



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
ہم سے مقدم ہن محمد نے بیان کیا انہوں نے  
کہا کہ میں نے ہمارے بچے کا منہ لگائے بیان  
کیا ان سے عبید اللہ نے بیان کیا ان سے نبی  
نے بیان کیا اور ان سے عبید اللہ بن عمر رضی  
اللہ عنہما نے بیان کیا کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ  
علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا قیامت کے دن زمین اس  
کی گھٹی میں ہوگی اور آسمان اس کے دانے  
باتھ میں ہوگا پھر کہے گا کہ میں بادشاہوں  
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## Azerbaijan, Morocco discuss inter-parliamentary ties

As part of her working visit to the Republic of Uzbekistan, Speaker of the Milli Majlis of Azerbaijan Sahiba Gafarova met with Speaker of the House of Councillors of the Kingdom of Morocco, Sidi Mohamed Ould Errachid.



## Message of CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif on World Health Day

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif in her message on the World Health Day reaffirmed her commitment to provide best health and medical treatment facilities to the people of Punjab. She reiterated that comprehensive health reforms have been launched in Punjab under the vision of 'Sehatmand Punjab'.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Shawwal Al-Mukarram 8, Tuesday, April 8, 2025

www.dailyspokesman.net

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Daily Spokesman Vol: 18, Issue: 353 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding reforms in the maritime sector on Monday.



Photo: PID

## PM Shehbaz, Gen Asim Munir to address Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum



### Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025 is scheduled to be held from April 8 to 9 in Islamabad, aiming to boost investment in the country's mineral sector.

According to the details, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir will attend the forum and also deliver keynote addresses.

The event is expected to attract high-profile foreign dignitaries, federal ministers, secretaries, top corporate executives, and prominent media personalities.

A high-level US delegation led by Eric Meyer, Senior Bureau Official for the US Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, will also attend the forum.

Foreign investors have already begun arriving in Paki-

stan, with delegations from the Asian Development Bank and China Geological Survey already reaching Islamabad ahead of the event.

The forum, a joint initiative of the Government of Pakistan and the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), presents a vital opportunity to fully harness the country's vast mineral resources.

Global investors are expected to participate actively, opening up new avenues for development in the mineral sector. International experts will also discuss the effective use of modern technologies in the mining industry.

Key sessions will focus on investment in major mineral projects, including Reko Diq, as well as on issues of security and government policy—making the forum a prime opportunity for potential investors.

# Bloodbath at PSX after Trump's tariff war hammers international markets

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) plunged by 3,882 points Monday amid global market turmoil following China's retaliatory tariffs against the United States.

The benchmark KSE-100 index plunged by 3,882.18 points, or 3.27 per cent, to stand at 114,909.48 from the previous close of 118,791.66.

Earlier, the trade was halted at the PSX around midday on the market dropped more than 8,000 points as various global markets crashed amid an ongoing tariff war.

The KSE-100 index lost 8,235.88, or -6.93% to 110,555.78—one of the steepest single-day drops in recent months—when trading was stopped.

Earlier in the morning session,



the PSX was hit by a bearish trend as the KSE-100 index plunged more than 3,000 points amid a global stock crash.

The market opened at 117,601.62 but fell steadily, with more than 147 million shares exchanging hands. Around 11:30am, the benchmark KSE-100 index plunged

by 4,411.07 points, or 3.71%, to reach 114,380.59.

Earlier on Friday, the 100 index turned around to a bearish trend after hitting the record high of 120,796.67 points. However, it retreated later, losing 146.45 points and closing at 118,791.66 points.

A total of 553,668,391 shares

were traded during the day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 35.492 billion.

As many as 457 companies had transacted their shares in the stock market; 151 of them recorded gains and 258 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 48 companies remained unchanged.

Stock markets and oil prices collapsed further on a black Monday for markets as US President Donald Trump stood firm over his tariffs despite recession fears.

Trading floors across Asia and Europe were overcome by waves of further selling after last week's sharp losses.

Hong Kong's drop of 13.2 percent Monday was its worst in nearly three decades.

Trillions of dollars have been wiped off combined stock market valuations in recent sessions.

Taipei stocks suffered their worst fall on record Monday, tanking 9.7 percent, while Frankfurt dived as much as 10 percent and Tokyo closed down by almost eight percent.

Hong Kong's loss was exaggerated as the index had been closed Friday for a public holiday.

Wall Street futures suffered another drubbing, while bitcoin tumbled.

The dollar was steadier after sharp losses last week.

"The carnage in global equity markets has continued," noted Thomas Mathews, Asia Pacific head of markets at Capital Economics.

He said Trump could still pare back his tariffs.

"But, if he doesn't, equities could get a lot sicker yet."

A 10-percent "baseline" tariff on imports from around the world took effect Saturday.

## Pakistan appoints Binance Founder CZ as Strategic Adviser to Pakistan Crypto Council

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a landmark development for Pakistan's digital finance landscape, Binance founder Changpeng Zhao — popularly known as CZ — has been appointed as the Strategic Adviser to the Pakistan Crypto Council, signalling a major leap

forward in the country's ambitions to embrace blockchain, Web3, and digital finance.

CZ's visit to Pakistan also included separate meetings with the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, underscoring the high-level commitment to building a regulatory framework and tech ecosystem that fosters



innovation.

Bilal Bin Saqib, the Chief Adviser to the Finance Minister for the Pakistan Crypto Council, said: "Pakistan is opening its doors to the future of the financial world. Who better than CZ to guide us on this journey?"

As a strategic adviser, CZ will offer guidance on regulation,

infrastructure, education, and adoption of crypto technologies in Pakistan.

Emphasizing the country's youth potential, he remarked, "Pakistan is a country of over 240 million people, and more than 60% of the population is under 30. The potential here is immense."

## SC questions Constitutionality of civilian trials in military courts

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan Monday resumed its high-profile hearing on the legality of civilian trials in military courts, with the Ministry of Defence's counsel, Khawaja Haris, presenting extensive arguments in support of the military's jurisdiction.

However, he was unable to complete his submissions, prompting the bench to adjourn proceedings until Tuesday.

The seven-member constitutional bench, led by Justice Aminuddin Khan and comprising Justices Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Musarrat Hilali, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Naeem Akhtar Afghan, and

Shahid Bilal, is hearing petitions challenging the trial of civilians in military courts—a matter that has raised critical constitutional questions about the separation of powers and judicial oversight.

Khawaja Haris argued that under the Pakistan Army Act, the armed forces have the legal authority to arrest civilians involved in acts such as vandal-

izing military installations or stealing military property. He emphasized that in such cases, military jurisdiction applies, citing judicial precedents, including rulings by former Chief Justice Saeed-uz-Zaman Siddiqui.

Justice Jamal Mandokhail, however, raised critical concerns about the constitutional basis for

these trials.

He pointed out that military courts do not appear to fall under Article 175 of the Constitution, which governs the structure and authority of regular courts.

In response, Haris maintained that court-martial proceedings derive their legitimacy from separate constitutional provisions and the Army Act.

### Bureau Report

LAHORE: A medical team comprising doctors of Sharif Medical Hospital conducted

## SHC issues stay order against IRSA's water availability certificate

### Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court has issued a stay order against the water availability certificate issued by the Indus River System Authority (IRSA) for the construction of canals, including Cholistan and Thal.

According to the report, a petition was filed in the court challenging both the structure of IRSA and the issuance of the water certificate.

The petitioner's lawyer argued that IRSA was illegally formed as no federal member had been appointed from Sindh, rendering all of its



decisions unlawful, including the water certificate issued on January 25.

The federal government requested more time to submit a response, after which the court ordered a detailed reply by April 18. Sindh's Advocate General emphasised that under the stay order, all canal construction must cease immediately.



# AJK Bank President seeks President's guidance amid challenges

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Bank Shahid Shehzad Mir called on President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry here today. During their meeting, Mr. Mir provided an in-depth overview of the Bank's performance and discussed various challenges the institution was currently facing. Speaking on the occasion, the President directed the Bank's chief to make every possible effort to achieve scheduled Bank status. Barrister Chaudhry pledged his complete support in this regard.



## Called on

STOKE-ON-TRENT, UK: A Overseas Kashmiris delegation called on President PPP Azad Kashmir Choudhry Muhammad Yasir at his residence led by Choudhry Radib Waheed including Muhammad Ayub, Zaheer Abbas, Muhammad Ilyas, Ch Yasir Ali, and others on Monday.



# Pakistan Army Martyrs' sacrifices to be written in golden letters of history

**Spokesman Report**

RAWALPINDI: The All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference observed the anniversary of the martyrs of Gayari with devotion and respect throughout Azad Kashmir on the instructions of the President of the Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, in which prayer ceremonies were held for the martyrs of Gayari and other martyrs. On this occasion, Fateha was recited for the martyrs for their eternal reward. On this occasion, the President of the Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan said



that the sacrifices of the Pakistan Army will be written in golden letters in history. The soldiers of the Pakistan Army have fought the enemy on every front in defense of the homeland and on the Line of Control of Azad Kashmir,



and the sacrifices of the Pakistan Army for the defense of the homeland are immortal. Even today, the soldiers of the Pakistan Army are making sacrifices from Balochistan to Waziristan and the Line of Control.

Meanwhile, on the instructions of the President of the Muslim Conference, the Kashmiris living in Azad Kashmir and all over Pakistan observed the anniversary of the martyrs of Gayari with devotion and respect. On this occasion, the leaders of the Muslim Conference, Mirza Muhammad Shafiq Jaral Advocate, Senior Vice President Sardar Altaf Hussain, Secretary General Mohartama Mehr-e-Nissa, Central Chief Organizer Raja Saqib Majeed, former government minister Shamim Ali Malik, Chairman of the Youth Wing Sardar Usman Ali Khan, Raja Muhammad

Latif Hasrat, Syed Nazar Abbas Shah, Chaudhry Khizr Hayat, Major Retired Nasrullah Khan, Ayesha Munsif, Kausar Parveen Advocate, Afshan Saeed Advocate, Bushra Raja, Nasreen Akhtar Raja, Sardar Abid Razaq, Sheikh Maqsood Ahmed, Sajjad Anwar Abbasi, Syed Yasir Naqvi Advocate, Syed Tawsoor Mousavi, Maimuna Kiani Advocate, Syed Saqlain Fida Kazmi, Raja Zarin Khan, Syed Nazar Abbas also saluted the martyrs who laid down their lives in the protection of the homeland alongside the armed forces to eradicate the scourge of terrorism.

