

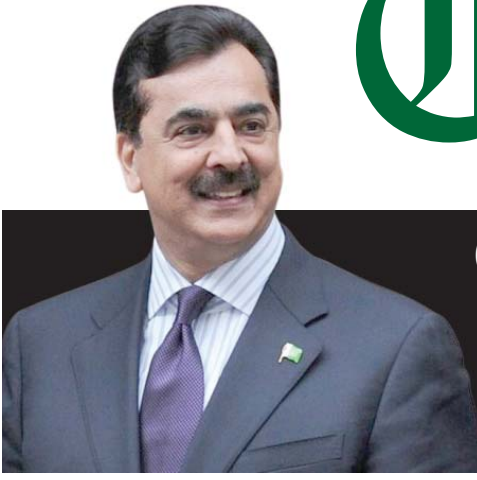


Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے شہر نے بیان کیا ان سے مشور
نے بیان کیا، کہا میں نے ابو دائل سے مشور
وہ عبد اللہ بن مسعود رضی اللہ عنہ سے بیان
کرتے تھے کہ انہوں نے بیان کیا کہ رسول
اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا مسلمان کو کالی
دیغا کھادے اور اس کو کھل کر کھائے۔ فخر
نے شہر سے روایت کرنے میں سلمان کی
مناہت کی ہے۔
(بخاری ص ۶۴۴ نمبر ۶۰۴۴)
Barkat Rice Mills
(Pvt) Limited



Chairman Senate congratulates nation on successful test of Fatah missile

Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Monday congratulated the nation on the successful test of the Fatah missile by the Pakistan Armed Forces, calling it a major achievement in strengthening the country's defence capabilities.



CM orders free medical treatment for patients returning from India

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has directed the Health Department to provide free medical treatment to patients who have returned from India without completing their procedures. Following the recent escalation of tensions between India and Pakistan.

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15th National Workshop Balochistan

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), interacted with participants of 15th National Workshop Balochistan at GHQ.



Photo: ISPR

COAS emphasizes National Unity Against Terrorism in Balochistan

Naveed Ahmad Khan

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), interacted with participants of 15th National Workshop Balochistan at GHQ today. Since 2016, the Workshop brings together a large number of male and female parliamentarians, bureaucrats, members of civil society, youth, academia and media representatives, with maximum representation from Balochistan. The Workshop, encompassing interactions,

seminars, group discussions and visits to different parts of the country. It is aimed at enabling future leadership of Balochistan in understanding vital national / provincial issues and mounting cohesive response.

Speaking at the occasion, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) highlighted Government's persistent focus on improving the socioeconomic profile of Balochistan, and stated that the scale and scope of ongoing and planned initiatives should serve to dispel the blatant disinformation in this regard. Many devel-

opment projects have already started bearing fruit benefiting the people of Balochistan. Appreciating the role of the civil society members in raising awareness among the people of Balochistan, specially the youth, COAS emphasized their role in enabling the progress leading to prosperity.

COAS underscored that foreign sponsored terrorism remains the gravest threat to Balochistan's security and development. He warned that the nefarious designs of hostile elements, who seek to incite

violence, spread fear, and destabilize the province, will not be allowed to succeed.

Reaffirming Pakistan's resolve, the COAS stated that terrorism knows no religion, sect, or ethnicity, and must be confronted with unwavering national unity. Terrorist groups that perpetrate terror in name of Baloch identity to advance their petty insidious agenda, are a blemish on Baloch honour and patriotism.

COAS emphasised that Pakistan seeks peace in the region and beyond, however, if Paki-

stan's sovereignty and territorial integrity is violated, Pakistan will respond with full force to preserve its national prestige and wellbeing of its people.

Pakistan's Armed Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies will continue to fight menace of terrorism with the complete support of the people of Pakistan.

The Workshop concluded after an engaging and candid Q&A session.

President Zardari, Iranian Foreign Minister discuss bilateral ties, regional security

Pakistan Army conducts training launch of FATAH series missile



Naveed Ahmad Khan

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan today conducted a successful training launch of a FATAH Series surface-to-surface missile with a range of 120 kilometers as part of ongoing Ex INDUS.

The launch was aimed at ensuring the operational readiness of troops and validating key technical parameters, including the missile's advanced navigation system and enhanced accuracy.

The training launch was

witnessed by senior officers of Pakistan Army, as well as officers, scientists and engineers from Pakistan's strategic organizations.

Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, and the Chief of Army Staff extended their congratulations to the participating troops, scientists, and engineers. They expressed complete confidence in the operational preparedness and technical proficiency of Pakistan Army to thwart any aggression against the territorial integrity of Pakistan.

Iran's Foreign Minister urges restraint in Pakistan-India tensions

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Minister of Iran, Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Monday to discuss matters of bilateral and mutual interest, regional security situation, particularly the ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan in the wake of the Pahalgam incident.

Welcoming the Iranian foreign minister, the president emphasised that Pakistan and Iran enjoyed historic and brotherly relations. He stressed the importance of both countries working together to promote peace and prosperity in the region.

The Iranian foreign minister said that he was undertaking the visit on the instructions of the Supreme Leader,



Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei, and the President of Iran, Masoud Pezeshkian. He expressed understanding of Pakistan's position on the current situation and called for restraint by both sides to de-escalate the tensions.

The foreign minister stated that Iran attached importance to its relations with Pakistan and was desirous of further strengthening bilateral ties for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries.

The president thanked the Iranian Foreign Minister for undertaking the visit to Pakistan at a critical juncture. He reiterated Pakistan's commitment to dialogue and diplomacy, while expressing concern over India's aggressive posture, which he said was endangering regional peace and stability. The president

India's weaponization of Indus Waters Treaty unacceptable: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday stressed that India's weaponization of the Indus Waters Treaty was unacceptable and a red-line for the people of Pakistan.

During a meeting with Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyyed Abbas Araghchi who called on him, the prime minister shared Pakistan's serious concerns over the prevailing tensions in South Asia as a result of India's provocative behavior since Pahalgam incident. Pakistani travel guides

He categorically rejected any attempts to link Pakistan to the incident, without sharing any evidence and said Pakistan had offered that an international transparent, neutral and credible investigation be conducted to ascertain the facts behind the Pahalgam incident. Pakistani



travel guides

While stating that Pakistan had acted with maturity and responsibility, the Prime Minister said "India had, on the other hand, created a media frenzy to

divert the world's attention away from Jammu and Kashmir dispute, which remained the root cause of instability in South Asia," PM Office Media Wing, in a press release.

