



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فہرمان رسول ﷺ  
 عبد اللہ بن عباس رضی اللہ عنہما نے بیان کیا کہ پیغمبر کی اولاد میں سنی اور دلبرین کو وصیت کا حق تھا۔ پھر اللہ تعالیٰ نے اس میں سے جو چاہا منسوخ کر دیا اور لوگوں کو لڑکیوں کے نکاح دیا اور دلبرین کو اور ان میں سے ہر ایک کو جسے حصہ کا مستحق قرار دیا وہی کو آٹھویں اور چوتھے حصہ کا حق دار قرار دیا اور شوہر کو آدھے یا چوتھے حصہ کا حق دار قرار دیا۔ (بخاری: حدیث نمبر 6739)  
**Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited**



## Starlink to operate in Pakistan by year-end, says IT minister

State Minister for Information Technology Shaza Fatima says Starlink services in Pakistan will be available by November or December. "The company will install infrastructure in Pakistan toward the end of the year after which it will provide services to consumers," she told the National Assembly committee. A meeting of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on IT and Telecom was held.



## LHC summons AGP in pleas against X ban

The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday summoned the Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) to assist in the hearing regarding the petitions filed against the ban on X (formerly Twitter). A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Aalia Neelum heard the petitions. The bench also included Justice Ferooz Haider and Justice Ali Zia Bajwa.

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## Betterment

ISLAMABAD: Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir Addressing the Pakistan Mineral Investment Forum 2025 on Tuesday.



Photo: Spokesman

# COAS invites global investors to avail mineral investment opportunities in Pakistan

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir has said that economic security has emerged as a key component of national security and Pakistan is set to become world leader on the basis of its mineral-based economy.

Addressing Pakistan Mineral Investment Forum 2025, Army Chief invited global investors and international organizations to explore investment opportunities in partnership.

Army Chief reiterated that future of the country is bright. General Asim Munir said engineers, geologists, operators and many expert miners are required in Pakistan to extract the mineral wealth of Pakistan. That is why Pakistan was sending students abroad for training to develop this sector.

General Asim Munir said currently, 27 Pakistani students from Balochistan were receiving training in mineral exploration in Zambia and Argentina. He said, "our goal is also to create

manpower, skills and human resources for the mineral sector".

He assured the global investors that Pakistan Army will provide then a robust security framework and proactive measures to protect the interests and trust of its partners and investors.

Army Chief said the development of upstream and downstream mineral industries in Pakistan will also be ensured. He said it is important that investment is made in refining and value addition in Pakistan to improve cost efficiency and

diversify markets.

General Asim Munir said Pakistan keeps mineral reserves and there is need of expertise and a transparent mineral policy and there is no room for despair and inaction.

Army Chief said by working together with global investors, Pakistan's mineral sector can promote regional development, prosperity and sustainability for the collective benefit.

He urged the nation to go ahead, and struggle for the country and for yourself.

Army Chief tells the investors that, "We Pakistanis assure our partners and investors that it is our collective national desire to benefit from your expertise in business and mineral wealth".

Army Chief assured the investors that, "you can count on Pakistan as a reliable partner".

He also appreciated the efforts of Baloch tribal elders who have played a significant role in promoting mining activities for the development and progress of Balochistan.

## SC hints at winding up hearing of civilians military trial case in two days

Spokesman Report

The constitutional bench (CB) of the Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday hinted at concluding the hearing of intra-court appeals filed against declaring the trials of civilians in military courts null and void in two days.

A seven-member bench, headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan, heard the appeals.

During the hearing, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel said that whenever a violation of a law took place, it was against the state's interests.

The judge asked whether the Jaffar Express tragedy that took place in Balochistan a few weeks ago was not against the state's interests. "The primary duty of the armed forces is to protect the country," he added.

Counsel for the Ministry of Defence Khawaja Harris, on the occasion, said that the crimes committed on May 9 were against the state's interests.



He expressed surprise as how the armed forces would defend the country when there would be attacks like the ones that took place on May 9.

Justice Mandokhel reminded him that it was not a matter to become emotional about. "It is the matter that relates to the country's security." The judge wondered how the law could apply to a conspiracy, which had not even been hatched.

Harris replied that the Army Act applied even when a conspiracy had been hatched.

Later, the hearing was adjourned until tomorrow.

Khawaja Harris will continue to give his arguments tomorrow as well.

## DPM/FM Dar discusses key issues with top US diplomat Rubio

Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Monday discussed wide range of matters with Pakistani Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar during a phone call, including U. S. reciprocal tariffs announced by the Trump administration, the State Department said. Pakistani travel guides

"They discussed U. S. reciprocal tariffs on Pakistan and how to make progress toward a fair and balanced trade relationship," Tammy Bruce, the department's spokesperson, said in a statement about the first conversation between the two leaders.

The US administration imposed tariffs on imports from around the world that range from a 10% baseline tax on imports from all countries to major economies 34% on China and 20% from Europe.

In South Asia, Pakistani and Indian companies will have to



pay 29% tariff and 26% tariffs on exports to the United States.

Ms. Bruce, the spokesperson, said, "Secretary Rubio thanked Pakistan for the arrest and transfer to the United States of ISIS-K operative Mohammad Sharifullah, and the Secretary and Deputy Prime Minister Dar underscored the importance of continued cooperation on counter terrorism. Pakistani travel guides

"Secretary Rubio also emphasized the importance of Pakistan's cooperation on law enforcement and addressing illegal immigration.... The Secretary raised prospects for engagement on critical minerals and expressed interest in expanding commercial opportunities for U. S. companies.

## Interior Minister orders steps to curb human smuggling

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday held a detailed meeting with newly-appointed Director-General Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Riffat Mukhtar Raja and directed him to take effective measures against human smuggling and illegal immigration.

Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhary, Federal Interior Secretary Mohammad Khurram Agha and the newly-appointed Director-General National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCA) Waqaruddin Syed were also present on the occasion.

Asserting that all those persons who were involved in human smuggling should

be dealt with an iron hand, Naqvi directed that a crackdown should be launched in all the four provinces on such persons.

Naqvi said that these persons played with the emotions of innocent people by showing them golden dreams to send them abroad.

He said that all relevant departments in collaboration with FIA have to take effective

measures to curb these crimes.

The interior minister said that cyber security is becoming a global challenge day by day.

He said that the capabilities of the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency would be enhanced and their officials will be sent abroad for the latest training.

## 1,061 Pakistani doctors get US residency positions

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a historic achievement, 1,061 Pakistani doctors have successfully obtained residency positions in the United States (US), marking the highest number of Pakistani physicians ever to get this number in a year.

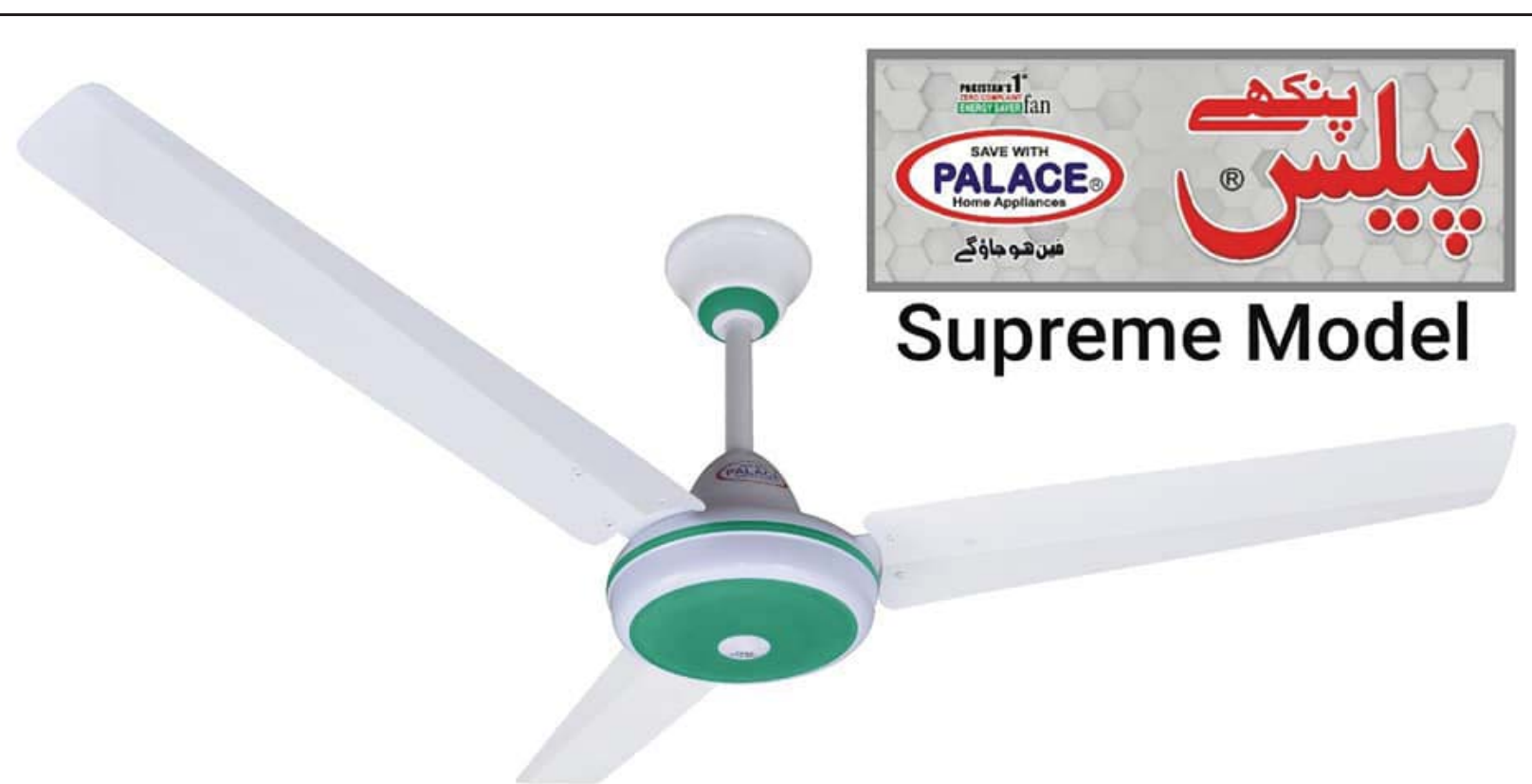
In a statement, President PM&DC Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj congratulated the doctors who were successful in achieving US Residency positions. Pakistani travel guides

He added that the impressive performance of these doctors exemplifies the high standards set by the Paki-

stan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) in overseeing medical education in the country and its strong curricula and training programs.