# Supreme Court Orders Crackdown on Unhealthy Meat in Azad Kashmir

**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: Under the direction of AJK Supreme Court Azad Jammu and Kashmir Food Authority Muzaffarabad continues its operations against unhealthy and substandard food items.



Meat coming from outside districts seized at Barrakot post. According to the order of the Supreme Court of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, ordering meat from outside districts is a crime. Which

was seized and action has been initiated against the concerned.

Controller Muzaffarabad Abrar Mir said that implementing the clear instructions of the Supreme Court that

bringing meat from outside districts is a crime, the meat brought to Azad Kashmir from outside districts has been seized by setting up a checkpoint at Barrakot post and action has been initiated against the concerned as per the law. We will ensure the provision of quality food to the people. A crackdown against substandard food items is underway. Business operators/traders should ensure compliance with the SO of the Food Authority, otherwise strict action will be taken.

# Islamic Ideology Council's Farewell Meeting Concludes with Commendations

**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: A farewell meeting of the Islamic Ideology Council Azad Jammu and Kashmir, presided over by its Chairman and Chief Justice of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan, was held here today. Besides AJK premier Chudhary Anwar ul Haq, the meeting was attended by members of the council including Maulana Saeed Yousaf Khan, Maulana Sahibzada Pir Muhammad Habibur Rehman Mehboobi, Maulana Qazi Mahmoodul Hassan Ashraf, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Hussain Chishti, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Arif, Maulana Altaf Hussain Saifi, Maulana



Qari Muhammad Azam Arif, Mufti Syed Kifayat Hussain Naqvi and other relevant authorities.

Addressing the meeting, Prime Minister Haq highlighted the Council's significant contribution in promoting religious pluralism and interfaith harmony in the state. He said that the Islamic Council's beauty and strength lie in its knowledgeable and highly learned scholars, who

represent a variety of schools of thought and perspectives.

The Prime Minister stated that the government has prioritized the Council and is committed to fully implementing its recommendations. Praising the dedicated efforts of the scholars, he noted that their contributions to societal improvement were truly commendable.

The Prime Minister also assured the participants that

the Council would receive priority support in terms of office space, staffing, and funding. Addressing the meeting, Chief Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan, who also serves as the chairman of the Council, commended the Prime Minister for attending the farewell gathering of the outgoing members. He noted that the Prime Minister's presence has significantly enhanced the forum's importance and effectiveness.

He remarked that the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir liberated the territory in 1947 after a hard-fought struggle based on the two-nation theory, allowing the majority population in the region to live freely in accordance with the principles of Islam and Sunnah.

Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan highlighted that Azad Kashmir holds the distinguished honor of being the first region in the Islamic world, following Saudi Arabia, to implement Islamic penal laws. In their address, the members of the Council reiterated their commitment to work together to promote interfaith harmony in the future.

## District Magistrate cracks down on armed guards at events



**Bureau Report**

BHIMBER: District Magistrate's action on public complaints Ban on armed guards accompanying weapons exhibitions and events

The District Magistrate Mr. Mirza Arshad Mehmood wrote in his order that there are serious concerns from the common citizens that some non-governmental persons are carrying armed guards without permission, which creates a sense of fear and insecurity in the city. Due to armed guards, there are also fears of terrorist incidents, which are not in the public interest in any way. To prevent this illegal situation, Section 144 is being implemented in the three tehsils for keeping armed guards during events or movements. The District Magistrate has issued an order in this regard and directed the Sub-Divisional Magistrates of the three tehsils to implement it, while a letter has been sent to the SSP Bhimber District Information Office Bhimber for publicity in this regard. The District Magistrate further wrote that if any person or persons participate in events with armed guards or invite armed guards to the event or encourage them in any way, action will be taken against them. Action will also be taken against the organizers of the event in which armed persons are caught displaying weapons.

## Afghan cardholders face arrests as deadline expires

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: Afghan ACC cardholders were given a deadline until March 21, and after the deadline expired, arrests are being made in a planned manner by the administration and police. These views were expressed by Additional Deputy Commissioner General Anil Saeed in his video statement. He stated that offices have been established in each tehsil for the identification of Afghan citizens, and after verification, they are transferred to Attock for complete investigation. In Attock city, various departments including FIA, NADRA, Health Department, Rescue 1122, Revenue, and Police are performing their respective duties. He further stated that around 800 Afghan citizens have arrived at the Attock camp so far, out of which 200 have already been transferred through the Torkham border, and the process of transferring others is ongoing. Attock is the last district of Punjab province, and Afghan citizens from all other districts are being sent here. After the necessary paperwork, they are being transferred to their homeland.

## Woman and four men arrested for drug trafficking in Attock police operations

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: Attock Police operations against drug dealers continue effectively - Over 5 kilograms of hashish recovered, 5 suspects arrested including a woman. According to details, on the instructions of District Police Officer Attock, Dr. Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan, Attock police are actively conducting operations against drug traffickers. In this regard, Saddar Hassan Abdal Police recovered 2 kilograms of hashish from a notorious female drug dealer, Sakina Bibi, widow of Zahid Hussain, resident of Poor Miana, Tehsil Hassan Abdal. In another operation, an attempt to smuggle drugs was foiled by arresting Sajid Iqbal, son of Shahid Iqbal, resident of Jabi Khattak Kanah Kalan, Pabbi District Nowshera, from whom 600 grams of hashish were recovered, and Irshad Zahoore, son of Abdul Zahoore, resident of Jaloza Jabba Khattak, Pabbi Nowshera, from whom 540 grams of hashish were recovered. Meanwhile, Hazro Police recovered 1,600 grams of hashish from drug dealer Khurram Shehzad alias Ghouri, son of Bahram Shehzad, resident of Saydan, and 520 grams of hashish from Amjad Mahmood, son of Ghulam Sarwar, resident of Jatal, Hazro. Attock police have registered separate cases in various police stations and placed the suspects behind bars.

## Free digital training empowers 1,000+ students at University of Malakand

PESHAWAR: Ranking Grow LLC, an award winning Digital Marketing Agency, has once again proven its commitment of uplifting underserved communities by providing free digital marketing training to over 1,000 students at the University of Malakand.

According to a press release issued here on Monday, this initiative stands as the largest digital training program ever conducted in the university's history and a major milestone for the region.

The students, mostly from underprivileged areas of KP, were given the opportunity to gain high-demand digital skills entirely free of cost. As a result of this training, more than 200 students were selected for internships, over 100 secured jobs, and several others successfully launched their freelancing careers and online businesses.

The impact of this initiative reflects

Ammad Ali's, Founder and CEO of RankingGrow LLC, broader mission of empowering youth through skill development and digital opportunities.

Ammad Ali has so far trained more than 10,000 students across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, creating hundreds of job opportunities and supporting youth through long-term, skill-based education. He stated that he will continue to offer free digital marketing training in remote and underserved areas of the province.

He also expressed his commitment to helping small startups grow online by providing mentorship and financial support.

In recognition of his remarkable contribution to youth empowerment and digital growth, the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa honored Ammad Ali with the Pride of KP Award, while the Directorate of Youth Affairs presented him with the High Achiever Award.

Under his visionary leadership, RankingGrow has grown from a one-person startup into an internationally recognized digital marketing and IT services company with over 100 employees. Based in Haripur, the company serves clients around the world.

Ammad Ali has announced plans to expand his training efforts even further, aiming to provide free training to another 10,000 students from underprivileged areas of KP in the coming years.







Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr ..... 4:22 am  
Zohr ..... 12:10 pm  
Asr ..... 4:44 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:33 pm  
Isha ..... 7:59 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 &  
& Rescue Services ..... 4451122  
Motorway Police ..... 9266044  
Motorway Police ..... 9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

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CMH ..... 561111  
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MH ..... 561116  
Cantt Hospital ..... 9270907-11  
DHQ ..... 5556311-4  
RGH ..... 9290301-7  
Holy Family ..... 9290322-7

# Punjab Governor congratulates BISP employees on winning elections

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Programme Organizes the Oath Taking Ceremony Of The Newly Elected Presidents And Cabinet Of The All Pakistan Bisp Employees Welfare Association And Bisp Officers Association

Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider attends as Special Guest; Congratulates Newly Elected Members for Winning Elections Through the Democratic Process; Highlights BISP's Role in Eradicating Poverty in Pakistan; Commends BISP Employees for Their Dedication and Hard Work in Challenging Circumstances; Acknowledges BISP's Development Under Senator Rubina Khalid's Leadership

An oath-taking ceremony for the newly elected presidents and cabinet members of the All Pakistan BISP Employees Welfare Association and BISP Officers Association was organized under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) at its headquarters today. The ceremony was presided over by BISP Chairperson Senator Rubina Khalid, while Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan was the Chief Guest at the ceremony. Other political leaders, representatives of government employees' organizations, and a large number of BISP field staff were present at

the ceremony.

In his address to the participants, Governor Sardar Saleem Haider congratulated the newly elected members for winning the elections through the democratic process. He stated that the Benazir Income Support Program is playing a positive role in eradicating poverty in Pakistan. BISP is a sacred institution, and its employees have performed their duties under challenging circumstances with full dedication, hard work, and responsibility. The Governor emphasized that after Senator Rubina Khalid took over as Chairperson, the institution embarked on a journey of development. He advised employees to be sincere, good-natured, and to earn a halal livelihood for the betterment of themselves, the institution, and the country.

Senator Rubina Khalid further explained that, following the instructions of President Asif Ali Zardari, a new banking model was introduced to ensure that money is paid to deserving women in a dignified and transparent manner. She also quoted Bibi Shaheed, who once said, "Skill is your asset." She said that skills can neither be snatched nor stolen.

At the end of the ceremony, Senator Rubina Khalid presented a shield to Governor Sardar Saleem Haider. The



Governor presented shields to the newly elected President of the All Pakistan BISP Employees Welfare Association, the BISP Officers Association, Mr. Sardar Shiraz, and the President of the BISP Officers Association, Mr. Sardar Azmat.

## PODA Advocates for Right to Health as a Constitutional Right

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: On World Health Day, PODA Alliance for Rural Women Leadership-Pakistan, representing over 2,000 rural women leaders from 130+ districts, reiterates its call to incorporate right to health in the fundamental chapter of rights of the Constitution of Pakistan.

There is no specific article directly related to right to health in the Constitution of Pakistan. However, Pakistan affirms its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as its own national development agenda through a unanimous National Assembly Resolution in 2016. SDG 3 states "ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages." In this perspective, it's obligation of the government to fulfill all indicators described under SDG 3 specifically and Article 38 of the Constitution of Pakistan which safeguards access to healthcare services.

