HTML Newspaper Recreation – Code Explanation

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Topic: Daily Jang (July 5, 1977) – Operation Fair Play

1. Code Structure Overview

The project is built as a single `index.html` file using standard HTML5 boilerplate. The document structure follows the semantic hierarchy:

- **`<!DOCTYPE html>`**: Declares the document type.
- **`<head>`**: Contains the meta tags for character encoding and the page title.
- **`<body>`**: Holds the visible newspaper layout, styled using **inline CSS** (`style="..."`) as per the assignment restrictions (no external CSS files).
- **Layout Strategy:** The core grid system relies on HTML `<table>` elements to mimic the rigid, multi-column structure of a printed newspaper.

2. Key Sections Breakdown

- **The Header (Masthead):** I used a `<header>` tag containing a `<table>` with width 100%. This split the header into two cells: the left cell aligns the date and pricing information (`text-align: left`), and the right cell holds the "Daily Jang" logo (`text-align: right`). A double border (`border-bottom: 4px double #000`) was applied to visually separate the masthead from the news.
- **The Main Headline (Banner):** The massive Urdu headline ("Army Overthrows...") was recreated using a `<section>` block containing an `<h1>`. I used `font-size: 52px` and `text-transform: uppercase` to replicate the "shouting" style of the original breaking news banner.
- **The 3-Column Content Area:** This is the most complex section. I used a single `<table>` row with three `<td>` cells:
  - **Left Column (20%):** A sidebar for the "Deposed Leaders" (Z.A. Bhutto), distinguished by a light gray background color.
  - **Middle Column (50%):** The main `<article>` containing the text of the Martial Law proclamation.

- ○ **Right Column (30%):** A dedicated column for the new leader (General Zia) and his address to the nation.

3. Design Decisions

- **Why Tables?** Since modern layout tools like Flexbox and Grid (external CSS) were forbidden, I used HTML tables. Tables allow for precise column widths (20% / 50% / 30%) that do not collapse, ensuring the "print" look remains intact regardless of the browser window size.
- **Semantic HTML:** Despite using tables for layout, I ensured the content inside was semantic. I wrapped the main story in `<article>`, the images in `<figure>` with `<figcaption>`, and the navigation in `<nav>`. This fulfills the requirement for semantic markup while maintaining the retro layout.

4. Challenges & Solutions

- **Challenge:** The varying lengths of content in the three columns caused alignment issues where shorter columns would float to the middle vertically.
  - ○ **Solution:** I applied `vertical-align: top` to all `<td>` elements. This forced the images and text to stick to the top of the row, creating a clean, professional newspaper line at the start of the article.
- **Challenge:** Creating visual separation between stories without using standard CSS margins.
  - ○ **Solution:** I used the `border-right` and `border-left` properties on the table cells themselves to draw vertical divider lines, perfectly mimicking the column separators found in the 1977 scan.