He reiterated the commitment to develop academic excellence among doctors and described this initiative as the start of a transformative journey aimed at further improvements.

He added that with a rigorous system of checks and balances, the PM&DC has played a crucial role in guiding Pakistani medical and dental colleges to establish robust curricula and comprehensive training programs.



# IIOJK: Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir condemns mysterious mishap in seminary

**Bureau Report**

MIRPUR: In Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir, Molvi Umar Farooq had expressed deep sorrow and grief over the tragic mysterious fire incident at renowned seminary - Shah-i-Hamdan Darul Uloom in Tral, in which a 10-year-old local lad lost his life and several others sustained injuries, said a report received here on from across the Line of Control.



Terming the incident as extremely painful and heartbreaking, the Mirwaiz extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family of the young child and prayed for his magh-firat.

He also expressed sympathy with all those injured in the incident and prayed for their speedy and complete recovery.

The Mirwaiz said the destruction of the Darul Uloom was a significant loss to the community, as such institutions were centers of learning and guidance. He emphasized the need for immediate support to the affected students and management of the Darul Uloom, and urged the state administration to investigate the cause of the fire and take all necessary measures to prevent such incidents in the future.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq prayed for peace, safety, and protection of all people and institutions of learning across the valley

## Pakistani People Stand in Solidarity with Palestinian Muslims: Azhar Khan Mughal



**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: High Court Bar Association Multan strongly condemns the Israeli attacks on the Palestine Muslims of Gaza. High Court Bar Association Multan President Muhammad Azhar Khan Mughal, General Secretary Safdar Sarsana, Vice President Hafiz Shoaib Qureshi, Finance Secretary Muhammad Hanafiya Abbas Bukhari and Library Secretary Madam Samira Anjum, while addressing a press conference protesting against the barbarity of Israel on the Palestinian Muslims, said that the lawyers of the High Court Bar Association Multan strongly condemn the bombing by Israel in Lebanon, Gaza and Palestine, in which innocent children, women and the elderly were martyred, and assure that the Pakistani people stand with the Muslims of Palestine and share their grief equally.

Multan, High Court Bar Association Multan President Muhammad Azhar Khan Mughal, General Secretary Safdar Sarsana, Vice President Hafiz Shoaib Qureshi and Library Secretary Madam Sameera Anjum are addressing a protest press conference against Israel's barbarity on Palestinian Muslims.

## Health crisis in Taunsa: Calls for emergency relief and treatment: Mayo

**Quratul Ain**

MULTAN: Former Advisor to the Governor of Punjab and President of the People's Party Human Rights Wing South Punjab, Saleem-ur-Rehman, Meo General Secretary Asif Farid Kalyani and Legal Advisor Mujahid Bashir Gurmani Advocate High Court strongly condemned the failure to take effective measures despite the Chief Minister of Punjab taking notice of the spread of AIDS among innocent children in Taunsa Tehsil, District Dera Ghazi Khan in the past months and revealed that even at this time, an epidemic of diseases like typhoid, malaria, diarrhea Diseases has spread in Taunsa Sharif and hundreds of patients are under treatment in various government and private hospitals, but no effective measures have been taken by the Health Department and this is a negation of the Chief Minister of Punjab's policy of providing public facilities for health, on which the whole city is protesting but no one has paid any attention. They have taken immediate notice of the Chief Minister of Punjab, Ms. Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Provincial Minister for Health, Chief Secretary Punjab and Secretary Health South Punjab and emergency relief activities and treatment facilities should be provided.



## Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's initiatives empower persons with disabilities

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: The inauguration ceremony of the training center by Moonlight Social Welfare Society Attock was held today. The event was presided over by Deputy Director Social Welfare Attock, Arif Mahmood Siddiqui, while senior Muslim League leader and ticket holder Malik Hameed Akbar Khan participated as the chief guest. During the ceremony, Muhammad Niaz, focal person for visually impaired individuals, appealed to the Chief Minister of Punjab, Provincial Minister for Special Education, DC Attock Rao Atif Raza, and ADCG Aneel Saeed to ensure that visually impaired individuals hired on a contract basis in the Special Education Department Attock are not terminated under departmental policy pretexts. Malik Hameed Akbar Khan assured full support for the welfare and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and appreciated Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif's initiatives such as the "Himmat Cards," "Dhee Rani Program," and the distribution of assistive devices among disabled individuals. Deputy Director Social Welfare Arif Mahmood Siddiqui stated that, under the directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, in the first phase, around 2,000 special persons in District Attock—those declared "Not Fit for Work" on their disability cards—have already received Himmat Cards. So far, 65,000 Himmat Cards have been distributed across the province in the first phase, and the second phase of distribution is ongoing. The public can benefit from these initiatives via the "Awam App" or through assistance from the Department of Social Welfare. President of Moonlight Social Welfare Society, Faizan Ali, General Secretary Zeeshan Irshad, Suhail Ahmed, and Advocate Sheikh Ahsan-ud-Din also reiterated their commitment to the welfare and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.



## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Umar Shahzad, the Director of the America Desk at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan called on President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry here on Tuesday. During the meeting, the duo discussed issues of mutual interest and prevailing political situation in the country.



Photo: Spokesman

# CEO Health Dr. Bajwa Visits to (THQ) Hospital Kamalia

**Zafar Chishti**

TOBA TEK SINGH: On the directives of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and the district administration, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh Muhammad Naem Sindhu, remains actively engaged in ensuring quality healthcare facilities for the public. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) District Health Authority Toba Tek Singh

Doctor Kashif Bajwa, paid a surprise visit to the Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital in Kamalia. He thoroughly reviewed cleanliness, medical facilities and administrative affairs, while Medical Superintendent (MS) Dr. Adeel Arif was also present. The CEO Health inspected the emergency ward, OPD and various departments, interacting with patients to inquire about the quality of medical services. He directed the hospital administration to ensure the provision of optimal healthcare facilities,



warning that negligence would not be tolerated.

# PML-N terms delayed election commission appointments as constitutional violation

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

Muzaffarabad: Pakistan Muslim League (N) Azad Jammu and Kashmir has termed the non-appointments in the Election Commission as a clear violation of the interim constitution and said that they will not allow any conspiracy to make Azad Kashmir a land without a constitution to succeed.

The Prime Minister should tell what obstacles are standing in the way of appointments in the Election Commission, including the Chief Election Commissioner. Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Shahbaz Sharif, acting on the letter of the President of the PML-N Azad Kashmir, as the Chairman of the Kashmir Council, has formed a

committee headed by the Federal Law Minister for constitutional consultation on the delay in appointments in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission, in which the Chief Secretary Azad Kashmir and the Secretary Kashmir Affairs are members.

The Chairman of the Kashmir Council has been given this authority by the Constitution of Azad Kashmir. The Government of Pakistan is responsible for playing its role in Azad Kashmir in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations for good governance and provision of basic needs. The objections by the PPP and the Leader of the Opposition to the committee formed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan are unjustified and incomprehensible.

We have only drawn attention to the ongoing violation of the constitution. President of the PML-N Azad Kashmir (N) Shah Ghulam Qadir and former Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan, while addressing a crowded press conference in the committee room of the MLA Hostel along with dozens of Muslim League workers, said that this region of Azad Kashmir and the parliamentary democratic system and constitution implemented here are the result of the long struggle and sacrifices of our ancestors. Our elders had achieved this constitution after a patient struggle. The constitution has not yet been implemented in Gilgit-Baltistan, which was liberated with us. The system is being run through a presiden-

tial ordinance. As a political party and member of the assembly, it is our constitutional, moral and political responsibility to play our role for the protection of the democratic system and the supremacy of the constitution. President of the Muslim League (N) Shah Ghulam Qadir said that during its rule, the Muslim League (N) empowered the government of Azad Kashmir and the office of the Prime Minister through the Thirteenth Amendment to the Interim Constitution under the leadership of Raja Farooq Haider Khan. Although difficulties were faced in this regard, the leader of the Muslim League (N) Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif gave us full support, on which we are grateful to them. It is the collective responsibility



of all of us to see whether the system in Azad Kashmir is running according to the constitution or not because we have taken an oath to protect this constitution. It is clearly written in the interim constitution that no constitutional post can be kept vacant. Immediate appointments to constitutional posts are a constitutional requirement to run the system. But unfortunately, the Election Commission has been inactive in Azad Kashmir since January 14, 2025, after the retirement of the Chief Election Commissioner.



Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:21 am  
Zohr ..... 12:10 pm  
Asr ..... 4:44 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:34 pm  
Isha ..... 8:00 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

**ENQUIRY**

Edhi Ambulance ..... 115  
PIA Flight Info ..... 114  
PIA Cargo ..... 9280979  
Railway Inquiry ..... 117  
Railway Exchange ..... 9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi ..... 5555489  
CAA ..... 9281092

**HOSPITALS**

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

*Clean sweep for Professional Lawyers Forum in Takht Bhai Bar Elections*

**Tariq Khan Yousafzai**

TAKHT BHAI: In the elections of the Takht Bhai Bar Association, all candidates of the Professional Lawyers Forum achieved a clean sweep, defeating the Democratic Alliance.

Saifullah Khan Mohmand Advocate, representing the Professional Lawyers Alliance, was elected as President of the Takht Bhai Bar for the second time with a large majority, while Imtiaz Malik Advocate was elected as the General Secretary. The annual elections of the Takht Bhai Bar Association for the year 2024-2025 were held on Tuesday in a very peaceful environment in the Bar Room Hall under the supervision of the Election Committee Chairman Muhammad Ikram Safi Advocate and members Nisar Khattak Advocate and Muhammad Shahid Khan Advocate. Out of the Bar's 99 members, all exercised their right to vote between 9 AM and 4 PM. Exceptional security arrangements were made, and the elections were held in a completely peaceful manner. The contest was a one-on-one between the Democratic Alliance—comprised of Malgaray Wakeelan and Jamiat Lawyers Forum—and the Professional Lawyers Forum, which included Insaaf Lawyers Forum, Islamic Lawyers Forum, and Justice Lawyers Forum. In the end, all candidates from the Professional Lawyers Forum emerged victorious, defeating the candidates of the Democratic Alliance. According to the results: Saifullah Khan Mohmand Advocate received 132 votes and was elected as President for the second time. Mian Shah Hussain Advocate secured 125 votes and became Vice President. Imtiaz Malik Advocate received 124 votes for General Secretary.

# Nawaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz Sharif meet Binance Founder to discuss Pakistan's Digital Economy Future

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) and three-time Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, was called on by Changpeng Zhao (CZ), the Founder and former CEO of Binance — the world's largest cryptocurrency exchange. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and CEO of Pakistan Crypto Council (PCC), Bilal Bin Saqib, were also present during the meeting.

Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif warmly welcomed the appointment of Changpeng Zhao as Strategic Advisor to the Pakistan Crypto Council. CZ's appointment was described as a significant step toward establishing Pakistan's identity as a regional hub for Web3 and digital finance.

The meeting included an in-depth discussion on the future of Pakistan's digital economy. Consensus was reached on adopting a vision of development rooted in innovative and emerging knowledge-based technologies.

CZ paid tribute to the visionary leadership of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif,

acknowledging his consistent efforts and foresight in promoting emerging technologies throughout his tenures as Prime Minister. Discussions also focused on youth inclusion in digital assets and future technologies, highlighting opportunities for their active role in shaping Pakistan's digital future.

Changpeng Zhao shared insights on the rising potential of blockchain technology and global entrepreneurship, emphasizing the importance of education and innovation. Agreement was reached on promoting advanced learning trends to drive digital transformation in Pakistan. "Engagements with global thought leaders like Mr. Zhao pave new paths of progress and opportunity," said Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.

"Pakistan is ready to become a partner in global innovative transitions," he added. "Pakistan must swiftly embrace rapidly evolving technologies to meet the demands of the modern era," said Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif remarked: "We are preparing our youth with top-tier IT skills to compete in the global digital market." Punjab is fully ready to embrace the technologies



of the future. She emphasized that Our focus is entirely on building a knowledge-based economy, which will guide the new generation toward innovation and digital enterprise.

CZ expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality extended by the PML-N leadership and appreciated Muhammad Nawaz Sharif's commitment to technology-driven development. He also lauded

the immense potential of Pakistani youth in digital and tech-based fields, noting their passion and aptitude for future-ready skills.

## Group Photo

ISLAMABAD: Additional Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Akbar Khan, Zafar Bakhtawari (Secretary General UBG), Nasir Mansoor Qureshi (President ICCI), Usman Shoukat (President Rawalpindi CCI) M. Munir Peshawari (President Gujrat CCI) and others posing a group photo after a dinner party hosted by H. E. Dr. Ihab Abdel Hamid, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Photo by Imtiaz Ahmad Faizi



## 'Pakistan Welcomes Home 500 Overseas Dignitaries for Historic Convention'

**Correspondent**

KHARIAN: The First Annual Overseas Pakistanis Convention is scheduled to take place from April 13 to 16, 2025, in Islamabad. This event aims to bring together around 500

distinguished members of the Pakistani diaspora to strengthen their connection with their homeland and explore potential investment opportunities.

Chaudhry Faisal Ishaq, a UK-based business community leader and head of the



Development Director A&F Realty Group Limited, has been specially invited to this convention. It should be remembered that Chaudhry Faisal Ishaq hails from the

village of Santapura, a suburb of Kharian, and is currently residing in Manchester, UK, and is the President of the Youth Wing of the Muslim League-Nawaz.

## Zahida Habib establishes H. M. Habib Endowment Fund



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: In a powerful tribute to a legacy of vision and service, Ms. Zahida Habib has established the H. M. Habib Endowment Fund at the Descon Technical Institute (DTI) in memory of her late father, H. M. Habib. A distinguished banker, philanthropist, and the founding force behind Habib Bank AG Zurich, H. M. Habib made lasting contributions to Pakistan's economic and educational development. Through this endowment, his commitment to empowering future generations will live on — providing perpetual scholarships for students pursuing various technical trades at DTI.

DTI General Manager Murtaza Ali Stated that, "We are deeply honored and grateful to Ms. Zahida Habib for this transformative contribution. The H. M. The Habib Endowment Fund will not only open doors of opportunity for countless students but will also uphold and extend the values of generosity, vision, and progress that H. M. Habib stood for."

## APSAMA President Expects Unanimous Candidate to Succeed

**City Desk**

RAWALPINDI: Candidates supported by APSAMA, Joint Action Committee, PIMA, IFC, Private Schools and College Management Association, Chamber of Private Schools Association, Educational Society of Private Schools, Rawalpindi Association of Private Schools and private and government colleges will definitely succeed in the elections to be held today, God willing. Election will prove to be a milestone for the development of the private education sector and the promotion of education.

These views were expressed by Abrar Ahmed Khan, President of All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association North Punjab, in a statement. Abrar Ahmed Khan thanked all the association presidents, especially the convener of the Joint Action Committee, Chaudhry Nasir Mahmood, Secretary General Malik Azhar Mahmood, Irfan Talib, Malik Naseem Ahmed, Hafeez Muhammad Basharat, Shahbaz Qamar Afridi, Muhammad Usman, Chaudhry Amjad Zeb, Muhammad Tayyab Chaudhry, Muhammad Jamil, Chaudhry Muhammad Asif, Chaudhry Muhammad Niaz, and Nadeem Shiraz. He expressed confidence in the unanimous candidate of APSAMA and other organizations, Syed Adil Shah, and assured full cooperation for success in the election. Abrar Ahmed Khan said that I have strong hope that our candidate, God willing, will definitely succeed in the election to be held today.

## Faisalabad Welcomes a New Era of Legal and Psychological Education

**Correspondent**

FAISALABAD: The launch ceremony of the University of London Law and Psychology programs at KCAS, held at Serena Hotel Faisalabad, marked a significant milestone in bringing world-class legal and psychological education to the region. The event commenced with a recitation of the Holy Quran and an introduction to KCAS's mission and vision. Key highlights included speeches by visionary leaders such as Ma'am Sarah Hayat (Rector, KCAS) and Mr. Ammar Anwar (Director Programs), who emphasized the transformative impact of this academic collaboration. Distinguished guest speakers graced the event, including Ms. Patricia Dean from the University of London and Mr. Saad Waseem, South Asian Representative of UoL. A major highlight of the evening was the panel talk titled "Bridging the Employability Dilemma," which explored the skills gap in today's job market. The session featured insightful contributions from esteemed panelists: Mr. Saad Rasool, a prominent lawyer and Harvard Law graduate; Mr. Ahmad Shafi, CEO of Crescent Textile Mills and a leader in industrial innovation; and Miss Tosheeba Sarwar, an expert in image management, entrepreneurship, and business development. The panel was skillfully moderated by Mr. Hamza Hayat, Head of the Law Program at KCAS.

## Punjab government should improve the financial funds of government institutions: Alhaj Vohra

**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: Central President Cloth Board Ittehad Group Pakistan Alhaj Naseer Yousuf Vohra visited the Decorative Office Press Information (DPR).

Director Maqbool Malik introduced the office to all the employees and also met with Rashid in-charge of the Pictorial Office.

On this occasion, Director

Press Information Maqbool Malik congratulated the businessman leader Alhaj Naseer Yousuf Vohra, Editor Trade Leader Shahid Mehmood, Chief Editor Waqt International Muhammad Idrees Paracha, Bureau Chief Lala Kashif on his appointment to Faisalabad and prayed for the progress and security of all the employees, journalists, Pak forces and the country of Pakistan.



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# Saudi Arabia: A World Power in the Making- I

**S**audi Arabia, long recognized as the world's largest exporter of oil, is now dramatically transforming itself into a multi-faceted global power. Driven by ambitious leadership, vast economic resources, and visionary strategic projects, the kingdom is poised to reshape not just its own future but also impact the international community significantly. Central to this transformation is Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS), who represents a new era of modernity, economic diversification, and cultural openness.

The modern story of Saudi Arabia began in earnest in the 18th century, with the alliance between Muhammad bin Saud and the religious scholar Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. This partnership unified tribes across the Arabian Peninsula, forming the basis of the contemporary Saudi state. Fast forward to the early 20th century, the discovery of massive oil reserves catapulted the kingdom from a modest regional entity into an economic powerhouse.

While his modernization drive has been transformative, MBS's reign has not been without controversy. His rigorous anti-corruption campaign, aimed at recapturing over \$100 billion for the state, has faced scrutiny and criticism domestically and internationally. Yet, despite criticisms, MBS's approach demonstrates a decisive push towards transparency and economic efficiency.

Saudi Arabia's economic diversification strategy centers around the Public Investment Fund (PIF), which manages a stag-

gering \$500 billion in assets. The fund has facilitated significant global acquisitions, including Newcastle United Football Club and stakes in major corporations like Uber, Microsoft, and Lucid Motors. These strategic investments underline Saudi Arabia's ambition to become a leading global financial and technological hub.

The centerpiece of Saudi Arabia's ambition is undoubtedly NEOM, a futuristic megacity project valued at \$500 billion. NEOM aims to house nine million people across a car-free environment facilitated by innovative transport solutions like high-speed rail and flying taxis. It represents Saudi Arabia's commitment to sustainability, featuring the world's largest floating industrial complex, a year-round ski resort, and wellness-focused mountain destinations. This ambitious urban development initiative positions Saudi Arabia at the forefront of global innovation and sustainable living.

The immense wealth of the Saudi royal family manifests in their luxurious lifestyles, showcasing the scale of their global influence. Their residences, such as the iconic Murabba Palace built in the 1930s, have evolved into opulent estates like the Al-Yamama Palace in Riyadh, which boasts hundreds of rooms, marble floors, and gold-plated interiors. Internationally, their property acquisitions, such as the Chateau Louis XIV near Paris, purchased by MBS for \$300 million, underscore the magni-

tude of their luxury spending.

The Saudi royals' luxurious lifestyle extends far beyond palaces and properties. Their unparalleled collection of luxury vehicles, including MBS's Pagani Zonda Riviera, valued at \$5.5 million, and other supercars like Bugatti and Ferrari, demonstrate an unmatched taste for opulence. Their wealth also translates into extravagant private yachts, most notably MBS's Serene, a \$500 million vessel featuring Leonardo da Vinci's Salvator Mundi painting, valued at \$450 million.

Despite their lavish spending, the royal family is also deeply involved in philanthropy. Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, one of the family's most prominent members, pledged his entire \$16 billion fortune to charitable causes, highlighting a commitment to social impact and humanitarian work. Their philanthropic efforts extend globally, often intersecting with strategic international diplomacy.

Saudi Arabia's growing influence on global sports, culture, and entertainment further solidifies its emerging status as a world power. Their creation of LIV Golf, funded by the PIF, aims to challenge established tournaments like the PGA Tour, signifying Saudi ambitions beyond economic influence.

Moreover, Saudi Arabia is actively leading regional megaprojects aimed at redefining urban living and sustainability.

Projects such as the floating "Vertical City Dubai," the "Al Mahara Floating Theater," and the eco-friendly Jubail Island in Abu Dhabi are designed to showcase the Kingdom's vision for innovation, luxury, and environmental consciousness. These groundbreaking initiatives demonstrate Saudi Arabia's aspiration to set new global standards for future cities.