Focusing on the current theme of World Health Day, Ms. Sameena Nazir, Chief Executive Officer of PODA said "recognizing health as a constitutional right is key to quality healthcare for every mother and newborn. Advocacy, policy reforms, and investment in healthcare infrastructure can make this right a reality."

The current theme "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures" highlights the importance of ensuring healthy starts in life. By addressing child marriages and promoting access to healthcare, Pakistan can work towards achieving this goal and creating a brighter future for its citizens, said Sameena Nazir.

## Meeting with Chinese Delegation

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Education Mr. Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani met with a high powered Chinese delegation led by the Chairman, CIIC Technology Group Co. Ltd. Mr. Wang Dang on Monday.



Photo: PID

## Simple lifestyle changes can help prevent diabetes, say experts

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Diabetes is increasing at an alarming rate in Pakistan. Every fourth person has become a diabetic. Diabetes has become a major and major challenge. In this critical situation, according to a conservative estimate, 33 million adults are living with diabetes.

The prevalence rate of diabetes is 26.7. A significant proportion of diabetic patients are undiagnosed and untreated, with an estimated 8 to 9 million people undiagnosed. Between 2000 and 2021, the number of adults with diabetes in Pakistan increased from approximately 5.2 million to 33 million. Which is a huge economic burden.

A large portion of the per capita income in Pakistan is affected by diabetes and according to a conservative estimate, this burden is worth \$ 25 billion. Which is 1.6% of Pakistan's GDP.

These views were expressed by Civil Society Forum Multan Chief Coordinator



Shahid Mahmood Ansari, President Dr. Irfan Ahmed Paracha, Chief Organizer Aurangzeb Khan Baloch and Organizer Khalid Chatta in a special press conference organized on the occasion of World Health Day.

While presenting recommendations, social leaders demanded that District Jail Multan be shifted out of the city and a

diabetes hospital be built in its place. Free supply of insulin should be ensured in government hospitals so that the common man continues to benefit from this facility without interruption.

Obesity and high sugar consumption are playing a major role in the increasing rate of diabetes in Pakistan. The rate of diabetes is higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

## Opportunity for Fostering Economic Cooperation

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) is set to host a high-profile business delegation of 60 members of different sectors from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on April 21, 2025, at its Head Office in Karachi.

President FPCCI continued that the ASEAN comprises an alliance of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Singapore, Myanmar, the Philippines, Vietnam and Brunei. The meeting will be followed by a special B2B session; providing a platform for Pakistani businessmen to engage with their ASEAN counterparts and



explore potential business opportunities. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh added that

the ASEAN delegation comprising prominent businessmen from various sectors - textiles, apparel, agriculture,

fisheries, food, beverages, carpets, footwear, construction, insurance, information technology, oil, handicrafts, jewelry, cosmetics, perfumes, healthcare, renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, coffee beans, green coffee, electronics, fruits and spices - aims to strengthen trade relations and explore business opportunities between Pakistan and ASEAN countries.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh explained that the relations between Pakistan and ASEAN are multidimensional and have grown significantly over the years due to mutual trust, cooperation, and cultural linkages. He has invited all stakeholders and business leaders to join the B2B session with the ASEAN delegation to be hosted by FPCCI.



A group photograph of the wedding ceremony of Zia ul Qamar Khan with Acting Malaysian Ambassador at Islamabad

## DC Naeem Sindhu visits DHQ Hospital



Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sindhu paid a surprise visit to DHQ Hospital Toba Tek Singh, as part of ongoing efforts under CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision to improve public healthcare. He inspected emergency, pediatric, OPD, lab, pharmacy departments and interacted with doctors and patients. The DC reviewed the medicine stock and directed staff to ensure free medicine availability, warning of strict action in case of negligence.

He also reviewed cleanliness, staff attendance and visited the under-construction Trauma Centre, instructing for speedy completion. The DC said quality healthcare delivery is a top priority of the Punjab government.

## Prize Distribution Ceremony was held

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: A prize distribution ceremony was held at Government Primary School 379 JB Toba Tek Singh to honour top-performing students. CEO Education Ms. Aqeela Intikhab Khan, who attended as chief guest, praised the students' performance and stressed the importance of increasing enrolment in public schools. She said that under CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif's leadership, efforts are underway to improve public education standards. DEO (Women) Dr. Saima, DEO Sardar Javid Iqbal and AEO Muhammad Rizwan also spoke on the occasion, urging parents to prefer government schools.



## Pakistan issues visas to Indian pilgrims for Baisakhi celebrations

NEW DELHI: On the occasion of Baisakhi celebrations, the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi has issued over 6,500 visas to pilgrims from India to participate in the annual festival scheduled to be held in Pakistan from 10-19 April 2025. The pilgrims would, inter-alia, visit Gurdwara Panja Sahib, Gurdwara Nankana Sahib and Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib.

Expressing his views on the occasion, the Charge d' Affaires Saad Ahmad Warraich, stated that the large number of visas issued by the Government of Pakistan was a manifestation of our policy to foster harmony and promote understanding between peoples, cultures and religions. He added that Pakistan would continue to facilitate such visits to sacred and holy sites.

Every year, a large number of Yatrees from India visit Pakistan to observe various religious festivals/occasions under the framework of the Pakistan-India Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines of 1974.



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# China's Angry Rebuttal to Trump's Tariff Tsunami

**M**y reading of China has always been of a country that is sagacious, forgiving and accommodating—an entity flowing naturally through history, shaped by the burden and blessing of over 5,000 years of civilizational legacy. China has long carried the unique distinction of never being an occupying force in the historical sense, never driven by the imperial ambition to rule the world. Despite holding immense power at different junctures in history, China refrained from conquest. Its Great Wall was built not as a launchpad for outward domination, but as a safeguard for inward integration. This tradition of strategic restraint and internal focus has morphed into the philosophical foundation of President Xi Jinping's economic and diplomatic agenda in the 21st century.

China's foreign policy, even amid rising global tensions, has maintained its emphasis on win-win cooperation, mutual growth, and infrastructural diplomacy. It does not promote regime change, nor does it meddle in the internal politics of other nations. China's strength lies in its ability to uplift weaker economies through massive infrastructure projects, energy support, port development, and institutional capacity-building. These efforts are not intended to dominate but to elevate. That is the spirit of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), offering struggling nations an alternative model of growth without conditionalities that mirror neo-colonialism.

China argued that the United States had, in fact, been the largest beneficiary of globalization. With a massive 25% share in world trade, the U.S. economic domi-

nance was built on the very trade practices it was now dismantling. China emphasized that it did not initiate the trade war but would not hesitate to defend its interests. It pledged to open up its economy further, reduce tariffs, and increase imports—not out of compulsion, but to demonstrate its commitment to global cooperation. This stands in sharp contrast to the inward-looking, protectionist tendencies of the Trump administration.

China's response was calm but resolute. It promised to uphold the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. It reaffirmed its belief in genuine multilateralism, rejecting all forms of unilateralism and economic coercion. China stood firmly in support of the international system with the United Nations at its core and the multilateral trading system with the WTO at its foundation.

China's declaration also emphasized that the vast majority of nations still believed in fairness, justice, and the rule of international law. These countries, it argued, would eventually stand on the right side of history—not because of allegiance to any one superpower, but because equity must triumph over hegemony.

Trump, meanwhile, sought to justify the economic fallout from his tariff blitzkrieg by promising future investments totaling \$7 trillion. However, even he admitted that the U.S. stock market had lost nearly \$6 trillion in value within days. While the theoretical future investment may or may not materialize over four to five years, the immediate damage was undeniable. The

American consumer bore the brunt of the tariffs, with increased prices on everything from electronics to household goods.

What Trump failed to recognize—or perhaps chose to ignore—is that tariffs on imports function as a hidden tax on American citizens. When tariffs are levied on goods from China or any other country, U.S. importers pass those costs onto retailers, who in turn pass them onto consumers. So, while the U.S. Treasury may gain in the short term from tariff revenues, it is ultimately the American people who pay the price.

This disconnect between political rhetoric and economic reality triggered public backlash. Demonstrations erupted across the United States, not just from ideological opponents of Trump but from ordinary citizens suffering from inflation and job insecurity. The symbols associated with Trump's protectionist agenda—banners, flags, and campaign props—became the targets of public outrage, a visible expression of disillusionment with failed promises and mounting hardship.

The damage was not just economic; it was reputational. America's standing as a leader of the free world, a promoter of open markets and democratic values, was called into question. The aggressive imposition of tariffs on allies and adversaries alike sent a message that America was retreating from the world stage, abandoning its commitments, and undermining its credibility.

What is the via media in this escalating trade conflict? The answer lies in dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect.

Instead of unilaterally imposing tariffs, the United States must return to the table and engage its partners through negotiation, evidence-based studies, and inclusive policy-making. Any trade policy that causes disproportionate harm to a segment of the global population—be it American or foreign—is inherently flawed.

Tariffs should be the last resort, not the first weapon of choice. They must be evaluated based on who truly benefits and who bears the cost. If the people of both nations stand to gain, then policy adjustments may be justified. But if tariffs disproportionately hurt consumers, strain diplomatic ties, and fracture global supply chains, then they are not only counterproductive but dangerous.

The world today demands cooperation over confrontation. It requires strategic empathy rather than economic nationalism. China's model of infrastructure-led diplomacy and economic integration may not be perfect, but it offers an alternative vision to brute-force protectionism. A world driven by consultation and shared prosperity is far more stable than one governed by unilateral decrees and economic coercion.

The battle between tariff wars and trade cooperation is not just a contest of policies—it is a contest of visions. The world must choose between retreating into silos or building bridges across continents. In this defining moment, China's calm and strategic response to Trump's aggressive tariffs may well mark a turning point in the global order.

It is a call for equity—not hegemony.  
*Writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France and Former MD, SRBC.*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Trump's Approval Rating Hits Negative Territory for First Time

President Donald Trump's approval rating has turned negative for the first time in a poll conducted by a Republican-leaning firm that coincided with big protests across the United States against his policies as the latest round of tariffs took effect Saturday.

Analysts said a shift in Trump's numbers could influence support from Republican lawmakers, affect his ability to push through his agenda and shape the political landscape, heading into the midterm election cycle.

According to Rasmussen's daily poll tracker, as of April 4, Trump's approval rating sits at 49 percent, while 50 percent disapprove of his job performance.

That is the first time in Trump's second term that Rasmussen's tracker has shown the president with a net negative approval rating. Rasmussen is generally considered as a Republican-leaning pollster.

Many polls have shown the president's approval rating on the decline in recent days.