At the outset, the prime minister expressed his sincere condolences to the Iranian side over the tragic explosion in Bandar Abbas that had led to the loss of precious lives and injured hundreds of people.

He prayed for those who had lost their loved ones, as well as for the early recovery of the injured.

During this warm and cordial meeting, the prime minister conveyed his respectful regards to Supreme Leader Ayatullah Ali Khamenei and warm wishes for President Masoud Pezeshkian.

He underscored that Pakistan attached great importance to its historic, deep-rooted fraternal ties with Iran.

Fazl boycotts National Assembly session

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) President Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Monday walked out of the National Assembly session, which was meant to discuss the national security situation against the backdrop of threats of misadventurism from India.

Boycotting the session, Fazl said the session was convened to discuss a critical situation, but no responsible functionary from the ruling coalition was present in the house. He said that nobody appeared to be serious even at this critical time and the government was completely insensitive to the situation.

Fazl said that he and his party lawmakers came to the assembly in high spirits, but they were disappointed as there was nobody present in the house to listen to them. He said he wanted to leave and then he left along with other lawmakers of his party.

DPM Dar, Iranian FM exchange views on regional situation, US-Iran talks



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of Iran Seyyed Abbas Araghchi on Monday exchanged views on the evolving situation in South Asia and US-Iran talks while agreeing that complex issues could be resolved through diplomacy and negotiations.

The Iranian foreign minister met with DPM/PM Dar. They appreciated each others' constructive diplo-

matic efforts which demonstrated their shared commitment to peace and stability in the region, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

Both the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strong Pakistan-Iran ties and agreed to boost cooperation in trade, energy and connectivity.

They also agreed to maintain strong momentum in Pak-Iran relations including by maintaining an increased frequency of interaction at leadership level.

Azad Kashmir launches National Volunteer Movement against Indian aggression



Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference has voluntarily launched the "National Volunteer Movement Azad Kashmir" against the current Indian aggression. In this regard, the registration process is underway across Azad Kashmir, the volunteers are determined to stand by the side of the Pakistan Army in the event of an Indian attack and fulfill their respon-

sibilities as they deserve.

The meeting of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was held yesterday under the chairmanship of its central leader Major (retd) Nasrullah Khan.

In the meeting, under the direction of the President of the Muslim Conference, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, the central leader of the Muslim Conference, Major (retd) Sardar Nasrullah Khan, launched the volunteer movement.

The meeting was attended by Dhirkot Constituency President Sardar Irfan Abbasi, Dhirkot Constituency General Secretary Raja Muhammad Munir Khan, Rangla Muslim Conference President Raja Khurshid Hameed, UC Rangla Chairman Raja Iftikhar Afzal, Executive Council Member Raja Maqbool Khan, Raja Muhammad Shahbaz, Executive Council Member Sardar Sayad Abbasi, Trader Wing Dhirkot Chairman Hafiz Imran, District

Council Member Nasreen Akhtar Raja and others, who started the registration process.

Major (retd) Nasrullah Khan said that the brave people of Azad Kashmir should become a part of this movement and become a lead wall against Indian aggression and stand by the side of the Pakistan Army.

The aim of the volunteer movement is to stand by the Pakistan Army in any aggression by India and confront Indian aggression.

There is a sea of art inside Kainat Ahmed. Dr. Jafar Hassan Mubarak



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: () The launch ceremony of the fictional collection "Blank Check" by the renowned poet, writer, painter and fiction writer Ms. Kainat Ahmed was held at the Nazriya Pakistan Hall Municipal Library, Dhobi Ghat, Faisalabad, organized by Nazeem Karwan Adab, Faisalabad. The special guest of the event was Dr. Tariq Hashmi, while the chairmanship was held by Dr. Jafar Hassan Mubarak and the chairman was Dr. Majid Mushtaq Rai. On this occasion, Ashraf Ashari, while expressing his views on the book and the author, said that in today's advanced era, man has created many means to express his thoughts. Among them, ghazal, poem, drama, story, novel and fiction etc. have been given high ranks. Human attitudes and social tragedies A special and meaningful contribution is part of this book. Dr. Tariq Hashmi praised contemporary fiction writing in his address regarding this book. He further said that Kainat Ahmed has painted a picture in the true sense of the word in this blank check. One problem is that women are not given a place in Urdu literature. In my opinion, this is a big accusation against male teachers, writers and critics. President Dr. Jafar Hassan Mubarak told about Kainat Ahmed's childhood life and said that today fiction is the most prominent genre in private literature. Its popularity is increasing day by day. The distinguished guests of the ceremony included Dr. Muhammad Ayub, Ashraf Ashari, Dr. Ghulam Dastgir, Dr. Parveen Kilo, Professor Waqas Ahmed Work, Mr. Gulzar Malik, Zahid Bilali, Muhammad Nazeem-ul-Hassan, Noor Fatima, Ahmed Raza Bhatti, Tanveer Betab, Saleem 'Saleem Shahid, Ahmed Adnan Tariq, Ashfaq Babar, Tariq Mahmood Khan, Malik Ali Raza Awan, Saira Mazhar, Anshra Hazadi. The program was hosted by Azad Naqibi and Rustam Naqibi. Finally, a commemorative shield was presented to Kainat Ahmed by the Naqibi Karwan Adab

Faisalabad Chamber Chief Seeks 4% Cut in Policy Rate to Boost Exports

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Rehan Naseem Bharara has termed the 1 percent reduction in the policy rate as highly inadequate in the current economic conditions of the country. He said that the Prime Minister and his economic team members have openly admitted that it is not possible to run industries profitably unless the policy rate is in single digits. He said that at present those who are running industries are actually causing their own personal losses, therefore a reduction of at least 4 percent in the policy rate was necessary. He said that at present inflation, foreign exchange reserves, export and other economic indicators are gradually improving, so there was scope for a reduction of up to four percent in the policy rate, but the State Bank has reduced the policy rate by only one percent. He said that the government will have to decide to bring the policy rate to single digits as soon as possible to increase industrial production and exports. He said that the business community has been disappointed by the reduction of only one percent in the policy rate.

Sarfraz Bugti lays foundation stone of Sui-Kashmore road project

SUI: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Monday laid the foundation stone of the Sui-Kashmore Road, calling it milestone towards a new era of development and prosperity in the region.



Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony held in Sui, Balochistan CM Sarfraz Bugti said that "the launch of the Sui-Kashmore road would usher a new era of development, uplift of deprived area, and stability for the region". Chief Minister said the project would significantly transform Dera Bugti and surrounding areas by improving connectivity and strengthening the local economy.

"The Sui-Kashmore Road is a journey towards development and stability. It will not only improve transportation but also boost trade, create employment opportunities, and make access to healthcare and education easier for the people," said Bugti.

The ceremony was attended by Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Petroleum Mian Khan Bugti, Chairman District Council Dera Bugti Mir Ghulam Nabi Shambani, local government representatives, tribal elders, and a large number of local people.

Project officials briefed the Chief Minister and other dignitaries on the scope, timeline, and cost of the road, emphasizing its importance for the region's infrastructure and economy. The road is the first mega communication project in Dera Bugti, aimed at facilitating the transportation of agricultural goods to markets, thereby benefiting local farmers.

Highlighting the government's commitment to uplifting underdeveloped areas, Bugti said that integrating remote regions like Dera Bugti into the national mainstream is a top priority. "We are using all available resources to complete development projects on a priority basis. Our goal is a peaceful, prosperous, and self-reliant Balochistan that contributes significantly to country's growth," he added.

He also instructed concerned authorities to ensure timely and high-quality completion of the project and to guarantee that its benefits directly reach the local population.

Earlier, the Chief Minister arrived in Sui on a one-day visit where he was welcomed by tribal elders and local people.

Partly cloudy, hot weather forecast for Lahore

LAHORE: The city experienced partly cloudy and mildly hot weather on Monday, with the MET office forecasting similar conditions and a chance of scattered rain over the next 24 hours.

According to MET officials, temperatures ranged between a high of 30°C and a low of 23°C. They added that scattered rain is likely over the next two days, with the possibility of windstorms in different parts of the country.

Meanwhile, the city recorded an average Air Quality Index (AQI) of 68, with PM2.5 levels measured at 3.6 times above the World Health Organization's annual guideline limit.

Demonstration

MUZAFFERABAD: Activists of Pasban-e-Hurriyat are shouting slogans and burns tyres during demonstration against Indian aggression on oppressed Kashmiris.



Photo: Online

Pakistan's efforts to counter India's aggression praised by Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Acting Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party has appreciated the government of Pakistan for its relentless efforts to counter India's aggression and its nefarious designs aimed at portraying Pakistan in negative light and maligning Kashmiris' ongoing liberation struggle.

In a statement issued here today the DFP acting chairman and former

APHC convener Mehmood Ahmed Saghar said that it was quite unfortunate that India, on the one hand, was using Phalgam tragedy as an instrument to build a war narrative against Pakistan, while on the other the state repression against Kashmiris has intensified as raids on Kashmiri homes, arbitrary detentions and house demolitions by the Indian occupation authorities continue unabated.

He, however, hailed the govern-

ment of Pakistan and other state apparatus for maintaining maximum restraint and adopting a more pragmatic approach to defeat the India's deliberate destabilization efforts, which he said were being widely seen as irresponsible, unreasonable and unjustified.

Denouncing the India's unilateral actions including suspension of Indus water treaty, expulsion of Pakistani nationals from the country Saghar said that these unilateral

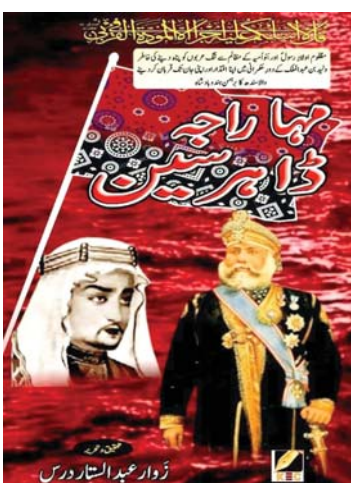
actions speak volumes about the Indian government's jingoistic and fascist mindset that pose a serious threat to regional peace.

Urging the international community to urgently address the escalating tensions in the region, Saghar said that it was high time that the global community acts responsibly, deescalates tensions, and support sincere efforts toward a just and peaceful resolution of the Kashmir conflict.

Launch of 'Maharaja Dahir Sen': New Book Challenges Distorted Historical Narratives in Sindh

HYDERABAD: The launch ceremony of Zawar Abdul Sattar Dars's latest book "Maharaja Dahir Sen" was held at the Abbasi Library, Qasimabad, drawing a large gathering of scholars, poets, journalists, and intellectuals. Speakers at the event emphasized the need to present historically accurate narratives to the younger generation and highlighted that Islam had spread in Sindh as early as 8 AH (Hijri), nearly 85 years before Muhammad Bin Qasim's invasion.

Prominent speakers, including Professor Syed Muzaffar Hussain Shah Mousavi, Zawar Abdul Sattar Dars, Faheem Babbar, Turabi Anees Memon, Riaz Umrani, and Muhammad Waris Abbasi, stated that Muhammad Bin Qasim's military campaign was not for the introduction of Islam but was aimed at



suppressing the descendants of the Prophet (PBUH) who had taken refuge in Sindh. They further noted that Maharaja Dahir Sen sacrificed his home, family, honor, and rule to

protect the Prophet's family.

The speakers criticized the distortion of history in school curriculums, asserting that paid court historians have long misled generations by

promoting fabricated heroes while omitting real historical figures. A glaring example mentioned was the inconsistency in the birthplace of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, with earlier generations taught he was born in the town of Jhirk, District Thatta, while newer textbooks now cite Karachi.

They called for an urgent revision of educational syllabi to remove these distortions and to educate the youth on the authentic and factual history of the region, enabling them to distinguish between fictional and real national heroes.

The event commenced with a recitation of the Holy Quran by Zawar Ali Soomro. Guests were presented with traditional Ajrak shawls, and the formal unveiling of the book followed.



Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:42 am
Zohr 12:05 pm
Asr 4:54 pm
Maghrib 6:54 pm
Isha 8:27 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad 1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 & 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

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CMH 561111
MH 561116
MH 561116
Cantt Hospital 9270907-11
DHQ 5556311-4
RGH 9290301-7
Holy Family 9290322-7
PIMS 9261170-79
Polyclinic 9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666

DEPARTMENTS

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CDA 9208301-04
Met Office 9250360-6
RDA 5555864
TMA 5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation 9209224
Potohar Town 9209224
Rawal Town 5773343

Mohsin Naqvi commends security forces for foiling terror plot in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi Monday paid glowing tribute to the security forces for successfully conducting intelligence-based operations against Kharaji terrorists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The operations led to the elimination of eight terrorists and the prevention of a major terror plot.