Saudi Arabia's increasing global investments extend into the realm of artificial intelligence, with a \$100 billion initiative designed to position the Kingdom as a leading AI nation by 2030. Through strategic partnerships with global tech leaders and investments in AI research and development, Saudi Arabia is set to become a critical player in the future of global technology, further cementing its role as a multifaceted global power.

As Saudi Arabia continues its rapid transformation under MBS's leadership, the kingdom stands poised as a multifaceted global power, impacting everything from global finance and technology to culture and international relations. Its blend of strategic economic planning, ambitious infrastructure projects, and bold societal reforms underscore Saudi Arabia's potential to redefine global geopolitics profoundly. The House of Saud's evolving legacy demonstrates a remarkable shift from oil-dependent prosperity to becoming a dynamic and influential world power.

*Writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France and Former MD, SRBC. He is living in Macomb, Detroit, Michigan*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## World must act with urgency to save suffering Palestinians in besieged Gaza

**A**mid the ongoing Israeli aid blockade and bombardment of Gaza, UN aid teams warned on Monday that civilians trapped there face multiple daily challenges as relief supplies run critically low.

In a joint statement, the heads of the UN's aid agencies warned that "we are witnessing acts of war in Gaza that show an utter disregard for human life," with Israeli displacement orders forcing hundreds of thousands to flee – with nowhere safe to go.

"With the tightened Israeli blockade on Gaza now in its second month, we appeal to world leaders to act – firmly, urgently and decisively – to ensure the basic principles of international humanitarian law are upheld.

"Protect civilians, facilitate aid, release hostages – renew a ceasefire," they urged.

More than 2.1 million Gazans are being "trapped, bombed and starved again," top UN officials said.

Any assertions that there is sufficient food inside the Strip to feed everyone is far from the reality on the ground, they added.

Over the weekend the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) announced the closure of 21 malnutrition treatment centres in Gaza, owing to the resumption of hostilities and the recent evacuation orders issued for areas where the centres were operating.

The development came as the UN agency warned that more than one million children in Gaza have been impacted by the Israeli embargo.

Spokesperson Abu Khalaf condemned the blockade while confirming it has thousands of aid parcels waiting to be delivered to Gaza.

Complementary food supplies for infants in Gaza have now run out, he said, with only enough ready-to-use milk left to feed 400 children for a month.

UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestine refugees and the largest in Gaza, highlighted the increasingly dire impact of Israel's 2 April decision to stop allowing all humanitarian and commercial supplies into the enclave.

Media reports citing the Gazan health authorities on Sunday said that Israeli strikes killed at least 32 people, including over a dozen women and children.

In other reports, the Israeli military was alleged to have completely destroyed almost all homes in Rafah and isolated the southern city from the rest of the enclave.

"It's been over a month since the State of Israel banned the entry of aid and commercial supplies into #Gaza," UNRWA said. "Stocks are getting low and the situation is becoming desperate."

Although the United Nations agency continues to provide assistance "with whatever supplies remain", the UN World Food Programme (WFP) on Friday reported that its 25 subsidized bakeries have had to close.

Stocks are dwindling and prices of the few remaining items in shops have soared because no food aid nor cooking gas is entering Gaza.

"Poor kids are looking all day for food to eat, and they can't find any," said Jalila Abu Laila, at a camp for displaced Gazans in the north of the enclave. "Basically, nothing is available; they might only get some rice from the good people who give some out, but in general, we are unable to provide anything."

Israeli cities also reportedly came under attack on Sunday – including the southern city of Ashkelon – after Palestinian fighters Hamas claimed responsibility for firing rockets at Israel.

Israel's military said around 10 projectiles were fired, but most were successfully intercepted.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

## Youth empowerment – A key to economic growth

### Spokesman Report

**W**hen youth of any country provide to be an engine for economic growth, what could be a more solid proof than the Punjab government's recently announced initiatives for their empowerment.

The initiatives worth Rs 132 billion announced for youth empowerment during first month of year 2025 validly reflect sincerity of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz to empower its people.

As people friendly government always play a crucial role for empowerment of people; Rs. 84bn allocated for Punjab Easy Business Finance Scheme and Rs. 48bn for Punjab Easy Business Card scheme are deemed to be game changer for our economic development.

When in today's rapidly evolving economic landscape, job creation has become a cornerstone of economic growth, poverty alleviation and social stability; the Punjab government validly recognized these sectors to support entrepreneurship, skill development and business expansion.

Another notable initiative of the provincial government is e-bike scheme aimed at improving student mobility and the Punjab government has already distributed 20,000 electric bikes and scooters among students of both the public and private sector educational institutions.

In the next phase, nearly 100,000 more e-bikes will be distributed among students as a leap forward toward

fostering economic growth, reducing unemployment and empowering the youth to build a prosperous future. The government has also announced provision of free bikes to orphan students to benefit students with underprivileged backgrounds.

"This initiative has transformed our daily routine," said a private college student Fatima Dilwar, expressing her gratitude for the government's efforts.

"Previously relying on public transport from Sheranwala Gate on way to our institution at Raiwind Road seemed to be a tedious task," Fatima said. "But, these bikes proved to be a life-changing gift that made my routine more convenient and comfortable."

She thanked the Chief Minister Punjab and expressed hope that the program's scope would be expanded to benefit more students.

By addressing unemployment through skill development programs, the government is focusing on a sustainable economic future with increased job opportunities for all.

Talking of the importance of youth empowerment, Mehmood Arvi, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs of Pak-China Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) also highlighted the critical role of such initiatives in overcoming economic challenges.

He enlisted various government efforts aimed at fostering employment and business growth, noting their significant contribution to economic innovation and stability.

"The government's support for SMEs, through financial assistance, tax incen-

tives and a simplified regulatory framework has enabled businesses to thrive, particularly in sectors like manufacturing, technology and agriculture," Arvi pointed out. "These initiatives are stabilizing the economy as well as empowering local businesses to compete globally."

He also commended the government's focus on vocational training and skills development programs that had equipped young people with marketable skills, enhancing their employability.

"By investing in education and practical training, the government is addressing skills gap and preparing workforce for demands of modern economy," Arvi said.

He noted that establishment of business incubators, innovation hubs and startup accelerators has provided young entrepreneurs with essential resources, mentorship and capital, enabling them to start and scale their businesses.

"These initiatives are not only generating employment but also contributing to development of a more diverse and resilient economy," he remarked. "With these targeted initiatives, the Punjab government continues to pave way for youth empowerment, economic growth and long-term prosperity in the country."

With the country still struggling to successfully sail through the persisting economic challenges, the current initiatives are hopes to push it forward on road to prosperity and success. What we need is to ensure transparency and continuity of policies so the deserving segments of society judiciously benefit from these scheme and play their role in nation building.

## Native poets of KP: peeping through annals of history

### Fakhar-e-Alam

**K**hyber Pakhtunkhwa is a unique province of Pakistan having a vibrant cultural history and its literary tradition is deeply rooted in the expressions of its native poets.

Preservation and promoting region's culture, language and history, these native poets of Urdu, Pashto, Hindko, Chitrali, Hazarwal, Serakai, Kohistani, Gojri and others languages reflect diverse history, blending themes of love and traditions, valor, warmth, mysticism, social justice and mutual coexistence.

Standing tall among them is Khushal Khan Khattak (1613-1689), often regarded as Father of Pashto literature for his versatile poetry, covering themes of unity of Pashtun tribes, patriotism and education.

"He was not just a poet, but a great warrior and a statesman, who stood tall for freedom," said Professor Dr Abbasin Yousafzai, an educationist from Islamia College Peshawar.

"His poetry delves into ethics of leadership, unity of Pakhtoon tribes and struggle against foreign invasion. His most famous work, Khushal Khan Khattak's Diwan, remains a cornerstone of Pashto literature," Dr Abbasin said. "Pashto literature and Khushal Baba can't be separated."

In the rich landscape of Pashto literature, Rahman Baba (1632-1706) is another icon recognized as 'Prince of Pashto Poets' with his unparalleled contributions to cultural and literary heritage. His spiritual poetry transcended his era, leaving a lasting impact on readers' minds.

His famous work, "Khudai Khidmatgar" (Servants of God), encouraged the Pashtuns to embrace nonviolent resistance against colonial masters while maintaining their dignity as his poetry echoed a message of unity, selflessness and service to the Pashtuns community.

Amir Hamza Khan Shinwari (1907-1994)—another iconic Pashto poet has touched hearts of Pashto lovers as his works focused formation of Pashto epic literature.

"His epic narratives combine elements of folklore, romance and adventure. His poems, much like those of Khushal Khan Khattak, served both as entertainment and as a source for cultural preservation and moral instruction," said Dr Shaheen.

Another philosopher, artist and poet was Ghani Khan

(1914-1996). Being one of the most celebrated poets of KPK in 20th century, his works transcend the boundaries of traditional Pashto poetry, incorporating both philosophical and spiritual elements.

"Ghani Khan's poetry often focuses on themes of humanism, love, beauty and search for meaning. His collections both in Pashto and English include; 'the Pilgrim of Beauty' and other poems," reflecting his profound and unique worldview," said Dr Salma Shaheen, former Director Pashto Academy.

Impressed by the poetry of Professor Dr Muhammad Azam Azam (1940-2012), Dr Salma said that Professor Azam had command of Pashto literary techniques and proverbs and was famous for ghazals, rich in symbols and rhythm. "He was a man of knowledge and like any creative person always remained restless."

Professor Azam has authored 11 books including Afsana, Tahqeeq Auo Tanqeed, Pashto Adab Ke Kerdamigaaree, Lashey, Rehman Baba Da Ulas Shair, Pukhtanee Romanonah, Da Aqidat Guloona, and Andazoonah.

Dr Salma said, Radio Pakistan and PTV centers Peshawar aired more than 500 songs and ghazals of Professor Azam who is also considered a trendsetter in Pashto drama on both radio and television. Great hindko poet Professor Khatir Ghaznavi (1925-2008) wrote his first novel as a school student and later earned fame after writing forty five books. All of his poetic books published in Hindko language are collectively known as "Koonjan." He also translated Khushal Khattak's poetry into Urdu and Hindko and his Khwab Dar Khwab is recognized as his prominent book.

Besides these few known writers, there is a long list including Chitrali famous poets Muhammad Siyar, Iqbaluddin Sahar, Qateel Shafi of Hazara, Serakai poet Saeed Ahmad Akhtar (1933-2013) and Abid Ali Abid of D I Khan.