According to Newsweek, the average of the 10 most recently published polls shows that Trump's approval rating stands at 47 percent, while 49 percent disapprove. That is a decline from early March, when Trump's approval rating was at 49 percent, while 47 percent disapproved.

The latest poll by RMG Research, another Republican-leaning pollster, has also shown a decrease in Trump's approval rating. The most recent poll, conducted between March 26 and April 3 among 3,000 registered voters, showed that Trump's approval rating stands at 51 percent, while 47 percent disapprove. The poll had a margin of error of plus or minus 1.8 points.

In a poll conducted in March by RMG, 52 percent had approved and 45 percent had disapproved.

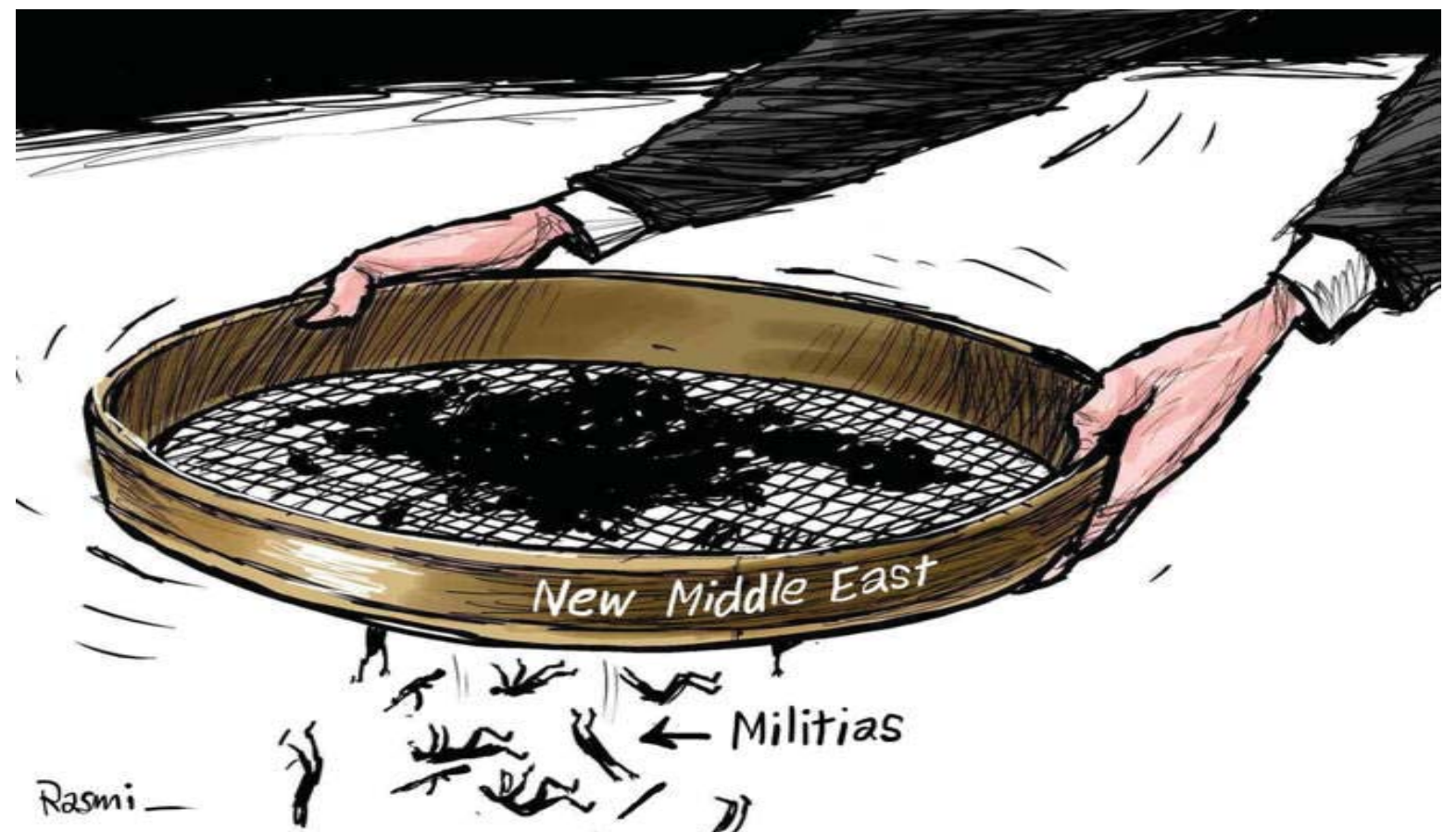
The same trend was apparent in the most recent TIPP Insights poll, conducted between March 26 and 28 among 1,452 respondents, which showed that 44 percent approve of Trump, while 45 percent disapprove, giving him a net approval rating of -1. The poll had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 points.

A previous TIPP Insights poll from January showed that Trump's net approval rating stood at +5 points, with 46 percent approving and 41 percent disapproving.

A poll conducted by Marquette University Law School between March 17 and March 27 among 1,021 adults also showed that Trump's approval rating had dropped to 46 percent, while 54 percent said they disapproved. In January, 48 percent approved and 52 percent disapproved. The poll had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

And according to the latest Reuters/Ipsos poll, conducted between March 31 and April 2 among 1,486 respondents, Trump's approval rating fell to 43 percent, the lowest since his return to office. Overall, the president was down 2 percentage points from a poll conducted March 21 to 23, and 4 points below the 47 percent approval he had shortly after taking office on January 20. The poll had a margin of error of +/- 3 percentage points.

Fears over the state of the economy sprouted in recent weeks in reaction to a number of Trump economic policies, including his new programme of tariffs. Goldman Sachs, a leading global investment banking and securities firm, previously estimated tariffs could push up inflation by 1 percent while squeezing U.S. companies' profits.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Ashraf Al-Awsat)

## Water scarcity: A threat to food security in Pakistan

Robina Afzal

**W**ater scarcity has emerged as a major issue in Pakistan, exacerbated by factors such as climate change, rapid population growth, deforestation and inefficient water management.

Once endowed with abundant water resources, the country is facing a growing water crisis due to the non-construction of dams, and waste of irrigation water that threatens food security and the livelihoods of people.

Agriculture is the backbone of Pakistan's economy, and the ongoing water shortage worsened by insufficient snowfall and rainfall, has far-reaching consequences for food production.

As the population continues to increase, the experts said the challenge of ensuring adequate water for agricultural needs becomes even more daunting.

"Pakistan is home to one of the largest irrigation systems in the world, drawing heavily from the Indus River and its tributaries. However, the available water per capita has drastically decreased over the past few decades," explained Sumbal Riaz, an economist, in an interview with APP on Sunday.

According to the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), the country's per capita water availability has plummeted from 5,000 cubic meters in 1951 to less than 1,000 cubic meters today. This sharp decline has pushed Pakistan into a state of water scarcity, compounded further by population growth, urbanization, and inefficient water usage.

Sumbal Riaz said that one of the primary causes of water scarcity is the over-extraction of water from the Indus River system and car washing machines. Pakistani travel guides

Approximately 90% of the country's available water is used for agriculture, with a significant portion wasted due to outdated irrigation techniques.

Furthermore, the construction of large dams and canals in neighbouring countries has negatively impacted on the natural flow of water, reducing Pakistan's access to these critical resources.

The southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and the Cholistan Desert in Sindh hold great potential to meet the nation's food requirements, provided that irrigation water is made available.

Riaz welcomed the Green Pakistan Initiative launched in Cholistan in February by the Chief Minister of Punjab, which aims to transform agriculture in the region by providing local farmers with high-quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and affordable agricultural machinery, including drones.

A 5,000-acre state-of-the-art agricultural farm will serve as a model for modern farming techniques, focusing on water-efficient practices and advanced irrigation systems to reduce costs and increase agricultural yields.

Gulzar Rehman, a former Conservator of Forests, emphasized that Pakistan is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including erratic rainfall patterns, extended droughts, and the rapid melting of glaciers in the Himalayas. These shifts disrupt water availability and complicate agricultural production.

Gulzar noted that Pakistan's agriculture relies heavily on irrigation, with major crops like wheat, rice, cotton, and sugarcane requiring substantial water.

"Water scarcity has resulted in lower crop yields, particularly in arid and semi-arid regions. This shortage also affects livestock farming and the fisheries sector, reducing food availability and variety."

The water crisis, Gulzar argued, requires a multifaceted approach, including both short-term and long-term strategies for improving water management and safeguarding food security.

These strategies should encompass overhauling outdated irrigation systems, constructing new dams, implementing better water conservation practices, desalination, and water recycling, while also adapting to climate change and investing in infrastructure.

Ibrahim Khan, Deputy Project Director of the 10 Billion Trees Afforestation Project, highlighted the progress of the Green Growth Initiative (GGI), which began in 2014. Since then, Rs. 675 billion has been invested in protecting and promoting forest resources, resulting in 26.7% of the province's land being covered by forests, exceeding international standards.

He noted that the province's forests harbour vast mineral reserves and agricultural potential, which could generate Rs. 215 billion annually if commercialized.

Additionally, carbon credits from these forests are valued at around Rs. 100 billion annually. The project has created more than 175,000 green jobs, contributing to land cultivation and improved water resource management.

Ongoing initiatives, such as the plantation around the Chashma Right Bank Canal (CRBC) project, which aims to cultivate 300,000 acres of barren land, and the Rs. 5 billion Mohmand Dam Canal project, set to irrigate over 200,000 acres, are vital to addressing Pakistan's water needs.

Experts remained hopeful that the swift completion of major dams like the Mohmand, Diamer-Bhasha, and Dasu dams will significantly alleviate Pakistan's water problems, ensuring food security and protecting the livelihoods of millions who largely depend on agriculture for their survival.

## Zulfikar Ali Bhutto: The people's leader who redefined Pakistan

Hassan Naqvi

**A**s Pakistan marks another April 4, the anniversary of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's execution, the nation remembers a leader who dared to dream big and reshaped the country's destiny. Bhutto was not just a politician; he was a statesman, a reformer, and the voice of the downtrodden. His legacy is one of resilience, vision, and an unwavering commitment to the people of Pakistan. His leadership laid the foundation of a modern, self-reliant Pakistan, and his ideals continue to inspire generations.

Bhutto emerged at a time when Pakistan was in turmoil. The wounds of the 1965 war had weakened national morale, and Ayub Khan's dictatorship had alienated the masses. Breaking away from the regime, Bhutto founded the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in 1967, giving a voice to the working class and the marginalized. His slogan, "Roti, Kapra, Makaan," was not mere rhetoric—it was a commitment to uplift the poor and bridge the gap between the privileged and the underprivileged.