In a statement, Minister Naqvi commended the timely and effective action by the security forces, saying:

"Just like always, our brave forces acted promptly and crushed the evil plans of Kharaji terrorists. Their courage and commitment deserve the nation's utmost respect."

Naqvi acknowledged the ultimate sacrifice made by Naik Mujahid Khan, who was martyred during the operation while fighting the terrorists fearlessly.

"Naik Mujahid Khan laid down his life for the homeland and has become immortal. His sacrifice will always be remembered, and he will live in our hearts forever," he said.

Tipu Sultan's legacy inspires Pakistan to stand strong against aggression

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, has said that if India attacks Pakistan, it will itself be divided into pieces. As a result of such an attack, Indian Punjab will gain independence and become Khalistan, and Occupied Kashmir will also achieve freedom. He expressed these views at a ceremony held in Hassan Abdal to commemorate the 226th death anniversary of Tipu Sultan, the Lion of Mysore.

On this occasion, Khurram Nawaz Gandapur of Pakistan Awami Tehreek, District President of Pakistan Peoples Party Sardar Ashar Hayat Khan, Sardar Zulfiqar Hayat Khan, Malik Amanat Rawal, Malik Riyasat Sadryal, Federal Secretary for Petroleum Tanveer Qureshi, Syed Atif Shah Gilani, Sheikh Ahsanuddin, Sheikh Waqar Azim Siddiqui, and other dignitaries were also present.

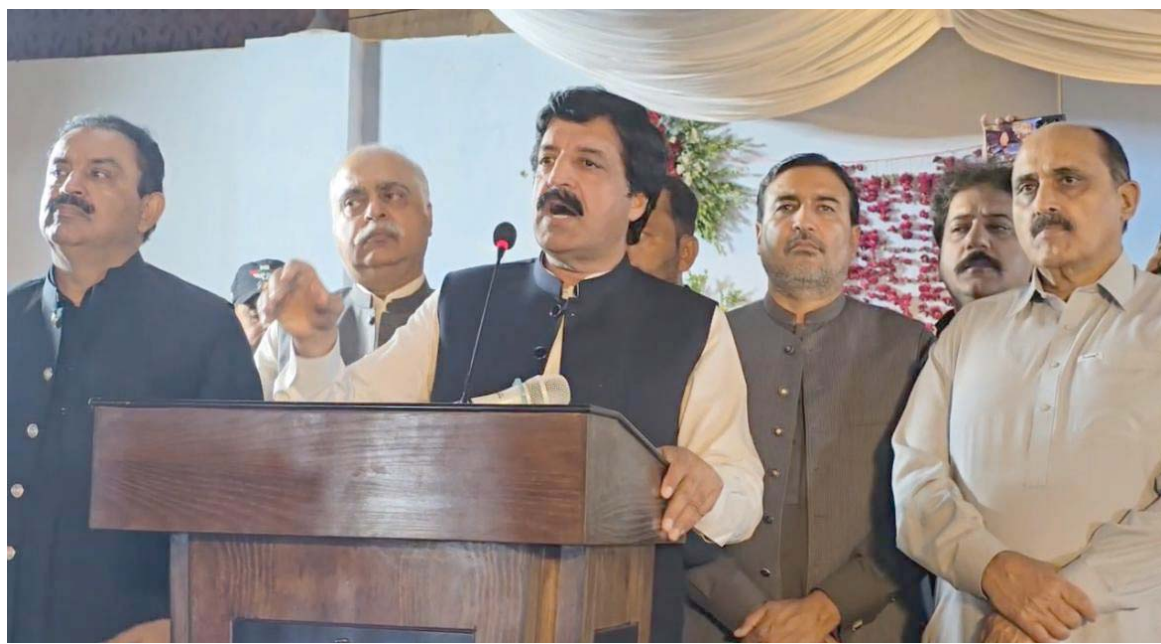
Speaking at the event, Governor Punjab said that for the past 30

years, the death anniversary of Tipu Sultan has been observed in Hassan Abdal with great reverence, which is a commendable tradition.

He stated that history always remembers those who stand for truth, citing the examples of Imam Hussain (RA) and Tipu Sultan. He said Tipu Sultan fought bravely and sacrificed his life in the way of Allah, and his life remains a guiding light for us. Sardar Saleem Haider Khan also said that in every era, people like Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq have caused great harm to the Muslim Ummah, but those who stood with the truth have always been immortalized in history.

Speaking on the current situation, he said that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is regretting issuing threats to Pakistan. If a war breaks out, India will disintegrate, Indian Punjab and Occupied Kashmir will become independent, and various separatist movements within India will declare their own independence.

He praised the Chief of Army Staff,



General Asim Munir, calling him a source of national pride who responded to Indian threats with courage and determination. He added that India now realizes the grave consequences of any aggression against Pakistan.

Call on

ISLAMABAD: UK's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ms. Jane Marriott calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday.



Photo: PID

Pakistan's Youth Abroad: A new era of employment opportunities

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, stated that consultation sessions with youth across the country have commenced to formulate a comprehensive National Youth Policy. The primary objective of this policy is to empower young people.

He stated that Pakistan currently has opportunities to send around 1.5 million youth abroad for employment. In collaboration with the renowned Chinese tech company Huawei, a phased training programme is underway to equip 300,000 youth with IT skills.



Rana Mashhood informed the participants that, on the directives of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif,

a Digital Youth Hub has been established. Young people can register through the Youth Hub website to receive education, training, and skill development in their chosen fields. Those with innovative ideas will also be eligible for financial assistance through the platform.

Commissioner Aamir Karim Khan stressed the importance of educating youth about their responsibilities. Vice-Chancellor of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Agricultural University, Professor Dr. Ishtiaq Rajwana, emphasized the need to establish an AgriTech Skills Development Center in South Punjab. Dr. Ubaidullah Khokhar, Special Secretary of the School Education Department, briefed the participants on youth-oriented initiatives implemented in schools.