Urdu poet Farigh Bukhari, Pashto Hindko poets Professor Dr Hamayun Huma, Ajmal Khattak, modern Pashto's Rehmat Shah Sahil and Younas Khalil, Sher Zaman Taizai and Rajwali Shah Khattak's poetry touched hearts of many.

Validly saying, the poetry of KPh reflects its people, their historical experiences, resilience, cultural depth and intellectual spirit. From Khushal Khan Khattak's epic compositions to Ghani Khan's philosophical musings, the native poets of KP have made indelible contributions to literary heritage of the region.

# Pakistan urges integration of advanced technologies to UN peacekeeping to enhance effectiveness

**Spokesman Report**

UNITED NATIONS: As ceasefires grow more fragile and conflicts more unpredictable, Pakistan has called for making use of the rapidly expanding array of new technologies to make its peacekeeping missions "more effective".

"Advances in sensing technologies can dramatically enhance ceasefire monitoring at lower costs," Ambassador Aïm Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, told the UN Security Council on Monday.

Speaking at a Council's briefing on the Heads of Military Component (HOMC) of the UN Peacekeeping, he emphasized that advances in sensing technology — including drones and satellite imagery — can significantly enhance monitoring capabilities by providing "real-time, comprehensive situational awareness".



Noting that the core original function of peacekeeping — monitoring and observing ceasefires — has endured, Ambassador Asim said that he first two

Missions — the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) — were estab-

lished with this purpose and continue to hold relevance till this day.

"Ceasefire monitoring by the UN has played a vital role in maintaining peace in several flashpoints such as Jammu and Kashmir, the Golan Heights, Cyprus, Lebanon and Western Sahara," the Pakistani envoy said, underscoring that UN peacekeeping was "cost-effective and deeply impactful".

The Security Council, he said, must ensure that the environment provided by the cessation of hostilities and compliance with ceasefire was utilized strategically to advance the overall political objectives, and peace process including through sustained diplomatic engagement and support for implementation of UN Security Council resolutions to ensure just and lasting settlement of those conflicts.

"This is true for all situations on the Council's agenda, including Jammu and Kashmir," Ambassador Asim told

15-member Council.

Peacekeeping, he said, remains one of the UN's most effective instruments to help countries transition the difficult path from conflict to peace. Pakistan is among the largest troop contributors to the peacekeeping missions deployed in hotspots around the world.

Next week, Pakistan will host Peacekeeping Ministerial preparatory meeting, in partnership with South Korea, in Islamabad. "We are also proud to join hands with Denmark and the Republic of Korea, in a 'trio' to keep this vital agenda front and center during our current tenure on the Council."

Ambassador Asim also stressed the need for timely, credible information and prompt reporting of violations for effective ceasefire monitoring and regular reporting to the Security Council by the six missions currently tasked with this role.

He paid tributes to the 4,423 peace-

keepers, who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty, including 181 Pakistani peacekeepers. "We honour their memory, bravery and service."

The Pakistani envoy described the military component as the backbone of UN peacekeeping, saying that the 'blue helmets' are not just the face of UN peacekeeping — they are its pride.

In this regard, he called for collaboration with regional and sub-regional organizations to boost peacekeeping impact; mitigating threats from landmines and IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) through specialized training, and improving peacekeeper mobility with helicopters and all-terrain vehicles.

The Ambassador also proposed equipping peacekeepers with training on ceasefire agreements, and to hold perpetrators accountable for attacks on peacekeeper — recent incidents across multiple missions highlight the urgency of this issue.

## ISSI forges collaborative partnership with premier Russian think-tank

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) has concluded an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia of the Russian Academy of Sciences (ICCA RAS) to forge a collaborative partnership. The ICCA RAS is a premier Russian think-tank providing policy inputs for several decades now.

At the meeting held at ISSI, the Russian delegation was led by Dr. Kirill Babaev, Director of ICCA RAS, and included Dr. Vladimir Sotnikov, Researcher at the Center for Central Asian Studies, and Dr. Olga Gerasimova, Head of the Department of International Cooperation and External Relations.

On the ISSI side, Director General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood was joined by Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BOG ISSI; Dr. Neelum Nigar, Director CSP; and members



of ISSI's research faculty including Mr. Asadullah Khan, Ms. Mahrukh Khan, Mr. Taimur Khan, and Ms. Maheen Shafiq.

The deliberations focused on the enhancement and institutionalisation of bilateral cooperation between ISSI

and ICCA RAS. A wide range of subjects was discussed, including the current trajectory and future prospects of Pakistan-Russia bilateral relations; regional and global developments including in the Asia-Pacific region; issues of connectivity, trade, and secu-

urity; and Pakistan's relations with Central Asian states. Russia's growing engagement with Central Asia was also discussed, as was the special significance of Pakistan-China strategic partnership.

Both sides expressed satisfaction with the posi-

tive momentum in Pakistan-Russia relations and reaffirmed their commitment to reinforce efforts for further strengthening this important bilateral partnership. It was noted that think-tanks like ISSI and ICCA RAS have a critical role to play in fostering mutual understanding, policy dialogue, and long-term cooperation between the two countries.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and Dr. Kirill Babaev signed the ISSI-ICCA RAS MoU for their respective sides. The MoU sets the framework for collaboration in multiple domains, including exchange of researchers, joint research projects, co-hosted events, and collaborative publications, marking a significant step forward in institutionalising academic and strategic cooperation.

The meeting concluded with both sides expressing optimism for enhanced engagement and concrete outcomes in the times ahead.

## Ambassador Zahra calls on UNESCO to foster scientific collaboration addressing common challenges



**Spokesman Report**

PARIS: Permanent Delegate of Pakistan to UNESCO, Ambassador Muntaz Zahra Baloch on Tuesday called on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to foster scientific collaboration to address common challenges.

She was addressing the plenary session of the 221st session of the Executive Board of UNESCO being held in Paris from April 7th-17th.

In her statement the Ambassador reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to a stronger and more effective UNESCO to meet today's challenges.

She emphasized the need for a realistic and sustainable budget to deliver on its strategic priorities in education, science, culture, and communication.

Ambassador Baloch urged strategic rationalization in the structure and work of the organization; enhancing synergies, and reducing duplication and overlapping.

She also called on promoting democratization of scientific progress and innovation; and insulate scientific advancement from artificial barriers and strategic competition.

Ambassador Muntaz Zahra Baloch appreciated the dedication and commitment of the UNESCO staff and underlined the need for transparency and accountability.

## World must act with urgency to save suffering Palestinians in besieged Gaza: top UN officials

UNITED NATIONS: Amid the ongoing Israeli aid blockade and bombardment of Gaza, UN aid teams warned on Monday that civilians trapped there face multiple daily challenges as relief supplies run critically low.

In a joint statement, the heads of the UN's aid agencies warned that "we are witnessing acts of war in Gaza that show an utter disregard for human life," with Israeli displacement orders forcing hundreds of thousands to flee — with nowhere safe to go.

"With the tightened Israeli blockade on Gaza now in its second month, we appeal to world leaders to act — firmly, urgently and decisively — to ensure the basic principles of international humanitarian law are upheld. "Protect civilians, facilitate aid, release hostages — renew a ceasefire," they urged.

More than 2.1 million Gazans are being "trapped, bombed and starved again," top UN officials said.

Any assertions that there is sufficient food inside the Strip to feed everyone is far from the reality on the ground, they added.

Over the weekend the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) announced the closure of 21 malnutrition treatment centres in Gaza, owing to the resumption of hostilities and the recent evacuation orders issued for areas where the centres were operating.

The development came as the UN agency warned that more than one million children in Gaza have been impacted by the Israeli embargo.

Spokesperson Abu Khalaf condemned the blockade while confirming it has thousands of aid parcels waiting to be delivered to Gaza.

## Pakistan Pavilion inaugurated at Middle East Energy 2025 in Dubai

**News Desk**

ABU DAHBI: Pakistan's Envoy to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi on Monday inaugurated the Pakistan Pavilion at the 49th edition of Middle East Energy 2025, held at Dubai World Trade Centre from April 07-09, 2025.

The event, recognised as the region's premier energy exhibition, brings together over 40,000 energy professionals and 1,600 international exhibitors. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Consul General Hussain Muhammad, Trade & Investment Counsellor Ali Zeb Khan and Chairman Pakistan Business Council Dubai Shabbir Merchant along with Pakistani exhibitors.

Organised under the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), the Pakistan Pavilion features eight leading Pakistani companies showcasing innovations across five key energy transition sectors. These include Smart Solutions, Clean & Renewable Energy, Backup Generators & Critical Power, Transmission & Distribution and Energy Consumption & Management.

Ambassador Tirmizi expressed



pride in Pakistan's growing role in the global energy market, stating, "It is a matter of great pride that eight dynamic Pakistani companies are participating in this prestigious event under TDAP's platform. Our pavilion is attracting global buyers, with a strong focus on smart energy solutions, renewable technologies and

power infrastructure. The increasing interest in Pakistani products reflects our country's potential as a competitive player in the energy sector".

Highlighting Pakistan's export growth, particularly in the MENA region, the Ambassador emphasised the UAE's position as one of Pakistan's key trading partners. He added,

"Middle East Energy provides the opportunity for Pakistani businesses to engage in knowledge exchange, forge partnerships and explore new avenues for collaboration with global industry leaders. This platform is instrumental in strengthening Pakistan's footprint in the international energy market".

## Neglect at the Nexus: PHA Multan's Abandonment of New Kutchery Judicial Complex

**Zain Khan Malghani**

MULTAN: The deteriorating condition of New Kutchery Judicial Complex, a key judicial hub of the city, urgently demands attention. Due to the continued negligence and poor performance of the Director General of Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Multan, the complex has witnessed a significant environmental decline. Upon entering the premises, visitors are greeted by wild and overgrown bushes, reflecting an irresponsible administrative approach.

According to details, during the

tenure of former DG PHA Asif Rauf Khan, the plants planted in the complex were lush and well-maintained. However, those very plants have now withered; some have completely dried up, and no new plantation activity is taking place. Judicial staff and private canteen owners have expressed their concerns, stating that there is no proper system for cleanliness, grass maintenance, or watering of trees and plants.

Khadim Hussain, a police officer stationed at the main gate of the judicial complex for the past fourteen months, revealed that no sweepers or gardeners



are ever seen in the area, nor has PHA carried out any plantation

activity. Wild keekar trees have grown right at the main entrance — a clear sign of PHA Multan's disinterest and inefficiency.

A canteen owner remarked that the district administration's focus remains confined to a few specific roads and parks in the city, while an important site like New Kutchery continues to be ignored. Thousands of lawyers, petitioners, and people from other districts visit the complex daily, and they leave with a negative impression of Multan's administrative standards due to the deplorable state of the premises.