The 1970 elections saw Bhutto's PPP sweeping West Pakistan, a testament to his ability to connect with the people. Despite the unfortunate events that led to the separation of East Pakistan, Bhutto assumed power with a determination to rebuild a shattered nation.

Bhutto was a leader who understood the importance of a strong foreign policy. His diplomatic acumen was evident in the way he strengthened Pakistan's ties with the Muslim world and the developing nations. The 1974 Islamic Summit in Lahore was a landmark event that elevated Pakistan's stature on the global stage. His efforts to make Pakistan a leader in the Muslim world earned him respect and admiration from international allies. He

envisioned an independent foreign policy, one that prioritized national interests over external pressures, a vision that remains relevant today.

His domestic policies reflected his socialist ideals. The nationalization of key industries was aimed at reducing economic disparity and empowering the working class. While these policies faced challenges in implementation, his intent was clear—he wanted economic justice for all Pakistanis. His land reforms sought to break the stranglehold of feudal lords, giving land ownership to those who tilled it. His government also laid the groundwork for industrialization and infrastructural development, setting Pakistan on a path of progress.

Bhutto was not without his flaws, but his shortcomings pale in comparison to his achievements. His political opponents often accuse him of authoritarian tendencies, yet history shows that his leadership was about nation-building, not self-preservation. His removal from power through a military coup and subsequent judicial murder remain among the darkest chapters in Pakistan's history. His trial was a travesty of justice, a politically motivated attempt to silence a leader who commanded the love of millions. His execution on April 4, 1979, was not just the loss of an individual; it was the loss of a visionary who had the courage to stand up for Pakistan's sovereignty and the rights of its people.

More than four decades after his judicial assassination, Bhutto's name continues to resonate in the hearts of the people. His vision for Pakistan as a progressive, democratic, and self-reliant nation remains a guiding force. Leaders come and go, but few leave an indelible mark on history. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was one such leader. His legacy is not just about the past; it is a roadmap for Pakistan's future. The best tribute to him would be to uphold the principles he stood for—justice, equality, and a Pakistan that belongs to all its citizens.



# ‘Hamdard Foundation Organizes International Children Health Conference to Mark International Health Day’



**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Hamdard Foundation Pakistan (HFP) and Hamdard Public School (HPS) organized an online International Children Health Conference yesterday to commemorate the April 7th International Health Day, focusing on the WHO's theme for this year: "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures." The conference, which brought together young speakers from the USA, Russia, Iran, Malaysia, Australia, and various cities of Pakistan, as well as representatives from the World Health Organization, was presided over by Dr. Mukhtiar Hussain Bhayo (Head of WHO Office Sindh), with Prof. Dr. Zeryab Setna (Hilal-e-Imtiaz) serving as the esteemed Chief Guest.

Ms. Sadia Rashid, President of HFP, delivered the opening statement, emphasizing the importance of health and well-being for future generations. She said: "This conference carries forward a legacy of three decades dedicated to raising awareness, advocating for, and promoting children's health. In view of this year's theme, we must collectively put our efforts into providing vital resources to create a healthier world for mothers, infants, and future generations. The urgency for action is evident in the alarming rates of maternal and infant mortality worldwide, particularly in Pakistan. Every year, thousands of women die due to childbirth and pregnancy-related complications, while over a million newborns lose their lives within the first month. These deaths are largely preventable through timely interventions, sustained commitment, and collective action. There is an urgent need for decisive measures. The

combined efforts of bureaucrats, politicians, and all relevant stakeholders are essential to bring meaningful and lasting change." Dr. Mukhtiar Hussain Bhayo said: "The 33rd consecutive year of Hamdard's support is truly commendable. Once again, Hamdard leads the way by hosting the first international conference to commemorate April 7th as International Health Day. This is a remarkable achievement and a proud milestone for Hamdard, marking its global leadership in health advocacy. This year's theme focuses on women and children. While maternal mortality has declined, it still falls short of the desired levels. It is heartbreaking that mothers continue to die from natural childbirth." Prof. Dr. Zeryab Setna expressed heartfelt gratitude to HFP for organizing this thought-provoking conference.

He said: "It has been a pleasure to hear young voices from around the world, reminding us that we are one community beyond race, nationality, religion, or culture. The health sector in Pakistan was championed by Shaheed Hakim Said, a visionary whose legacy lives on through Hamdard Pakistan's continued dedication to national health development." In the recorded messages, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the WHO, Dr. Hanan Bally - Regional Director, and Ms. Ellen Thom - Deputy WHO Representative in Pakistan commended Ms. Sadia Rashid and HFP for their outstanding efforts in spearheading various active initiatives and social awareness campaigns aimed at promoting general health and well-being throughout the country. The Director-General expressed his appreciation for the significant contributions made by Ms. Sadia Rashid and

Hamdard Pakistan towards advancing public health and enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities across the nation. Fatema Munir Ahmed, Managing Director/CEO of Hamdard, Dr. Mohammad Babar Alam, Head of the WHO Sub-office, KPK, Dr. Jams-haid Ahmed, Head of the WHO Sub-office, Punjab and Dr. Asfandiyar Sherani, Head of the WHO Sub-office, Balochistan also expressed their views in the conference and said: life begins at birth, and the health of both mother and child at this stage is crucial. It lays the foundation for lifelong growth and well-being. Comprehensive maternal and child care plays a vital role in ensuring long-term health benefits. Investing in child healthcare is a powerful tool to build a progressive, inclusive society and reduce poverty. Healthy, well-supported individuals form strong, resilient communities. The conference was attended by local

and foreign child delegates, including Mahmood Asmar from the United States, Sabrina from Russia, Maryam Binte Abdullah from Malaysia, Syed Saim Mubashir from Australia, and Saba Mirzaei from Iran. The delegates from different cities of Pakistan were Aizah Arsalan (HPS), Maira (Hamdard Village School), Marzia Ali Murtaza (Mama Parsi School, Karachi), Zahra Fatima (Habib Girls School, Karachi), Vonzell Paul (St. Joseph's Convent School, Karachi), Jennifer Khurram (St. Michael's High School, Karachi), Rohma Gulzar (Pak Land School & College System, Rawalpindi), Shaera Asif (City English School, Rawalpindi), Ayesha Mustafa (HPS, Lahore), Fatima Shabbaz (Govt. Central Model School, Lahore), Abdullah Khalil (Warsak Model School & College, Peshawar), Fawad Hassan (Frontier Model School Boys, Peshawar), Hussna Subhan, and Zainab (SOS Children's Village School, Quetta).

## Pakistan Grapples with U. S. Tariff Shock: SDPI Hosts Policy Seminar to Chart Economic Response

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The experts on Monday at a high-level policy seminar in the aftermath of 29% US trade tariff imposed on Pakistan among 180 nations across the globe demanded the government to embrace a diversified trade approach and a broadened vision to explore existing regional trade potential to ward off severe impacts of prevailing trade tariffs by the Trump Administration. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) convened the critical policy seminar titled "Tariff 29%: What Does It Mean for Pakistan?" to examine the implications of the 29% tariff imposed by the United States (US) on Pakistani exports, with a particular focus on the textile sector. The seminar gathered top economists, trade experts, industry stakeholders, and government representatives to assess the challenges and identify pathways for turning the crisis into an opportunity. In his welcome remarks, Dr. Sajid Amin

Javed, Deputy Executive Director of SDPI, emphasized the critical timing of the dialogue: "The objective is to assess whether the tariff is a threat or an opportunity, and what needs to be done to mitigate immediate impacts while preparing for long-term structural shifts." He added that The 29% tariff, part of the Trump administration's broader reciprocal tariff regime affecting over 180 countries, is especially damaging for Pakistan, whose exports to the U. S. account for 19% of its total exports, with textiles alone making up over 70% of that share. Although lower than tariffs on Bangladesh (36%) and Vietnam (46%), Pakistan's rate is higher than India's 27%, making the trade environment highly competitive. In his special remarks, Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, a veteran in trade and customs, traced the history of U. S. tariff policy and warned that the current global environment requires bold recalibration: "Pakistan's narrow export base—dominated by textiles—leaves it vulnerable. Our over-re-

liance on protectionist policies and outdated SROs must be revisited. We need free and preferential trade agreements, especially with the U. S., and SDPI should guide the government toward a diversified export strategy." He stressed that Pakistan's exports make up only 10% of GDP, in stark contrast to Vietnam's 100%, and that international trade contributes over 40% of Pakistan's revenue, highlighting the urgency for reforms. Dr. Aadil Nakhoda of IBA highlighted the escalating trading costs and the lack of priority for textile products in U. S. trade talks, calling for modernization and technological integration in Pakistan's exports: "Vietnam's electronics sector is an example. Pakistan must shift towards a broader export mix, including agriculture, services, and technology." M. Hassan Shafqaat, CEO of the Pakistan Textile Council, called the tariff regime both a threat and a potential opportunity. He suggested:

"We must negotiate with the U. S., provide compensation where needed, and explore relocating production from countries hit harder by tariffs to Pakistan. Plastics, leather, and automobiles are sectors that can attract foreign investment in manufacturing." He also recommended tagging products as "Originated in US" to reduce duties, intensifying diplomatic efforts, engaging institutions like the WTO, and forming new regional alliances. Lastly, he advised exploring the US tariff order's annexed duty-free lists for potential benefits. He urged the government to view the situation as both a short-term threat and a long-term opportunity, especially as China appears most affected. Shafqaat stressed the need for Pakistan to address its high energy costs and tax rates through joint public-private solutions. Mr. Samir S. Amir of the Pakistan Business Council noted inefficiencies in Pakistan's manufacturing sector, citing high yarn waste in towel production and low per-unit apparel prices:

"Instead of blanket subsidies, we need targeted reforms. Let's shift the conversation from trade threats to trade potential within South and Southeast Asia." Muhammad Suleman Khan, Director of Tariff Policy at the Ministry of Commerce, assured that the government is actively evaluating the impact and working on strategic responses: "We are in constant contact with global trade counselors, and a dedicated committee has been formed by the Prime Minister. There's no need to panic." In his concluding remarks, Dr. Sajid Amin Javed emphasized the importance of symbolic yet strategic policy measures, calling on the government to articulate its position clearly at both domestic and international levels. He described the current situation as a "defining moment," and urged collaboration across the private sector, public institutions, and civil society to respond with unity, resilience, and foresight.