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) to hold Gaza Martyrs Conference on May 11 in Peshawar

City Desk

PESHAWAR: In a bold and timely move to draw global attention to the ongoing atrocities in Gaza, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) under the leadership of Maulana Fazlur Rehman is organizing a Gaza Martyrs Conference in Peshawar on May 11. Former Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and senior JUI-F leader Haji Ghulam Ali has appealed to the people of Peshawar and across the province—including business leaders, political figures, youth, students, and members from all walks of life—to participate in large numbers to show solidarity with the oppressed people of Palestine.

Haji Ghulam Ali emphasized that this conference will serve as a powerful platform to raise a unified voice against Israeli aggression and to send a strong message to the international community: the people of Pakistan stand firmly with their Palestinian brothers and sisters and will not remain silent in the face of injustice.

Northwest A&F University, China delegation visits FUUAST



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Urdu University of Arts, Sciences and Technology (FUUAST) welcomed a high-level delegation from Northwest A&F University, China, led by Prof. Dr. Lixin Zhang, Chairman of the Silkroad Biohealth Agricultural Industrial Alliance, Yangling. The visit marked a major step forward in enhancing academic and research cooperation between Pakistan and China.

The distinguished Chinese delegation included Prof. Liang, Prof. Limin, Prof. Sun, and Prof. Shi. They were warmly received by Prof. Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari, Vice Chancellor of FUUAST, Dr. Ihtsham Ul Haq Padda, In-Charge of the Islamabad Campus, and Mr. Aleem Raza, Additional Registrar.

An introductory session was held with heads of departments, faculty members, university officials, and students. During the session, Prof. Dr. Lixin Zhang, Prof. Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari, and Prof. Dr. Mushtaq addressed the gathering and emphasized the need for deepening bilateral cooperation in critical areas such as food security, biotechnology, environmental sciences, and higher education.

The visit reflects growing educational and scientific cooperation under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Belt and Road Initiative.

CAT upholds CCP order with reduce penalty on dairy farmers

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) has directed representatives of all three dairy farmer associations of Karachi to submit written undertakings pledging not to engage in milk price fixing in the future. However, at the request of the appellants, the Tribunal reduced the penalties imposed on key office-bearers of these associations.

The penalty for each individual—Shakir Umer Gujjar, President of the Dairy and Cattle Farmers Association (DCFA), and Haji Sikandar Nagori of the Karachi Dairy Farmers Association (K DFA)—was reduced from PKR 1 million and PKR 500,000, respectively, to PKR 150,000 each.

The CCP had launched an inquiry after media reports highlighted a sharp surge in milk prices in Karachi. Its investigation found that the associations were directly involved in raising prices at all levels—bandhi, mandi, wholesale, and retail. The associations used pressure tactics, including threats to halt milk supply, to enforce price hikes.

The CCP obtained video evidence showing Shakir Umer Gujjar addressing a gathering of dairy farmers to announce an increase in milk prices in Karachi. Additionally, the Commission secured further evidences confirming that the announced prices were implemented across the city. The probe also revealed that milk was hoarded in ice factories to create artificial shortages, and later sold at inflated prices in rural Sindh. These actions disrupted the supply chain and burdened consumers.

The CCP reiterates that business associations across the country must ensure their platforms are not used to share commercially sensitive information or facilitate anti-competitive conduct.

Zindigi Partners with FPCCI to Drive Nationwide Digital Financial Transformation

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Zindigi, powered by JS Bank, and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) have entered into a strategic partnership to accelerate the digital transformation of Pakistan's business landscape. This collaboration encompasses 76 chambers and 155 trade associations under the FPCCI umbrella, and aims to enhance financial accessibility for businesses nationwide, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Faisal Khalid, Chief Product Officer at Zindigi Stated, "This partnership with FPCCI marks a significant step towards redefining Pakistan's business



landscape through digital innovation. By offering secure and efficient financial solutions, we aim to foster growth for businesses of all sizes, especially SMEs while contributing to Pakistan's digital economic evolution."

Vice President at FPCCI, Aun Ali Syed Expressed his enthusiasm about this collaboration, "We are proud to collaborate with Zindigi in this groundbreaking partnership that aligns with our vision to drive digital transformation.

This collaboration underscores the shared commitment of FPCCI and Zindigi to foster innovation, enhance financial inclusion, and accelerate Pakistan's transition to a digitally empowered economy.

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Unity in the Face of Aggression: Pakistan's Minister for Kashmir Affairs Embarks on Historic Visit

From April 29 to May 1, 2025, Azad Jammu & Kashmir witnessed a powerful wave of national unity, political resolve, and popular defiance during the visit of Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Engineer Amir Muqam. His tour of Muzaffarabad, Neelum Valley, and Jhelum Valley was far more than a political itinerary—it was a potent reaffirmation of Pakistan's commitment to the Kashmir cause and a heartfelt demonstration of solidarity with the Kashmiri people.

The event featured speeches by several key figures including Engr. Amir Muqam, former AJK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider Khan, Dr. Najeeb Naqi, Mushtaq Minhas, Dr. Mustafa Bashir, Begum Norreen Arif, Maryam Kashmiri, and Zulfiqar Ali Malik, among others. The speakers highlighted the ideological, strategic, and emotional bond between Kashmir and Pakistan, pledging continued support for the freedom struggle.

Garhi Dupatta, Hattian Bala, Chinari, and Chakothi—each stop marked by thunderous receptions and deeply emotional interactions. Youth sang patriotic songs, women waved flags, and elders offered prayers. The people's warmth was evident in the showers of rose petals and chants of "Pakistan Zindabad."

was not just a border village, it was Pakistan's frontline of resistance.

In his concluding address, Amir Muqam proclaimed, "If India dares aggression, the people of Kashmir will stand shoulder to shoulder with our Armed Forces and deliver a response that history will never forget." Former PM Raja Farooq Haider echoed the same spirit, declaring the people of Kashmir as the nation's first line of defense.

This rally symbolized more than a political event—it embodied the living spirit of resistance. It rejected Indian propaganda and showed the world that Kashmir's bond with Pakistan is forged in sacrifice, loyalty, and an unbreakable will.

A Message Beyond Borders

At a time when regional conspiracies threaten the peace and fabric of Azad Kashmir, this visit stood as a beacon of unity and resilience. It affirmed that the Kashmir cause lives not just in international forums, but in the hearts of every Pakistani and every Kashmiri.

As the tour came to a close, it left behind renewed hope, reinvigorated political strength, and a clear commitment from Pakistan's leadership to uphold the rights of the Kashmiri people.