Multiple attempts were made

to contact PHA Multan spokesperson Jalal on his mobile number 03017419028; however, he did not answer the calls, nor did he provide any official statement.

Petitioners, lawyers, and canteen owners have jointly appealed to the Chief Minister of Punjab, Ms. Maryam Nawaz Sharif, to urgently take notice of this grave issue. They have demanded that regular cleaning arrangements, a plantation campaign, removal of wild bushes, and the planting of useful and shady trees be ensured in the New Kutchery Judicial Complex. This



would not only lead to environmental improvement but also provide a pleasant and respectable judicial environment for visitors.

"The Multan administration should ensure the preservation of a government building by

arranging greenery within the Judicial Complex." It is high time that government institutions take their responsibilities seriously and provide facilities to this vital public location in accordance with its significance.

## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
115,532.43	114,909.48	
Day's High	Day's Low	
116,692.29	115,560.90	
Index Value	Change	
27,286,381,616	+622.95	
Percentage	Time	
+ 0.54%	8 Apr, 2025 3:30 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,962.51	+260.43	
Percentage	Time	
+3.39%	8 Apr, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
39,137.44	+1,171.84	
Percentage	Time	
+3.09%	8 Apr, 9:44 am GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
33,012.58	+1,876.00	
Percentage	Time	
+6.03%	8 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

# Pakistan, Turkiye agree to enhance cooperation in energy sector

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Turkiye on Tuesday agreed to enhance cooperation in the energy sector, especially in the area of renewable energy.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was talking to a 9-member delegation led by Turkiye's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Alparslan Bayraktar here at the PM House.

"We are proud of the centuries-old brotherly relations between Pakistan and Turkiye," the prime minister added.

He noted that the recent visit of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Pakistan will further enhance economic relations between the two countries.

The prime minister thanked Turkiye's Minister of Energy and the high-level delegation for participating in the Pakistan Minerals Investment Summit.

"There are vast opportunities available to expand economic relations between the two countries," the prime minister added.



He stated that the agreement on offshore oil and gas exploration between Pakistan and Turkiye will further strengthen their economic ties.

The Turkish delegation appreciated the ongoing reforms in Pakistan's energy sector.

Turkiye's Minister of Energy said that his country will share its successful experience in energy reforms and privatization, particularly in the power sector, with Pakistan.

He added that the ongoing reforms in Pakistan's energy sector will make it more attractive for investment.

The Turkish Minister also expressed strong interest in Pakistan's mineral sector, especially in the exploration of rare earth minerals.

He noted that participation in the Pakistan Minerals Investment Summit provided a clear understanding of the vast potential of this sector in the country.

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Power Awaiz Leghari, Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi, and senior government officials.

## One-on-one meeting

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a one-on-one meeting with Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan, Mikayil Jabbarov at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Tuesday.

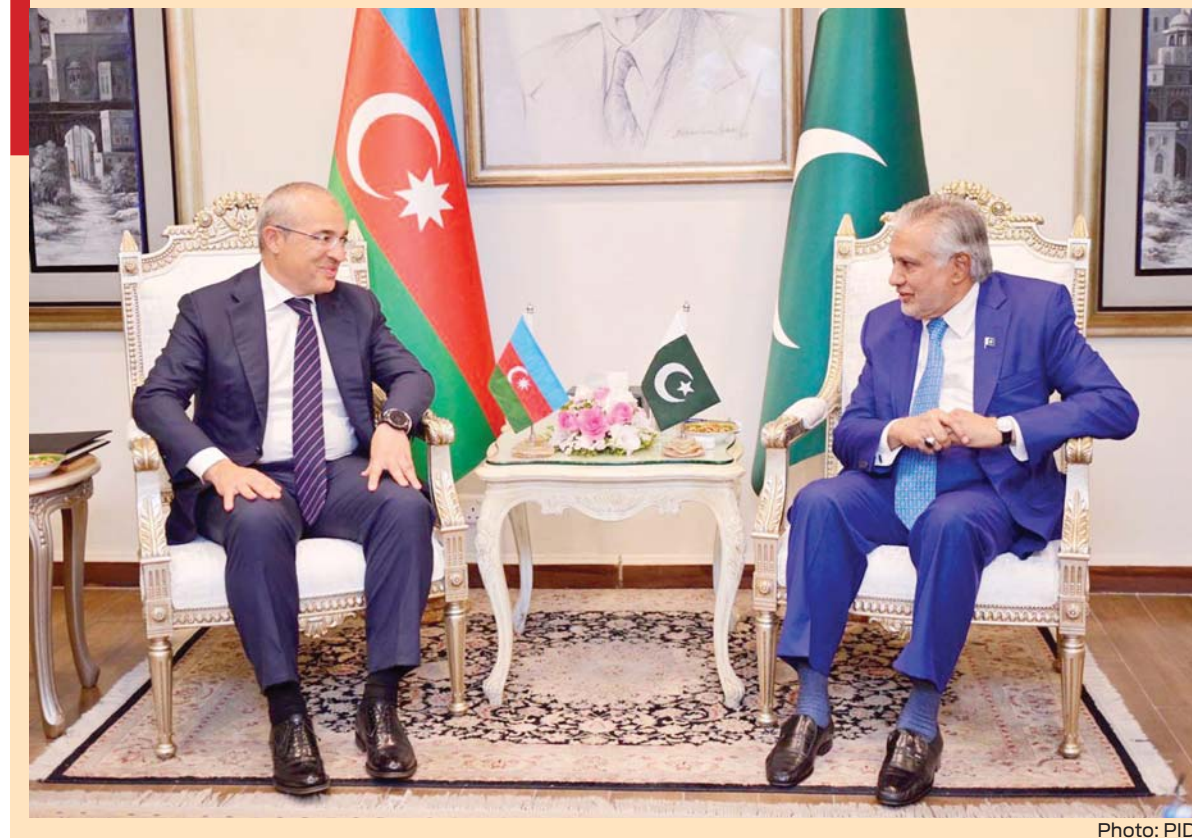


Photo: PID

## PFMMS 2025: Pakistan's Footwear Industry steps into the global spotlight with a historic event

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Footwear Machinery & Material Show (PFMMS) 2025, organized by the Pakistan Footwear Manufacturers Association (PFMA), is set to be a game-changing event for Pakistan's footwear industry, bringing together a record-breaking 250+ exhibitors from around the world. For the first time, leading companies from China, Italy, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Germany, and more than 8 other countries will converge in Pakistan, making it a landmark event in the country's industrial landscape.

Rashad Islam, Chairman

of the Pakistan Footwear Manufacturers Association (PFMA), expressed his enthusiasm about the impact of this monumental event, stating:

"PFMMS 2025 is not just an exhibition—it is a defining moment for Pakistan's footwear industry. This event will serve as a gateway for local manufacturers to connect with global markets, attract foreign investment, and establish Pakistan as a competitive force on the world stage. With an unparalleled lineup of exhibitors and groundbreaking innovations on display, PFMMS 2025 is destined to be a monumental success."

## ABHI partners with National Foods Limited to provide earned wage access

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: In a significant step toward financial empowerment, ABHI, an embedded finance platform, has partnered with National Foods Limited (NFL), a multi-category food giant and a global food exporter with a presence in 40 countries, to introduce Earned Wage Access (EWA) for its workforce. This collaboration underscores both companies' commitment to employee well-being, ensuring greater financial control and stability for NFL employees.

Through ABHI's EWA solution, NFL employees can access a portion of their earned salary in real-time via the ABHI mobile app or SMS, within 30 seconds, anytime, anywhere. This initiative eliminates the stress of waiting for payday, reducing reliance on high-interest loans and fostering greater financial security. By offering immediate salary, employees can cover unexpected expenses, avoid debt traps, and maintain financial stability.

"We are excited to partner with National Foods to empower their employees with Earned Wage Access," said Rayaan Sayeed, Head of Sales at ABHI. "Financial stress significantly impacts happiness and productivity. Through this collaboration,



we aim to alleviate that stress, giving employees the financial control they need to focus on what matters most." "At National Foods, we recognize that financial stability is a key pillar of overall well-being," said Khurram Merchant, Global Head of Total Rewards & People Analytics. "NFL's partnership with ABHI is a step towards reimagining how we support our people in real, tangible ways. By giving our employees access to their earned wages, we're not only reducing financial stress but also enabling them to take control of their financial journey. This initiative reflects our long-term commitment to building a more empowered, resilient workforce."

## Oil and gas reserves discover in North Waziristan

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: According to Mari Energies, the operator of the Waziristan Block, the Spinwam-1 well has yielded substantial oil and gas reserves, boosting the country's hydrocarbon resources.

The latest discovery has revealed an estimated 70 million standard cubic feet per day (MMSCFD) of gas and 310 barrels per day (bbl/d) of crude oil. This find is in addition to the existing reserves discovered from three other formations in the same well.

The previous discoveries include the Kawag Formation, which yielded 20.48 MMSCFD of gas and 117 bbl/d of crude oil; the Samansk Formation, which produced 12.96 MMSCFD of gas and 20 bbl/d of crude oil; and the Hangu Formation, which revealed 23.85 MMSCFD of gas and 122

bbl/d of crude oil. The Waziristan Block is operated by Mari Energies, which holds a 55% stake, while Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) and Orient Petroleum have 35% and 10% shares, respectively.

It is pertinent to mention here that Mari Petroleum Company Limited (MPCL) announced the discovery of new oil and gas reserves from the Spinwam-1 Well in North Waziristan's Karghar Formation.

A spokesman of the company said that the well is producing 20.48 MMSCFD of gas and 117 barrels of oil per day. This marks the second successful discovery from the Spinwam-1 well.



## Mr. Muzzafar Ahmed Mirza appointed as Commissioner, SECP

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Government in exercise of powers conferred under sections 5 and 7 of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan Act, 1997 is pleased to appoint Mr. Muzzafar Ahmed Mirza as Commissioner, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) for a period of three years with immediate effect.

Mr. Mirza was previously serving as Chief Prosecutor / Executive Director at the SECP. Since joining

the Commission in July 2012, he has led the Law Division and played a central role in the Commission's legal and enforcement functions.

He has been instrumental in shaping Pakistan's corporate and financial regulatory framework. His key contributions include leading work on several landmark legislative reforms, including the Companies Act, 2017; Securities Act, 2015; Futures Market Act, 2016; the Corporate Restructuring Companies Act, 2016; and the Corporate Rehabilitation Act, 2018.

In addition to his litigation and legislative work, Mr. Mirza has played an active role in broader reform initiatives to modernize and strengthen the corporate sector. His contributions include efforts to improve the ease of doing business, advance regulatory frameworks for digital assets, and develop SECP's Regulatory Sandbox — encouraging innovation in financial services while maintaining investor protection.