## Mian Fazal Elahi hosts Eid Milan brunch to celebrate media fraternity & promote national unity



**Naveed Ahmed Khan**

ISLAMABAD: In a heartwarming gesture to bring together members of the media community, Mr. Mian Fazal Elahi, CEO, Editor, and Publisher of Diplomatic Focus, hosted an elegant Eid Milan Brunch Reception on Sunday at the Main Restaurant of Islamabad Club. The event honored senior journalists, television anchors, photographers, government representatives, and personal friends of Mr. Elahi, offering a much-needed break from the daily grind of news-

rooms and studios. The gathering was a celebration of Eid, but also much more—a vibrant convergence of minds that reflected on Pakistan's media landscape, national image, and ideological foundations. Distinguished figures from the Ministry of Information and the Press Information Department also graced the event, underscoring its importance as a bridge between the government and the media fraternity. Speaking to the attendees, Mr. Elahi emphasized the significance of maintaining strong personal and professional

bonds within the journalism community. "The nature of our work often keeps us away from meeting even close friends," he remarked. "This brunch is an effort to reconnect, relax, and enjoy meaningful conversations in a casual setting." Known for his generous hospitality and social engagement, Mr. Elahi has hosted several such gatherings over the years. However, this Eid Milan brunch stood out for its warmth, camaraderie, and the diverse representation from across media and governmental circles. Veteran

journalist Mr. Tazeen Akhtar lauded Mr. Elahi's initiative, calling it "a golden opportunity" for professionals to socialize, share ideas, and strengthen community ties. "Events like these help journalists step out of their hectic routines and engage in constructive dialogue. Mr. Elahi has once again proven his commitment to uniting the media community," he said. The atmosphere at the Islamabad Club was lively yet relaxed as attendees engaged in discussions not only about journalism but also about broader national concerns. The ideology of Pakistan, the media's role in image-building, and current socio-political issues were some of the topics that sparked thoughtful conversations over brunch. Guests expressed their appreciation for

Mr. Elahi's continued efforts to promote positive dialogue among stakeholders. Many highlighted the need for such informal yet impactful gatherings that foster unity and mutual understanding within the media landscape. The brunch concluded with attendees expressing gratitude, who praised Mr. Elahi for organizing a memorable and meaningful event. The success of the

Eid Milan Reception once again affirmed Mr. Elahi's reputation as not only a seasoned media personality but also a gracious host and a community connector. As the guests departed, the spirit of unity and celebration lingered, a testament to the power of shared moments, thoughtful conversations, and genuine hospitality. Photos by Imtiaz Ahmad Faizi



## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
114,909.48	118,791.66
Day's High	Day's Low
117,601.62	110,103.97
Index Value	Change
34,138,478,649	-3882.18
Percentage	Time
-3.27%	7 Apr, 2025 3:30 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,819.57	-235.41
Percentage	Time
-2.84%	7 Apr, 4:35 pm GMT+1
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,008.90	-305.96
Percentage	Time
-0.80%	7 Apr, 10:54 am GMT-4
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
31,136.58	-2,644.00
Percentage	Time
-7.83%	7 Apr, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	175.50	177.75
Bahrain Dinar	739.80	747.80
Canadian Dollar	199.35	201.75
China Yuan	37.59	37.99
Danish Krone	40.15	40.55
Euro	310.75	313.50
Hong Kong Dollar	35.66	36.01
Indian Rupee	3.18	3.27
Japanese Yen	1.87	1.93
Kuwaiti Dinar	899.60	909.10
Malaysian Ringgit	62.57	63.17
New Zealand \$	158.75	160.75
Norwegians Krone	26.4	26.70
Omani Riyal	724.05	732.55
Qatari Riyal	76.28	76.98
Saudi Riyal	74.45	75.00
Singapore Dollar	210.75	212.75
Swedish Korona	27.45	27.75
Swiss Franc	314.86	317.66
Thai Bhat	8.13	8.28
U.A.E Dirham	76.10	76.75
UK Pound Sterling	366.50	370
US Dollar	280.6	282.1

# Army Chief's struggle is helping the nation overcome despair, says Bostan

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The President of the Forex Association of Pakistan, Malik Muhammad Bostan, expressed his appreciation for the Pakistan Army and Army Chief General Asim Munir, stating that their efforts have transformed the nation's despair into hope.

He credited General Asim Munir's positive policies for halting the outflow of dollars to Iran and Afghanistan, as well as for launching a crackdown on the mafia, which has led to the dollar dropping from 340 rupees to 280 rupees. The improvement in Pakistan's economy, he noted, is due to the hard work of General Asim Munir, and the nation, which was once filled with despair, is now seeing a glimmer of hope.

Malik Muhammad Bostan added that smuggling is decreasing in the country, and inshallah, Pakistan will see significant development in the coming days, with the national economy becoming much more stable. He also



stated that the dollar's value could continue to decrease. If the State Bank halts the purchase of dollars today, the value of the dollar would begin to drop. He emphasized that exporters and the pressure of debts are contributing factors. He mentioned that there have been no follow-through or payments on Pakistan's wholesale agreements, and the country heavily depends on remittances.

He stressed that the government needs to introduce good policies and good governance. The country also needs to address the scourge of terrorism. Terrorists have been targeting Pakistan's Special Forces, but Malik Bostan praised the Pakistan Army for successfully thwarting the attack on the Jaffar Express, which was part of a terrorist plot to hijack the train and malign Pakistan globally. He expressed his gratitude to the Pakistan Army for their efforts in safeguarding the country, especially during the holy month of Ramadan, ensuring the failure of the terrorists' nefarious plans.

## Called on

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Junaid Anwar Chaudhry talking to Danish Ambassador Jakob Linulf who called on him at his office on Monday.



Photo: PID

## Tariff policy aims to squeeze China's economically: Mian Zahid Hussain



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, the President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, the President of All Karachi Industrial Alliance, the Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board, and the President and former provincial minister, Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Monday that the US President Trump's economic policies signal the beginning of a global trade conflict.

He stated that the main goal of tariff policy is to put pressure on China's impressively growing economy.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that US tariffs would result in a global recession and may impact Pakistani exports, remittances, and revenue.

Talking to the business

community, the veteran business leader said the US move can be remedied with better and timely measures.

The business leader said that Pakistan imports about \$1.75 billion from the US and exports \$5.5 billion annually. Thus, the US faces a trade deficit of over \$3.75 billion.

The US has imposed a 29 percent tariff on Pakistan to eliminate this deficit. Therefore, if Pakistan increases its imports from the US by about \$3.75 billion annually, the US trade deficit with Pakistan will be eliminated. He said Pakistan's tariff will be 10 percent instead of 29 percent.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the same US measure will apply to all countries. Countries that eliminate their trade deficit by importing the same amount of goods from the US will benefit.

## ICCI and Ethiopian Embassy to Hold Business Forum on April 15

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and the Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad have agreed to hold a Business Forum at the ICCI on April 15th, 2025, to mobilize traders and investors for the Single Country Exhibition, being organized by the Ministry of Commerce and Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from May 15th to May 17th, 2025.

On the occasion, the Ambassador congratulated President Qureshi on assuming the office of President ICCI and highlighted the strong connection between the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad and ICCI, recalling their joint initiatives to strengthen trade and investment relations between the two countries.

He briefed the ICCI President about extraordinary business, trade, and investment opportunities in Ethiopia following the successful implementation of home-grown economic reforms in two phases undertaken by H. E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

The Ambassador said the Government of Ethiopia and the business community in the country are fully prepared to host the traders from Pakistan for the Single Country Exhibition that is coinciding with "Invest In Ethiopia 2025," a high-level business forum scheduled from May 12th to May 14th 2025 in Addis Ababa.

Welcoming the Ambassador, President



Nasir Mansoor Qureshi appreciated the strengthening ties between the two countries and said, "Ethiopia is one of Africa's fastest-growing economies and offers significant opportunities for Pakistani businesses seeking to explore new markets."

The ICCI President assured the Ambassador of his full support in further

strengthening the bilateral trade relations between the two countries.

The meeting was also attended by former ICCI President Zahid Maqbool, former Senior Vice President Khalid Chaudhry, Executive Member Mohsin Khalid Malik, and Secretary General Ghulam Murtaza.

## President FPCCI Leads Trade Delegation to UK for Commonwealth Program

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, is leading the Pakistani trade delegation to the United Kingdom to attend a Commonwealth program on 7th - 8th April. The strategic move aims to capitalize on the vast opportunities offered by the Commonwealth; which comprises of 56 countries with a combined GDP of over \$13 trillion.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh will speak in the significant roundtable entitled "Standards and Regulation; Creating Competitive and Dynamic Regulatory Environments to Drive Growth."

FPCCI delegation will engage with British businesses, investors and government officials to explore avenues for bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation. The visit is expected to strengthen Pakistan's trade relationship with the UK and

other Commonwealth countries.

During the visit, President FPCCI, Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, will have meetings with West London Chamber of Commerce; Pakistan-British Business Council; Sardar Shafiqat, President of the UK-Pakistan Chamber of Commerce (UKPCCI) and Mr. Atta Haq, Chairman of UK-Pakistan Business Council (UKPBC).

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh will also visit Pakistan High Commission; where

he will highlight Pakistan's business potential - particularly in key sectors, such as agribusiness; energy & renewables; green logistics; pharmaceutical; information technology; digital services; textiles and allied sectors.

FPCCI delegation will also showcase Pakistan's competitive advantages - including its strategic location; skilled workforce and business-friendly policies. The visit is expected to attract British invest-



ment in Pakistan; promote bilateral trade and foster economic cooperation between the two nations.

## ECC approves technical supplementary grants for various projects

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Monday approved Technical Supplementary Grants (TSGs) for various projects.

The ECC met under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb.

The meeting was attended by several key federal ministers, including Minister for Power, Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister for Petroleum, Ali Parvez Malik, Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, and National Food Security & Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain. Senior officials from various ministries and divisions were also present, said a press release issued here.

During the meeting, the ECC reviewed and approved several Technical Supplementary Grants (TSGs) for ongoing projects and initiatives from different ministries and divisions. The committee emphasized that, with the fourth quarter of the fiscal year underway, it would closely monitor and prioritize the allocation of future TSGs to ensure efficient utilization of government resources.

The ECC approved a TSG of Rs 9 billion for the Finance Division to address grants, subsidies, and miscellaneous expenditures for the fiscal year 2024-25.

Rs 50 Million TSG for the National Commission for Human Rights and a TSG of Rs 50 million was approved for the National Commission for Human Rights, based on a proposal moved by the Ministry of Human Rights.

The ECC approved a TSG amounting to Rs 23.434 billion (Rs 23.20 billion being the provincial share and Rs 622.36 million being the federal share) for the Federal Directorate of Immunization to support the immunization of over 8 million children under two years of age against 12 vaccine-preventable diseases.