Let us unite and declare together: "We will achieve freedom, we will achieve freedom!"

And, God willing, that dawn is not far.

The author is regular contributor, political analyst and former member AK Council with extensive experience in political and regional affairs.

Pakistan Urges UN to Ensure Self-Determination for Kashmiris

Ambassador of Pakistan to Moscow Muhammad Khalid Jamali has urged the United Nations Security Council to ensure the right to self-determination for the people of Kashmir to eliminate the root causes of escalating tensions in the region.

"I believe that the root cause of the problem in [Indian] Jammu and Kashmir is the right to self-determination for the Kashmiri people, which was promised to them by the international community through various UN Security Council resolutions. This needs to be addressed for a permanent, sustainable and durable peace," he said in an interview with TASS, the Russian state-owned news agency, published on Monday.

Asked whether Pakistan was approaching Russia to take part in the investigation into the attack in Pahalgam, the ambassador said, "We are open [to it]. We want this investigation to be conducted and this blame game to stop."

"There are incidents from time to time, and without addressing the root causes, Pakistan is blamed for this," Jamali pointed out. He recalled that in connection with the Ukraine conflict, Russia has also always pointed to the need to address the root causes.

He said that when political disputes continue for a long time, resentment arises and such incidents are likely to occur. It's always very easy to blame and make someone a scapegoat," he commented.

He told the interviewer that Islamabad was in constant contact with Moscow on the issue of settlement between Pakistan and India.

"We are already in touch with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since the last meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif in Astana last year, we have had many exchanges of visits. There is no need to go into details, but in the last month alone, we have had at least four high-level [visits], from Russia to Pakistan and from Pakistan to Russia, respectively," he said.

The ambassador pointed out that consultations have not been interrupted. "And we consider Russia an important player in international politics. We have very good relations with Russia at the moment, and we continue to consult on many issues," the diplomat added.

To a question, the ambassador said that Russia provided sufficient security to Pakistan's embassy in Moscow.

"I think the Russian people and Russia are very hospitable. And we are very satisfied with the arrangements that we have. According to the Vienna Convention, the Russian side provides us with sufficient security," he added.

Refugee Crisis

Pakistan, being the generous host of millions of Afghan refugees for more than four decades, ended its support by deciding on mass deportation due to constant security threats and terrorist attacks on innocent public and security forces, and the sheer inability of the Kabul regime to stop infiltration. Although the consequences of abruptly overburdening the less capacitated Kabul with millions of people may appear disastrous in the future—which could have been avoided through phase-wise, managed, peaceful, and sustainable repatriation planning with the engagement of all stakeholders—the decision had to be taken keeping in view the security environment. The future of Afghans in their homeland depends on their community acceptance, the regime's capacity for managing peaceful integration, resources, and international support. However, despite the fact that the refugees now must go back, this deportation, if done systematically under an agreed policy, would surely have had a more durable impact.

Pakistan has always suffered due to militancy and terrorism from Afghanistan, causing significant loss of precious lives, eventually forcing the government to withdraw further support to Afghans in Pakistan, comprising a small number of refugees and, factually, more illegal immigrants. Although it is the prerogative of a state to take any decision in the best interest of its internal matters, refugees who have been living in Pakistan for decades—and many of whom were born and raised here—needed to be treated exceptionally. The matter should have been discussed with all stakeholders, particularly refugee agencies like UNHCR and IOM, along with other national and international partners, for a more broadly acceptable decision with consent and contributions from all.

Afghan refugees have been living in Paki-

stan with the agreement and acceptance of the Government of Pakistan. It cannot be claimed that millions of Afghans illegally entered Pakistan; rather, they were allowed during times of crisis in Afghanistan. They have been living here for ages and could have continued to do so, but unfortunately, their country did not recognize the sacrifices of the people and government of Pakistan, forcing the government to make this unpleasant decision, making millions of refugees vulnerable. Afghan refugees in Pakistan are deeply disheartened about leaving the country, especially while facing protection challenges. Heartfelt stories are emerging from Punjab and Sindh. Refugees being deported are complaining of harassment and exploitation, and a lack of support from any agency, particularly the mandated refugee agency. Watching Naubat Khan with his family in Karachi leave with tears—thanking the people of Pakistan for their exemplary support during their decades-long stay and remembering friends and business partners, but also complaining of not being protected as he and his family had expected—was heart-wrenching.

"When our house was raided in the late evening, we immediately contacted the SHARP office in Karachi, which always stood with us," he said. "But surprisingly, we were informed that SHARP is no longer a partner, and another organization was given the assignment earlier this year—something never communicated to refugees." It is pitiful that the leadership of the refugee agency, which was supposed to provide comprehensive protection and strengthen partners, changed the only legal support system at this critical time, leaving refugees unattended and vulnerable.

Refugees facing forced deportation are criticizing the poor policies of the refugee agency, which appears unable to understand the situation and align its resources for supporting refu-

gees in holding centers, ensuring dignified travel, and engaging with the government to prevent harassment and exploitation. "We are ready to go, but we should at least be given some time to pack," said a refugee who claims to be under severe threat of deportation.

Communities are broken, unable to connect or protect each other. Across Pakistan, refugees are being harassed, arrested, detained, and forcefully deported. Yet, UNHCR is still running a large, ineffective community protection program in Pakistan, with no real output or need at this stage—highlighting the poor planning and decision-making of the refugee agency. These resources could have been diverted to humanitarian support and advocacy to ease the forced deportation process into an agreed and dignified deportation process, protecting the basic rights of refugees and avoiding disrespectful behavior from law enforcement authorities. But the agency appears unable to understand, realize, or plan an effective response to the crisis, according to deporting refugees.

Considering the current situation, a grand dialogue among stakeholders is suggested under a sustainable solution strategy to develop a clear roadmap for repatriation within a specific period. This would allow space for the international community to make appropriate arrangements on both sides of the border for dignified repatriation and the pooling of resources. Strengthening legal support to protect the rights of refugees during their stay in Pakistan is essential. All irrelevant programs should be redirected toward relevant responses that positively impact refugees.

It should also be noted that the emerging global anti-immigrant movements and shrinking resettlement opportunities require timely consideration. These trends will reduce international influence on governments and limit the role of agencies working for refugees and asylum seekers worldwide.