The Commission welcomes him onboard.



## Pakistan's Economic Progress Hinges on Completion of M-6 Motorway



Abdul Ghafor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: President Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry (HCSTSI), Muhammad Saleem Memon, has termed the persistent delay in the construction of the Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway (M-6) as a major roadblock to Pakistan's economic progress. He emphasized that this project is not merely a road construction initiative but a national economic lifeline that holds immense importance for trade facilitation and regional development.

In an official communication, Memon revealed that the Chamber has sent urgent letters to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Federal Minister for Communications, the Chairman of the National Highway Authority (NHA), and the Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, demanding the immediate resumption and completion of the M-6 motorway. Additionally, a letter has also been sent to the Chief Minister of Sindh, urging the provincial government to put pressure on the federal authorities to expedite this long-overdue project.

Highlighting the strategic importance of M-6, chamber president said, "The Karachi-Peshawar Motorway is the backbone of Pakistan's economy, and the M-6 is its only missing link. Karachi handles over 60% of Pakistan's exports and imports, and the delay in the M-6 completion is causing enormous losses to the business community through increased transport costs, trade inefficiencies, and rising accident rates." He further stated that this motorway is not just a route—it is a lifeline for Pakistan's industrial, agricultural, and commercial sectors, connecting critical economic hubs such as Hyderabad, Matiani, Nawabshah, Khairpur and Sukkur.

# 35th National Games meeting held at Sindh Assembly Building

Sports Desk

KARACHI: The Sindh Olympic Association has devised a comprehensive and effective strategy to organize the 35th National Games in a befitting manner. Preparations will be made with full dedication.

According to details, under the leadership of SOA President Sardar Muhammad Bux Khan Mahar and Secretary Ahmed Ali Rajput, a high-level meeting was held, attended by officials of provincial sports associations of Pakistan. Representatives from the Pakistan Olympic Association, Sindh Olympic Association, Commissioner Karachi, Secretary Sports, Police, and Rangers were present.

The meeting, chaired by SOA President Sardar Muhammad Bux Khan Mahar, reviewed the



progress made so far. Participants included Commissioner Karachi, DG Rangers, IG

Police, Secretary Sports Abdul Aleem Lashari, POA President Arif Saeed, POA Secretary

Khalid Mehmood, Joint Secretary Muhammad Jahangir, Pakistan Sports Board's Imran

Yousuf, Sana Ali, Gulfaraz Ahmed Khan, Asghar Baloch, Imtiaz Ahmed Sheikh, Khalid Rehmani, Kashif Ahmed Farooqi, Ghulam Muhammad Khan, Ghulam Yaseen, Abdul Raheem, and others.

POA Secretary Khalid Mehmood briefed the attendees about the National Games and expressed full confidence in the security arrangements.

The meeting discussed the current progress, the schedule of the opening and closing ceremonies, sports venues, game schedules, venue beautification, availability of sports equipment, accommodation for players and technical officials, venues for refresher courses and workshops, the number of medals, and the formation of multiple committees.

## Punjab players' 3-day trials for National Games start today

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Sports Board Punjab will start trials of players for 35th National Games from April 9 (today) at different venues of city.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry will supervise the selection process of players in the trials in which 600 players from all divisions of Punjab will be selected for National Games.

Director General Sports Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry in a statement on Monday said that the trials will continue at different venues of provincial capital from April 9 to 11. "The sports officers have been assigned monitoring duties for ensuring transparency in the trials process. The monitoring teams will visit and inspect trials of every game".

Director General Sports Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry said that after three-day trials, the training camps of selected athletes will begin on April 14. "Sports Board Punjab will provide the best facilities to the players during the training camps".

## Pakistani cricket team returns from New Zealand



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan cricket team arrived in Lahore late at night after concluding a tour of New Zealand.

All the coaching staff and other officials also arrived at Allama Iqbal International Airport (AIIA), Lahore, along with the team.

The players who returned to Pakistan include Imamul Haq, Salman Ali Agha, Mohammad Ali, Usman Khan, Abdullah Shafiq, Faheem Ashraf, and Irfan Khan Niazi.

Coach Aaqib Javed and Azhar Mehmood also arrived with the players.

The national cricket team won only one match during their tour to New Zealand.

The national cricket team suffered humiliating defeat in four T20 International matches against New Zealand.

The cricket team miserably failed to win a single match during the One-Day International cricket match during their tour to New Zealand.

Star batsman Mohammad Rizwan and former captain of the national cricket team Babar Azam were also part of the squad.

# BYD partners with HBL PSL Season 10 to electrify Pakistan's most iconic series

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a thrilling fusion of sport and innovation, BYD Pakistan-Mega Motor Company, has officially joined hands with Pakistan Super League's 10th edition as its official mobility partner. The partnership was formalized at a landmark signing ceremony, held outside the Pakistan Cricket Board's headquarters for the first time, hosted at the BYD Experience Center in Lahore, marking a significant collaboration between the nation's premier cricket league and the world's No.1 New Energy Vehicles (NEVs) manufacturer.

This alliance underscores a shared commitment to innovation, excellence, and promoting sustainable practices within Pakistan. As the country's premiere sporting event, the Pakistan Super League (PSL) is not just a celebration of cricket - it's a national phenomenon that unites millions of fans across the country. Partnering with such a prestigious platform amplifies the impact of BYD's vision for a greener future. The signing ceremony was attended by Chief Financial Officer of PCB, Javed Murtaza, as well as other senior executives



from both organizations, marking a significant step forward in this impactful collaboration.

This electrifying partnership unites the nation's most thrilling sporting event and the high-tech global NEV leader in the automotive industry—highlighting a shared commitment to innovation, excellence, and sustainability. As part of the sponsorship, BYD's latest NEVs will

be showcased during various matches across the country, offering cricket enthusiasts an opportunity to witness cutting-edge automotive technology.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Mega Motor Company's GM Marketing, Syed Haider Mujtaba, said, "Partnering with HBL PSL X gives us the opportunity to connect with millions of passionate cricket fans, while show-

casing BYD's groundbreaking New Energy Vehicles. This collaboration reflects our commitment to promoting sustainable mobility and eco-friendly transportation solutions in Pakistan"

Javed Murtaza, Chief Financial Officer of PCB, expressed his enthusiasm about the partnership, stating, "We are very proud to have BYD Pakistan as our official mobility partner, marking a beginning of a long-term, prosperous and mutually beneficial partnership for both HBL PSL and BYD. As HBL PSL celebrates the completion of its first remarkable decade and steps confidently into the next, we are committed to making the league bigger and better with each passing year. In that context - BYD's partnership with HBL PSL couldn't be timelier"

This partnership not only elevates the excitement of HBL PSL X but also highlights the synergy between BYD's innovative approach to sustainable mobility and the dynamic spirit of Pakistani cricket. Looking ahead, BYD will continue to develop technically innovative solutions to popularize and grow the New Energy Vehicles segment in Pakistan.

# Hassan Ali hopes PSL to re-engage disappointed cricket fans

KARACHI: Karachi Kings' right-arm quick Hassan Ali said on Monday that the national team's performance will always have an impact on the popularity of the Pakistan Super League (PSL), urging players to re-engage disappointed cricket fans via strong performance.

Speaking to reporters before Karachi Kings' first practice session ahead of the 10th edition of the PSL, Hassan acknowledged that while Pakistan's recent results have been disappointing, the team's new players need time to settle.

"When the national team doesn't perform well, it impacts franchise leagues like the PSL," Hassan said. "But when Pakistan do well, the PSL's graph also rises."

Pakistan have struggled in recent months, including a poor showing at the ICC Champions Trophy at home ground and during the tour of New Zealand.

However, Hassan backed the new players, saying: "The current results aren't



great, but we have fresh faces in the team and also in management who need time. The players know where they went wrong and where to improve."

The experienced pacer emphasised that senior players must perform in the upcoming tournament to reignite fans'

passion. "Our people love cricket, and the fans are very emotional. We will try our best to make them happy with our performances."

This year's PSL clashes with the Indian Premier League (IPL), but Hassan remained optimistic, saying: "Fans watch

the tournament where there's good cricket with entertainment. If we play well in the PSL, viewers will leave the IPL to watch us."

He highlighted the league's role in nurturing young talent, calling it a "big platform" for emerging players to share dressing rooms with top stars. "Performing in the PSL grabs the attention of selectors and management — there's no doubt about that."

Hassan, who had a strong comeback in domestic cricket earlier, vowed to maintain his form. "I recently performed well in the National T20 Cup and will try to keep that momentum. This PSL is important for me as I aim to make a comeback to the national team and as Karachi Kings team, we will do our best to bring Karachi cricket fans back to the stadium."

The PSL begins on the 11th of this month, with Karachi Kings set to play their first match on the 12th against Multan Sultans.

## Pakistan women's cricket team eyes top two spots in WC qualifiers: Coach Wasim



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Women's Cricket Team Head Coach Mohammad Wasim has expressed satisfaction over the team's preparations for the upcoming ICC Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifiers, stating that he is hopeful of securing a place among the top two to qualify for the World Cup.

Speaking to the media, Wasim said the warm-up matches proved beneficial and allowed the team management to finalise combinations for the qualifiers. "We are content with how the team is shaping up. Victory always boosts confidence, and we want the players to carry this momentum into the qualifiers," he stated.

Mohammad Wasim added that the 50-over format suits the current squad and that stability in the batting lineup is becoming more visible. "Our bowlers, both pacers and spinners, are in rhythm. Bowling has always been our strength, and now our batters are also showing a good response," he said confidently.

He further emphasised that while teams like the West Indies and Bangladesh pose strong challenges, the Pakistan team is aiming for consistency throughout the tournament. "We expect positive results in the World Cup qualifiers," the coach concluded.

# Topliners of Pakistan Cricket Commentary

Tahmeed Sadiq

A lot have been written and said about Pakistan players on the skyline of game of Cricket, be it PCB officials and other impelling forces who have always been involved in promotion of the cricket in or outside the playing field, in the PCB offices or in the press galleries.

Nobody ever discussed the role of cricket commentators in any debate who equally participated and have been instrumental in the game while sitting in the commentary booths and behind the mic.