This initiative is part of Pakistan's ongoing commitment to public health, Rs 1.06 billion TSG for the Transformation to National Forensic Agency Project and a TSG of Rs 1.06 billion was approved for the timely completion of the 'Transformation to National Forensic Agency' project, ensuring it is completed by June 30, 2025.



South African F-Class National Long Range Championship 2025

# Pakistan Long Range Rifle Team – A Proud Continuation of Excellence

Sports Desk

LAHORE: With the gracious approval of the Patron-in-Chief, seven members of the Pakistan Long Range Rifle Team attended a four-day wind training camp in South Africa from 27th to 30th March 2025. This camp was conducted under the guidance of two newly appointed South African wind coaches, allowing the team to adapt and prepare for the formidable upcoming European F Class teams championship to be held in September in Bisley, UK and the F Class World Teams Championships in 2026.

Following the camp, the team participated in the prestigious South African F-Class National Long Range Championship – an event of high international standing; given South Africa's status as the reigning F-Class World Champions in both, individual and team categories.

**Team Events – A Historic Double Gold Victory**

In an extraordinary display of skill, precision, and teamwork, the Pakistan Team won both team matches, decisively outperforming all competitors – including the current world champion South African team on their home turf.

Team Members: Lt Gen Ahsan, Asad Wahid, Obaid Ibrahim, Huzaifa Gill, Junaid Waqas, Lt Col Junaid Ali, Sep Waleed; SA Wind Coaches, Hennie Gerber & Julius Hartman.

Vice President Team Match (800m + 900m): Score: 1168 / 1200 (97.3%) – Gold

Chairman's Team Cup (prestigious event): Score: 1174 / 1200 (98%) – Gold

These results are historic and deeply significant – defeating the reigning world champions in their own backyard not once, but twice, is a feat that reflects the team's relentless pursuit of excellence and their unity under pressure. Alhamdulillah for this remarkable success.



The individual events further underscored Pakistan's growing dominance in international long-range shooting. Four Pakistani marksmen delivered outstanding performances, collectively earning 11 medals:

- 5 Gold
- 3 Silver
- 3 Bronze

Special recognition must be given to Lt Col Junaid Ali, whose exceptional consistency across multiple distances and disciplines led to 3 Gold, 2 Silver, and 2 Bronze medals – a true testament to his dedication and selfless commitment and skill.

**A Journey of Growth and Glory**

The Pakistan Long Range Rifle

Team's international journey began with their debut at the 2023 World Championship in South Africa, securing a respectable 5th position. Later that year, the team earned its first major title by winning the European FTR Teams Championship, accompanied by six individual medals including two European records.

This momentum continued in 2024 with another podium finish – Bronze at the European FTR Teams Champi-



onship, along with an impressive haul of 14 individual medals; again with two European records.

Now in 2025, the team has achieved a new milestone by claiming double gold in team matches and 11 individual medals at the South African Nationals – defeating none other than the reigning world champions in both categories.

This remarkable sequence of achievements stand as a profound testament to merit based team selection; that fosters a culture of discipline, resilience, and continuous excellence. It also reflects unwavering dedication to advancing Pakistan's stature on the international stage with selfless resolve and National pride.

With continued trust support and encouragement of the Patron-in-Chief, the Pakistan Long Range Rifle Team stands resolute in its mission to bring further honour to our beloved nation,

InshaAllah!

Allah be praised

**Individual Medal Summary:**

- Scottish Sword Match (300 + 600 + 800m): Gold – Sep Waleed
- State President 1st Stage (300 + 500 + 600m): Silver – Obaid Ibrahim
- Jack Mitchley Match (300m): Gold – Asad Wahid
- Free State Bisley Match (300 + 600m): Gold – Lt Col Junaid Ali
- Dalrymple Cup (300 + 600m): Silver – Lt Col Junaid Ali
- Col Bodley Match (900m): Gold – Lt Col Junaid Ali
- State President 1st Stage: Bronze – Lt Col Junaid Ali
- State President 2nd Stage: Silver – Lt Col Junaid Ali
- State President Overall Trophy: Gold – Lt Col Junaid Ali; Bronze – Obaid Ibrahim
- SA Championship Aggregate Overall: Bronze – Lt Col Junaid Ali

Pakistan Super League 2025

## HBL PSL X Media Advisory Teams' Training: Press Conferences Schedule in Karachi and Rawalpindi

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: The HBL Pakistan Super League X will start at the iconic Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Friday, 11 April with defending champions Islamabad United taking on the two-time winners Lahore Qalandars.

Given below are the important details for media interested in covering the teams' training sessions from 7-11 April in Karachi and Rawalpindi.

**Accreditation passes**

The media accreditation process has closed and the PCB is NOT entertaining any late requests.

Teams' training schedule in Rawalpindi/ Islamabad and Karachi from 7-11 April

7 April  
Karachi Kings will train from 5pm to 8pm at the Hanif Mohammad HPC Centre ground. Beforehand, a player or a member of the support staff will be available for short stand-up media interviews.

able for short stand-up media interviews.

8 April  
Peshawar Zalmi will train from 1.30pm to 4.30pm at the Islamabad Club. Afterwards, a player or a member of the support staff will be available for short stand-up media interviews. Islamabad United will train at the same venue from 6.30pm to 9.30pm. Beforehand, a player or a member of the support staff will be available for short stand-up media interviews.

9 April  
Multan Sultans will train at the Hanif Mohammad HPC Centre ground from 12pm. Beforehand, a player or a member of the support staff will be available for short stand-up media interviews.

10 April  
Karachi Kings will take part in a practice session from 12pm to 3pm at the Hanif Mohammad HPC Centre. Multan Sultans will feature in a training session from 5.30pm onwards at the same venue. Both practice sessions will be vision only opportunities.

11 April  
Peshawar Zalmi and Quetta Gladiators will train at the Islamabad Club from 1.30pm to 4.30pm, while Lahore Qalandars and Islamabad United will train at

a vision only opportunity.

At the Islamabad Club, Peshawar Zalmi and Quetta Gladiators will train from 1.30pm to 4.30pm. Beforehand, a player or a member of the support staff will be available for short stand-up media interviews. Lahore Qalandars and Islamabad United will train at the same venue from 6.30pm to 9.30pm. Beforehand, a player or a member of the support staff will be available for short stand-up media interviews.

10 April  
Karachi Kings will take part in a practice session from 12pm to 3pm at the Hanif Mohammad HPC Centre. Multan Sultans will feature in a training session from 5.30pm onwards at the same venue. Both practice sessions will be vision only opportunities.

11 April  
Peshawar Zalmi and Quetta Gladiators will train at the Islamabad Club from 1.30pm to 4.30pm, while Lahore Qalandars and Islamabad United will train at

the same venue from 6.30pm to 9.30pm. These will be vision only opportunities.

1pm PKT – HBL PSL X participating teams captains are expected to take part in the pre-tournament media conference at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, far-end building, Level 2. More details will be shared in due course

11 April – At the National Bank Stadium, Karachi Kings and Multan Sultans will take part in the practice session from 5.30pm onwards. Beforehand, both the sides are expected to hold their pre-match media conferences in the press conference room behind Halem Ahmed Media Centre, Level 3, Karsaz Road End.

Islamabad United will face Lahore Qalandars in the first match of the HBL PSL X at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium. The first ball is expected to be bowled at 8.30pm PKT. After the match, star performers from either side will hold their post-match press conferences.

## Lahore Gymkhana Golf Club Set to Host Prestigious 11th J. A. Zaman Memorial Open Championship

Tahir Amin Malik.

LAHORE: The 11th J. A. Zaman Memorial Open Golf Championship is set to get underway at Lahore Gymkhana Golf Club from the 06th April to 13th April 2025.

Now in its 11th iteration the J. A. Zaman Memorial – a PGA and PGF sanctioned event – garners interest of top golfers from across the country. The match has progressed to become one of the most anticipated matchups in the Pakistan golfing calendar with top professional and amateur golfers competing for merited prize money and honors. The salient features of the 2025 edition are:

- The Top 100 ranked professionals will compete in the main draw for a total purse of PKR 9.0million from 10th April to 13th April over 72 holes. – Top amateur golfers will compete for glory and honors in victory over 54 holes with the results contributing towards the World Amateur Golf Ranking (WAGR).
- A chance to win a HAVAL JOLION 1.5T for a Hole-in-One on designated holes.
- Seven categories including Juniors, Senior Amateurs, Lady Amateurs, Junior and Senior Professionals along with the main draw of Professional and Men



Amateur golfers makes the tournament one of the most inclusive matches in golf.

- Ladies WAGR category to encourage ladies golf in Pakistan with over 30 participants.
- Live streaming on Youtube of selected holes and Live scoring makes for enjoyable viewing as per international standards of golf.
- 550+ participants makes the tournament one of the most popular events in Pakistan golf.

The tournament is held in memory of Mr. J. A. Zaman (late) who was a man of boundless dignity and dexterity. He was a notable entrepreneur and a philanthro-

pist who believed in sharing generously of the good fortune bestowed on him by the Almighty. His family cherish his memory and continue to take inspiration from how he found success and balance in this world and, God willing, the Hereafter. The Zaman family – the principal sponsor of this championship – is willing to make possible with the cooperation of Lahore Gymkhana Golf Committee, such a prestigious event where only the best in the sport will be showcased.

At the press conference to start the event Mr. Hamid Zaman (sponsor) highlighted the passion for golf his late father had which his descendants carry

forward in this shape of this tournament. He also thanked the Lahore Gymkhana committee, Mr. Taimour Anwar and Mr. Aahyan Mumtaz – tournament organizer – for their unwavering support in the organization of the tournament. He also expressed his goal of making this an international tournament in the coming years.

**About Lahore Gymkhana:**

The golf course at Lahore Gymkhana Club is one of the oldest courses in Pakistan tracing its origins to the 19th century. It's a Par-72 championship level 18-hole golf course which is tree lined demanding excellence from start to finish. Star players on the national circuit like Pakistan #1 Shabbir Iqbal, Ahmed Baig, Matloob Ahmed, Minhaj and Muhammad Alam and Zubair, amongst others, will be competing against one another to see who emerges victorious. The tournament welcomes spectators to watch the play as a part of its inclusive approach towards promoting golf in Pakistan.

The final round will be held on Sunday 13th April 2025 followed by the prize ceremony where the Zaman Family will be our hosts. The Chief Tournament Organizer in Mr. Aahyan Mumtaz on behalf of the sponsor, While Munazza Shaheen is the Chief Referee.