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Analysis



M Azam Tariq

Analysis



Sardar Abdul Khaliq Wasi

Hattian Bala turned into a sea of supporters, with figures such as Fared Khan, Sujawal Khan, and Raja Rashid reaffirming their trust in national leadership. In Chinari, a heartfelt welcome by Mirza Asif Mughal and Khalid Mir led to a spirited march towards Chakothi, underscoring the resolve of people living on the edge of conflict.

Chakothi—The Frontline of Faith and Defiance

The final destination, Chakothi, right on the Line of Control, saw an extraordinary rally on May 1 under the banner "Long Live Pakistan Armed Forces." Thousands gathered, undeterred by daily threats from across the border. Their message was loud and clear—this

Addressing the crowd, Amir Muqam declared, "These mountains, these rivers, and these skies bear witness that the Kashmiris have never bowed before tyranny—and they never will." Other speakers expressed unwavering solidarity with the Pakistan Armed Forces and saluted the sacrifices of Kashmiri martyrs.

Jhelum Valley: A Tapestry of Unity and Resolve

In Jhelum Valley, the delegation visited



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

Food is a Blessing, and Wasting it is a Moral Failure

Just a few days ago, a friend of mine, Muhammad Usman Sheikh, sent me a short video clip. It was hardly a few seconds long, yet powerful enough to leave a lasting impression on my heart and mind. Sometimes, it's not grand speeches or lengthy books that stir our conscience but a moment of silent truth that speaks louder than words.

The clip showed a lively restaurant filled with people enjoying their meals. Tables were adorned with colorful dishes, chatter filled the air, and laughter echoed in the background. At one particular table, a young man and woman sat, enjoying their meal, visibly happy and content. Another man came and took a seat at the same table. He appeared well-groomed, educated, and composed. He glanced through the menu, likely deciding what to order. After finishing the meal a young man and woman, they got up to leave, but their plates still had a significant amount of food left uneaten.

There was no performance, no drama just a quiet act that carried a loud message. Who was this man? He wasn't poor. He had money. But what he possessed, more than wealth, was wisdom and humility. He understood the value of food not just in terms of nutrition or taste, but in its sacredness. He chose not to waste what others discarded. In doing so, he taught us something we often forget: food is a blessing, and wasting it is a moral failure.

This wasn't just a scene from a restaurant it was a mirror to our daily lives. How often do we cook more than we need, serve extra just for show, and throw away leftovers without a second thought? Especially at weddings and parties, the wastage of food has almost become

a symbol of wealth and status. But behind that glamour lies a silent tragedy. Millions across the globe sleep hungry every night. For some, even a dry piece of bread would be a feast. And yet, here we are, throwing away perfectly good food not because it's spoiled but simply because we can afford to. It's not poverty that causes this negligence it's pride.

Why do we hesitate to share our leftovers with the less fortunate? Why do we look the other way when we see someone in need? Is it embarrassment? Ego? Or just indifference? Whatever the reason, the outcome remains the same: blessings wasted, and humanity forgotten. There are countless families around us respectable, dignified people who may not openly ask for help but could benefit greatly from a simple act of kindness. If only we could make it a habit to share what we have, to look around before discarding, and to care a little more.

That man in the video didn't deliver a lecture or preach. He didn't need to. His action was enough. He showed that it is not wealth or education that defines character but compassion and consciousness. He could've ordered a fresh meal, but he chose not to let good food go to waste. He didn't shout for attention, yet he taught more than most ever could. Perhaps it's time we all reflect. How many meals have we wasted? How many times have we overlooked an opportunity to help? And how often have we ignored the blessings on our table?

Let us remember: food is not just something to fill our stomachs. It is a gift of Allah one that millions pray for daily. To waste it is to mock their hunger. To respect it is to honor humanity.

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Analysis



Javed Ullah Raja

Iran's Foreign Minister meets Pakistan's Army Chief to discuss regional security

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Seyed Abbas Araghchi met General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at GHQ today.

The meeting featured constructive discussions on the geo-strategic environment, with particular focus on challenges confronted by both countries in the domain of security. The Pak-Iran border security mechanism was also reviewed as part of efforts to enhance bilateral coordination.

The COAS reaffirmed that Pakistan and Iran are brotherly neighbours, bound by deep-rooted ties of shared history, culture, and religion.

Both sides agreed to stay engaged for enhanced bilateral cooperation while jointly working to assist in bringing positive developments in issues concerning the region.

The Iranian FM acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan's efforts for peace and stability in the region.



Pakistan's Top Military Officer Briefs Political Leaders on National Security Situation



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting and DG ISPR held an in-camera session with political leaders on national security.

DG ISPR Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Atta Tarar held an in-camera session with members of political parties on national security.

In the in-camera session, national security issues were discussed in view of the current situation.

Leaders of political parties participated in the session held in the context of the Pahalgam false flag operation in large numbers.

DG ISPR briefed the participating leaders of political parties about the preparations of the Pakistan Army.

Political leaders of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir attended the meeting. The prominent politicians participated including former Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf, former Federal Minister Abid Sher Ali Nadeem Afzal Chan, Information Minister Azad Kashmir Syed Pir Mazhar Shah, Shah Ghulam Qadir, President Muslim League-N Azad Kashmir, former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, President Muslim Conference Sardar Hassan Ibrahim, President Jammu and Kashmir People's Party and other political leaders.

Pakistan a lucrative untapped carbon trading market for Azerbaijan: Musadik Malik

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov on Monday call on Senator Musadik Masood Malik, Federal Minister for Climate Change & Environmental Coordination.

During the meeting, both sides engaged in a detailed discussion on various matters of mutual interest, particularly in the areas of environmental conservation, climate resilience, and carbon offsetting and trading.

Ambassador Farhadov emphasized Azerbaijan's commitment to strengthening people-to-people contacts between the two nations, underscoring the pivotal role of the business community in enhancing bilateral relations.

He noted that Azerbaijan views the business community as the backbone of its diplomatic ties with Pakistan and highlighted the potential for deeper collaboration in various sectors.

Furthermore, Minister Malik emphasized that Pakistan offers

significant investment opportunities in commercially viable solar energy projects. He also shared Pakistan's growing focus on expanding its green industry, offering fertile ground for various green initiatives aimed at creating a sustainable future.

The Minister invited Azerbaijan to explore opportunities for joint ventures, which could mutually benefit both countries' investors.

The minister emphasised that sustainable development depends on strategic relation-

ships and cooperation, noting that limitless opportunities await and a new era of trade and innovation is set to begin.

