees itself at the heart of a new Israel-centric regional order and has gone all in on the vision of a Middle East (and beyond) dominated by Israel, the US and the UAE, with India likely being the Asian pole of this alignment. Called the 12U2 partnership or the 'West Asian Quad', this aims to be the dominant force in a region increasingly looking for local alignments underpinned by one or more of the great powers. Once useful organisations will be replaced by other systems. In doing so, the UAE has also dealt a blow to the increasingly ineffective Gulf Cooperation Council, which now looks to be going the way of the OIC or even, dare I say it, Saarc, which could not survive Indian hostility to Pakistan. In much the same way the GCC will likely not survive the Saudi-UAE clash or the contradictions and divides the war on Iran has laid bare. After all, Oman — which is closest to Iran amongst all the Gulf states — was conspicuously absent in the latest GCC meeting. This

Sickening presence

M Nadeem Nadir
A married woman tells her friend that she has maintained her weight within a healthy BMI range. She lives a comfortable life in a ten-marla house with her in-laws, while her husband works abroad. The other woman, in a self-satisfied tone, says that she has gained a healthy amount of weight while living in a three-marla house with her husband, who holds a government job. The second woman had, in fact, taken the mention of the ten-marla house as a sideswipe at her. She then told a story to the first, claiming to reveal the secret behind her weight loss. Once, a king, wishing to test the acumen of his ageing wazir, gave him a goat and ordered that it be fed continuously without gaining any weight. The task seemed impossible. If the goat was fed, it would gain weight, and if it was starved, the wazir would fail the king's command. Puzzled and under pressure, the wazir was at his wits' end. In the final hours of the night, as he lay staring at the starry sky, he found his eureka moment. After one month, the king visited the wazir. The wazir greeted him with an equally triumphant smile, which unsettled the king. The king was baffled to see that the goat appeared somewhat emaciated and demanded that the wazir swear under oath that the goat had been fed a constant supply of fodder. The wazir calmly affirmed that the goat had indeed masticated the fodder and chewed the cud throughout the day. As kings are never accustomed to suspense in the presence of courtiers, the king appreciated the wazir's acumen but wanted to know how he accomplished the feat. The courtiers surmised that it must have been something unnatural with the fodder that couldn't be assimilated, or that the goat must have been sick with loss of appetite. The wazir declared nothing was wrong with the fodder or the goat. Now, the king was running out of patience. He announced royal perks and privileges for the wazir, provided he would divulge the secret first. Courtesy Tribune

Heat without relief

Karachi touched a searing 42°C on May 3, with the "feels-like" temperature surging close to 49°C. While it marks the city's hottest day of the season so far, this experience is not necessarily limited to the mega city alone. Across Pakistan, an early and intensifying heat pattern is taking hold, one that is broader, deeper and far more dangerous than a single day's headline suggests. The Pakistan Meteorological Department had already warned of rising temperatures and heatwave conditions across Sindh and adjoining regions, with several districts expected to remain 4 to 6 degrees above normal. In upper and central Sindh, cities such as Hyderabad, Sukkur and Jacobabad are bracing for temperatures exceeding 44°C. Southern Punjab is also under similar stress, while forecasts suggest that this may only be the beginning of multiple heatwave spells through May. What makes the current spell particularly alarming is its timing and intensity. Early May is no stranger to heat, but sustained conditions well above seasonal norms point to a shifting climate baseline. Yet Pakistan continues to respond to heatwaves as isolated weather events rather than as recurring public health emergencies. Hospitals are rarely equipped with dedicated heat response protocols.