### Pakistan Cricket Board Announced Match Officials for HBL PSL X

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board has announced the match officials for HBL Pakistan Super League X, scheduled to take place across four venues – Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi from 11 April to 18 May. A total of 13 umpires and seven match referees will be involved in 30 matches, while the match officials for the Qualifier, two eliminators and final, will be announced in due course.



Elite Panel of ICC Umpires – Ahsan Raza, Paul Reiffel and Kumar Dharmasena are among the 13 umpires officiating in the six-team tournament. Also included are Alex Wharf and Chris Brown.

From Pakistan, Aleem Dar, Asif Yaqoob, Faisal Khan Aafreedi, Rashid Riaz Waqar are part of the PCB International Panel of Umpires.

Abdul Moqet, Nasir Hussain, Tariq Rasheed and Zulfiqar Jan – part of PCB Elite Panel of Umpires will also be officiating matches during this edition of the HBL PSL.

Among the match referees, ICC Elite Panel of Match Referee Ranjan Madugalle will officiate matches alongside his fellow Sri Lankan Roshan Mahanama. Also serving as match referees are Ali Naqvi and Muhammad Javed Malik – both from the PCB International Panel of Match Referees.

Ifthikhar Ahmed, Iqbal Sheikh and Nadeem Arshad will also officiate during the tournament.

### Agreement reached between Traditional Sports, Equestrian Archery

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Traditional Sports Federation and the Pakistan Equestrian Archery Federation have entered into an agreement. Both federations will groom young players in traditional sports and will organize the first Punjab Traditional Games this year.

President of Pakistan Traditional Games Nawab Furqan and President of Pakistan Equestrian Archery Federation Aurangzeb Mubashir signed the Memorandum of Understanding. On this occasion, they stated that both federations will work together to promote traditional sports and provide opportunities for rural male and female players to showcase their talent so that they can bring honor to the country at national and international levels.

Chairman Pakistan Traditional Sports Federation Brigadier (R) Azam Afandi and former Mayor of Lahore Colonel (R) Mubashir Ahmed specially participated in the event and said that players of Pakistan's traditional sports have more opportunities than those in non-traditional sports.

Nawab Furqan said that they will conduct competitions for all traditional sports of Punjab this year, and next year, a Pakistani contingent consisting of teams for three sports – Kabaddi, Wrestling, and Tent Pegging – will participate in the World Nomad Games. Amin also added that the Pakistani contingent has returned with gold medals from all the events it has participated in so far, and no players have gone missing.





## Chairman Senate met to President of Uzbekistan

TASHKENT: The Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, met with the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, on the sidelines of the 150th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).



Photo: PID

# Uzbek president calls for stronger parliamentary role in promoting global peace, social justice

### Spokesman Report

TASHKENT: President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev has urged parliaments across the world to play a greater role in ensuring global peace, social justice, and sustainable development addressing the opening ceremony of the 150th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Tashkent.

Welcoming delegates from over 140 countries, President Mirziyoyev said it was a matter of pride that the historic Assembly, being held in the Central Asian region for the first time, had brought

together 181 national parliaments and 15 regional parliamentary bodies in the Uzbek capital.

The Assembly is being held under the theme "Parliamentary Action for Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions," which President Mirziyoyev said was a timely and symbolic call to address pressing global challenges. Referring to increasing armed conflicts, climate change, poverty, and inequality, he stressed that parliaments must act as a powerful force to tackle these threats and promote inclusive development.

The president noted that despite a 4.5-fold increase in global GDP over the past three decades, income disparities had persisted, with over 575 million people projected to remain in poverty by 2030 if corrective action is not taken. "Parliaments must mobilize their intellectual resources, share best practices, and expand cooperation to mitigate inequality and build just societies," he said.

He also mentioned that Uzbekistan has formed partnership mechanisms with nearly 100 foreign parliaments and launched over 80 friendship groups and

commissions. Underscoring global issues, the Uzbek leader called for: peaceful resolution of conflicts, particularly the situation in Ukraine and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, supporting the two-state solution; constructive engagement with Afghanistan, urging parliaments to support dialogue with Kabul and avoid its isolation; stronger commitment to climate action, including support for renewable energy and green technologies, aligned with the Paris Agreement; women's empowerment, referencing recent international forums hosted by Uzbekistan and

proposing a UN resolution to expand women's socio-political engagement; youth participation, proposing the establishment of a Global Platform of Youth Parliaments under the IPU and offering to host its inaugural forum, poverty reduction and social protection, sharing that Uzbekistan's poverty rate had dropped from 35 percent to 8.9 percent in eight years through the "From Poverty to Prosperity" program, and responsible use of artificial intelligence, suggesting the development of a model law on AI ethics to guide legislation in this emerging field.

## Nine Khwarij killed including ringleader Shireen in DI Khan operation

### City Desk

RAWALPINDI: In a successful intelligence-based operation carried out by security forces in the Takwara area of Dera Ismail Khan district on the night of 6/7 April, nine Khwarij terrorists were killed, including high-value target and ringleader Shireen.

According to details, during the operation, the security forces effectively engaged the terrorists, resulting in an intense fire exchange. As a result, nine terrorists were neutralised and sent to hell, including the notorious ringleader Shireen.



The troops also recovered highly sophisticated weapons and a large cache of ammunition from the terrorists' possession.

Khawarij's ringleader,

Shireen, was most wanted by law enforcement agencies for his involvement in numerous terrorist activities, including the target killing of innocent civilians.

Khawarij's ringleader, Shireen, was also responsible for the martyrdom of Captain Hasnain Akhtar, Shaheed, on March 20, 2025.

According to an ISPR press release, on the night of 5/6 April, movement of a group of Khwarij trying to infiltrate through the Pakistan-Afghanistan border was picked up by the security forces in the general area of Hassan Khel, North Waziristan District.

The troops effectively engaged and thwarted their attempt to infiltrate. After an intense exchange of fire, eight Khawarij were sent to hell, while four Khawarij got injured.

Pakistan has consistently been asking the interim Afghan government to ensure effective border management on their side of the border. The interim Afghan government is expected to fulfil its obligations and deny the use of Afghan soil by Khwarij for perpetuating acts of terrorism against Pakistan.

A sanitisation operation is being conducted to eliminate any other Khawarij found in the area as security forces of Pakistan are determined and remain committed to securing its borders and wiping out the menace of terrorism from the country, adding troops from the front.

## Pakistan listed among 4 countries that make up half of global maternal deaths: UN report

### Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan is ranked among four countries — together with Nigeria, India and Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) — that accounted for nearly half of the estimated 260,000 maternal deaths worldwide in 2023, according to UN data released Monday that has prompted stark warnings about the impact of cuts to aid funding by the U.S. and the U.K.

Maternal deaths include those related to complications during childbirth or pregnancy, three UN agencies said in a joint report.

The Trends in maternal mortality report was published by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN sexual and reproduc-



tive health agency UNFPA, in observance of World Health Day on 7 April. The report showed that Nigeria

had the highest number of maternal deaths and accounted for more than a quarter (28.7 percent) of all esti-

ated global maternal deaths in 2023, with approximately 75,000 deaths.

Only three other countries had more than 10,000 maternal deaths in 2023—India and DRC tied at 19,000, with Pakistan totaling 11,000. India and DRC accounted for 7.2 percent each, while Pakistan accounted for 4.1 percent of global maternal deaths.

Together, these four countries accounted for almost half (47 percent) of all maternal deaths globally in 2023, according to the report.

The report warned that unprecedented aid cuts are putting global progress to end maternal deaths at risk, and called for greater investment in midwives and other health workers.

## Maritime, energy sectors' reforms to boost trade, unlock Pakistan's potential: PM



### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the reforms in maritime and energy sectors would boost trade, reduce costs, and unlock Pakistan's economic potential.

The prime minister, chairing a high-level meeting to review progress on the government's wide-ranging reforms in the maritime sector, emphasized that comprehensive efforts were underway to transform Pakistan's port infrastructure, streamline customs operations, and strengthen the country's maritime economy for long-term national benefit.

He hailed the task force on maritime reforms for its diligent work and praised their efforts in preparing a comprehensive set of recommendations that aim to end decades-long stagnation in the sector.

"Pakistan has been blessed with a long coastline and vast maritime resources. With the right reforms, we can unlock immense economic potential and bring our ports to

global competitive standards," Prime Minister Shehbaz said.

He noted that reduction in electricity tariff of almost Rs. 7.5 per unit was a direct result of the focused work of a dedicated task force on reforms in energy sector.

He emphasized that the same results-driven model was now being applied to the maritime sector.

"This electricity tariff reduction is a major relief not only for households but also for all sectors like agriculture, commerce, trade, and industry. It will bring down the cost of production, improve local manufacturing, generate employment, and enhance exports," he stated.

He said that structural reforms remained central to the government's economic strategy, which had already stabilized Pakistan's macro-economic indicators.

The prime minister also highlighted the opportunity presented by the recent drop in global oil prices, and assured that the government was working to harness its long-term benefits for Pakistan's economy.

## NACTA approves National Intelligence Fusion and Threat Assessment Centre



### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A major decision was made under the chairmanship of Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi during a meeting of the NACTA Board of Governors, approving the establishment of the National Intelligence Fusion and Threat Assessment Centre (NIFTAC) under NACTA to comprehensively counter terrorism.

Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry also attended the meeting, while NACTA's National Coordinator, Dr Khalid Chauhan, briefed the

board members on the new initiative.

Addressing the meeting, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi stated that the establishment of this centre was finalised after detailed consultation, and it will play a pivotal role in achieving the core objectives of NACTA.

He further announced that NIFTAC centres would be established in all provincial capitals to ensure a coordinated national response against terrorism.

Senators Manzoor Ahmed and Poonjo Mal Bheel were also present at the session.

## Lawyers boycott courts in GB, PBC extends support

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) has officially extended its support to the lawyers' community in Gilgit-Baltistan, who are currently protesting against the non-appointment of judges and law officers in the region.

In a statement issued by the PBC, it was affirmed that the Council stands in solidarity with the lawyers of Gilgit-Baltistan, where demonstrations continue due to delays in judicial appointments.

The legal fraternity in Gilgit-Baltistan has already announced a boycott of court proceedings until April 16. Lawyers

are also demanding the implementation of the Lawyer Protection Act in the region, emphasising the urgency of addressing their longstanding grievances.

The PBC has urged the federal authorities to resolve the issues being faced by the legal community in Gilgit-Baltistan without further delay, citing that a functional and impartial judiciary is essential for upholding the rule of law.