Pakistan has produced some exceptional and astounding English and Urdu commentators,

During our childhood we used to listen to the live English cricket commentary on Radio to the mellifluous voices of Greatest of Greats the legends like Omar Qureshi, Jamshaid Marker and Aslam Azhar then the new era begun and after arrival of TV we could relish the voices and expressions of Iftikhar Ahmed, Chishti Mujahid, Tariq Rahim, Humayun Shahzad and Tariq Bucha and last but not least Late Muhammad Idrees Pakistan has also given rise to some extraordinary and amazing Urdu commentators and how can one forget running commentary in vernacular "Urdu" and few names to mention are Munir Hussain, Hassan Jalil, Farooq Mazhar and Zakir Hussain and all these historic names are unfor-

gettable.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to find a single source on the current Pakistani media where I can hear live Urdu commentary of any cricket match. On contrary in India, I could find lot of sources of Hindi commentary.

In fact, I have been following Pakistan cricket since my childhood and it has been very unfortunate and sad that Urdu commentary has disappeared, at least from the television screens, I reckon this to be a terrible loss for those who understand Urdu.

As far English commentary is concerned it is still at its peak. Ramiz Raja and Bazeed Khan are forerunners in the field of English commentary along with few other former cricketers who had seen their peak in the game

as well, notable among them are Wasim Akram, Waqar Younus and Aamer Sohail.

In the recent past some new shining faces like Zainab Abbas and Urooj Mumtaz have been added in English commentator's clan whereas, Urdu commentary box is deserted and parentless.

The only voice audience can hear in Urdu commentary is of Tariq Saeed. All the responsibility has since been thrust upon his shoulders which he accepted and doing up to the mark so far.

I wish media Boffins would back Urdu cricket commentary because most of Pakistan population do not understand English.

I think that following a Pakistan Cricket match with Urdu commentary can elevate and augment to the game itself.



## Called on

Islamabad: Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), Dr. Asad Majeed Khan called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb at the Finance Division Tuesday.



Photo: Ramzan Mughal

# Pakistan can bid farewell to IMF by utilising mineral resources: PM Shehbaz

By Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Tuesday Pakistan could bid farewell to the IMF (International Monetary Fund) by exploiting its mineral resources.

Addressing the Pakistan Mineral Investment Forum 2025 at the Jinnah Convention Centre, the prime minister expressed hope that the event would "enhance investors' confidence in Pakistan."

The prime minister stated that progress on the Reko Diq project is encouraging.

"Nature has blessed Pakistan with abundant natural resources. From Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Balochistan and



the mountains of Gilgit-Balistan, there are vast mineral reserves. The lands of Sindh and Punjab are also rich in natural resources, and Azad Kashmir holds immense mineral treasures," Prime Minister Shehbaz added.

He said that Pakistan has

trillions of dollars in mineral reserves, and by benefiting from these resources, the country can free itself from the shackles of debt and bid farewell to the IMF.

The mining industry in Balochistan will create employment opportuni-

ties and lead to social and economic development, he stated.

He was of the view that investment in minerals was beneficial for everyone. "Pakistan welcomes investors from the Gulf countries, China, Europe, the US, and other regions. Pakistan is home to the world's largest coal reserves."

He stated that by relying on local coal, instead of imported coal, Pakistan is saving valuable foreign exchange.

"The country aims to promote exports by adding value to its products. Exports of finished goods, rather than raw materials, will be ensured," he continued.

He encouraged investors to focus on finished products and emphasized that technical training is essential for the mining industry. "Partnerships between the private sector and government will be promoted to provide technical training to the youth. Investors should also play a role in skills enhancement of the young people."

Prime Minister Shehbaz concluded by saying that "together, we will make Pakistan a great nation and convert memorandums of understanding into formal agreements."

Later, a number of MoUs were signed between Pakistan and foreign companies.

# NRL discovers significant copper-gold mineralization in Chagai, Balochistan

By Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: National Resources Limited (NRL) has discovered significant copper-gold mineralization in Chagai, Balochistan. This was announced by Muhammad Ali Tabba, Chairman National Resources Limited and CEO Lucky Cement Limited while addressing the participants at Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025 today.

NRL, a 100% Pakistani privately owned company and a subsidiary of Fatima Fertilizer, Liberty Mills Limited, and Lucky Cement, was awarded a lease in October 2023. The licensed area contained two known porphyry prospects with strong exploration potential. Over the 15 months, NRL has identified 18 new prospects. One of these prospects, "Tang Kaur,"



has rapidly progressed to an advanced drilling stage.

Mr. Tabba informed that NRL has completed 13 diamond drill holes (3,517 meters), all of which inter-

sected significant porphyry-style alteration, sheeted and stockwork quartz vein sets, and sulfide mineralization. Assay results from the first six drill holes (1,500 meters) confirm strongly

mineralized, near-surface zones with downhole intervals ranging from 48 to 148 meters, using a 0.2% copper cut-off grade and up to 10 meters of internal dilution. The average grade of the intercepts ranges from 0.23% to 0.48% copper, 0.09 to 0.14 g/t gold, and 1.30 to 6.21 g/t silver, resulting in a copper equivalent of 0.28% to 0.56%. The mineralized system remains open to the north, east, and at depth.

He said that advanced drilling at Tang Kaur is scheduled for May 2025, leading to an NI 43-101 Technical Report by year-end by internationally recognized consultants, who are already monitoring the project. This will be followed by 3-4 years of detailed exploration, culminating in feasibility studies, while exploration of the other prospects and leases continues.

# Jam Kamal invites investors to tap Pakistan's 95% unexplored mineral potential

By Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Tuesday highlighted Pakistan's vast mineral resources, offering significant opportunities for global companies to invest and collaborate in exploring the nearly 95 percent of mineral reserves that remained untapped in various parts of the country. Pakistani travel guides

"I believe you have a country where 95% of the mineral resources are yet to be explored in the way they should be. This is something worth investing in, especially considering the demand for metals such as copper, critical rare earth minerals, lithium ore, iron ore and many others," he said during a



panel discussion at the inaugural session of the two-day Pakistan

Minerals Investment Forum 2025.

Jam Kamal expressed his gratitude to the renowned international companies already operating in Pakistan, including Barrick Gold. "Their presence demonstrates the importance and potential of Pakistan's mineral sector, which can be developed to an exponentially greater level," he added.

He highlighted Balochistan and the northern regions of Pakistan, noting that more than 90 mineral types were present there, with basic data and knowledge currently available.

The minister explained that the Geological Survey of Pakistan (GSP) was actively working to explore these critical and basic mineral reserves, but emphasized that there were still vast untapped opportunities in the sector.

# ECO's Secretary General Calls on Finance and Revenue Minister

By Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb today met the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), Dr. Asad Majeed Khan who called on him at the Finance Division today.

The meeting focused on enhancing regional economic cooperation and discussed initiatives to strengthen the role of the ECO in promoting trade, commerce, and tourism among its 10 member countries.

Dr. Asad Majeed Khan briefed the Finance Minister on the profile and strategic role of the ECO in fostering regional economic cooperation. He emphasized the importance of regional trade and connectivity, particularly in the context of emerging trade corridors and markets in the region. Both leaders agreed on the need for further strengthening regional trade and connectivity, which are critical in advancing the economic develop-

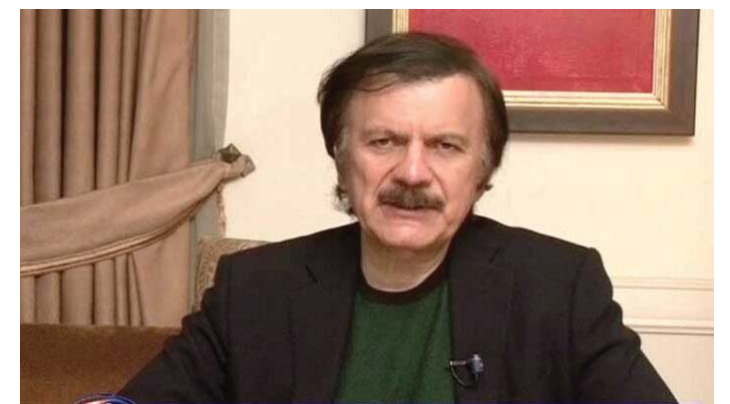
ment of the member countries.

The Secretary General also highlighted the strides taken by the ECO since his appointment to enhance trade and tourism through intensified engagement with member countries. Dr. Khan presented ways to make the organization more robust and dynamic, ensuring that it continues to drive regional trade and cooperation effectively. He stressed the significance of mutual collaboration in advancing the shared goals of trade, commerce, and tourism in the region.

In response, Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb assured the Secretary General of the Ministry's full support for various ECO initiatives aimed at advancing regional cooperation.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with both leaders reaffirming their commitment to further strengthening the ties between the ECO member countries and fostering a collaborative environment for shared growth and development.

# Haroon Akhtar reviews budget proposals for the upcoming fiscal year



By Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Tuesday chaired a high level meeting to review budget proposals for the industrial sector for the upcoming fiscal year.

The meeting was attended by the Secretary of the Ministry of Industries and Production Saif Anjum, representatives from the Engineering Development Board (EDB), and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), said a news release.

The participants discussed various key issues including the promotion of local manufacturing, import and export of raw materials, the structure of Customs Duties (CD), Regulatory Duties (RD), and Additional Customs Duties (ACD).

The Ministry proposed a 20% Regulatory Duty on LED lighting products, it added.

Haroon Akhtar directed for revisions in the budget proposals, emphasizing the need for tax reforms to uplift the industrial sector. He proposed the introduction of a super tax to bring Pakistan's corporate tax structure at par with regional standards.

# Entrepreneur Tabassum eyes landmark mining investment in Pakistan

By City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a groundbreaking development poised to reshape Pakistan's mining and energy sectors as South Africa-based Pakistani entrepreneur Tabassum Pardesi has formally commenced her participation in the Pakistan Mining Summit 2025, held in Islamabad.

The high-profile summit brings together policymakers, global investors, and industry leaders to explore Pakistan's vast untapped mineral wealth. Tabassum, a trailblazing businesswoman best known for co-founding South Africa's Skywise Airline and for breaking barriers in male-dominated industries, is now spearheading a landmark investment initiative to establish a Coal-to-Gas-



ification plant at the Thar coalfields.

The venture, in collaboration with leading South African mining conglomerates, aims to generate cleaner energy, reduce Pakistan's reliance on imported fuels, and unlock long-term economic opportunities for the region.

# Polio eradication drive to begin on Apr 21

PESHAWAR: A five-day polio eradication campaign is set to be launched in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from April 21. The campaign aims at administering polio drops to over 6 million children across the province.

According to the provincial health department on Tuesday, more than 800,000 children in the capital city of Peshawar will receive the polio vaccine.

For the purpose, over 30,000 teams have been formed to carry out the campaign, while 50,000 police personnel will be deployed to ensure



security during the drive.

Health officials confirmed that one case of polio has been reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa so far this year, underscoring the importance of continued vaccination efforts.