Ambassador Farhadov expressed his enthusiasm for exploring these opportunities, recognizing the potential for Azerbaijan to contribute to Pakistan's green initiatives and benefit from its growing market for sustainable investments.

In addition to the discussions on environmental matters, Ambassador Farhadov informed the Minister that Azerbaijan has

become one of the most favored tourist destinations for Pakistanis. Quoting an official from a Pakistani travel agency, the Ambassador shared that approximately 250,000 Pakistani citizens visited Azerbaijan in 2023, highlighting the growing popularity of Azerbaijan as a travel destination. This growing trend in tourism reflects the strengthening of cultural and people-to-people ties between the two nations, the ambassador added.

The meeting concluded with both leaders reaffirming their



commitment to further strengthening the bilateral relationship between Azerbaijan and Pakistan, with a shared focus on

environmental sustainability, investment in green projects, and fostering economic cooperation.

Uzbekistan and Pakistan: Accelerators of Interregional Dialogue

Islomkhon Gafarov,

In the contemporary world of international relations, the "region-to-region" cooperation format is gaining increasing popularity. Current challenges in the areas of security, sustainable economic development, and social stability require not only the active involvement of nation-states and individual regions but also the advancement of interregional cooperation. This format facilitates the emergence of new trends in the international arena and contributes to the strengthening of multi-level partnerships.

One of the most prominent examples of such cooperation is the dialogue between Central and South Asia, which is becoming a significant trend within the broader Eurasian context. The international conference "Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities," held in Tashkent in July 2021, served as a starting point, giving impetus to the development of interregional cooperation. The upcoming Termez Dialogue, scheduled for May of this year, promises to mark a new stage in this process. Within the framework of this dialogue, Uzbekistan and Pakistan are expected to play a pivotal role, being regarded as key actors capable of shaping the trajectory of further rapprochement and coordination between the two regions.

Why Uzbekistan and Pakistan?

The interregional cooperation format of "Central - South Asia" has attracted the interest of many major global powers. Originally, the initiative was promoted by the United States as a tool for enhancing regional connectivity. However, following the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, Washington's engagement in promoting this format has notably diminished.

Currently, China and Russia are showing significant interest in the initiative, viewing it as a potential instrument for expanding their influence across Eurasia. Nevertheless, their involvement remains largely political and declarative, lacking concrete financial commitments and well-defined projects under the "region-to-region" cooperation framework. India and Iran also support the idea of regional

interaction but prioritize maritime transport routes - such as the port hubs of Chabahar and Mumbai - which they perceive as more promising for connectivity than land corridors traversing Afghanistan.

In contrast, Uzbekistan and Pakistan have demonstrated the most tangible interest and practical engagement in developing the "Central - South Asia" cooperation format. These two countries have emerged as key beneficiaries of this initiative, advancing economic and transport projects backed by concrete investments and institutional efforts. In the long term, the depth of their engagement, their political will, and their financial commitment will be decisive in shaping the dynamics and effectiveness of interregional cooperation within the "region-to-region" paradigm.

The Priority of Geoeconomic Interests

At the current stage, Uzbekistan and Pakistan are demonstrating a notable shift in their foreign policy strategies from geopolitical priorities to geoeconomic ones. Uzbekistan is pursuing a pragmatic and multi-vector foreign policy, aiming for active participation in major infrastructure and logistics initiatives spanning the Eurasian continent. Key projects in which the country is involved include the Middle Corridor, the Belt and Road Initiative, the North-South International Transport Corridor, and the Trans-Afghan Corridor.

In this context, South Asia assumes particular importance for Uzbekistan, which views the region - especially countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan - as a promising export market within a broader regional framework. Furthermore, access to maritime ports via Afghan and Pakistani territory is of strategic significance for Uzbekistan, a landlocked state. The implementation of such projects not only facilitates the country's integration into global economic supply chains but also transforms its territory into a crucial transit hub for other Central Asian nations and the Russian Federation.

Pakistan, for its part, also prioritizes geoeconomic interests. One of the core components of its foreign economic policy remains its involvement in China's Belt and Road Initiative, particularly through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Additionally, Islamabad seeks to deepen cooperation with the Russian Federation, particularly in the agricultural sector - Russia has become one of Pakistan's main wheat suppliers. Pakistan views Central Asia as both a new market and a potential transit route to northern Eurasia.



Thus, Uzbekistan and Pakistan exhibit convergence in their external economic approaches, placing a shared emphasis on the development of connectivity, infrastructure, and market access. Both countries pursue multi-vector policies aimed at enhancing their roles in Eurasian integration and transit projects. This commonality strengthens their strategic importance within the framework of "Central - South Asia" cooperation.

The Afghanistan Factor

The Afghan issue represents a key dimension of cooperation between Uzbekistan and Pakistan. Both countries, as Afghanistan's immediate neighbors and economic partners, play a significant role in supporting its socio-economic development, including the provision of humanitarian assistance. Given Afghanistan's current state of international isolation and exposure to sanctions, the country is particularly reliant on the support of its neighboring states.

Despite the Taliban having held power for over three years, their government has yet to receive international recognition, and Afghanistan's external financial assets remain frozen. Nonetheless, efforts have been made within the country to promote recovery and modernization: initiatives to combat opium poppy cultivation and corruption have been launched, a tax system is being implemented, qualified professionals are gradually returning to administrative roles, and attention is being paid to the development of education.

In this context, Uzbekistan and Pakistan have emerged as active advocates of Afghanistan's sustainable development. A key infrastructure initiative is the construction of the Trans-Afghan Transport Corridor. Since 2023, a project office in Tashkent has been coordinating the implementation of this route. For Uzbekistan, the corridor provides access to Pakistani ports such as Karachi and Gwadar, while for Pakistan, it offers a gateway to the Central Asian market. Afghanistan, in turn, plays a critical role as a transit hub within this project. The development of education and human capital must also become a strategic priority. Both countries have already taken concrete steps in this direction, for example, Uzbekistan is constructing a madrasa in Mazar-i-Sharif for 1,000 students. Such initiatives should be expanded further, including through scholarship programs and educational opportunities for Afghan students. These measures will not

only contribute to the socio-economic stabilization of Afghanistan but also foster stronger ties among the peoples of the region.

Challenges

Despite ongoing efforts to restore historical ties among the countries of the region, several challenges continue to hinder deeper cooperation.

First, there is a notable deficit in public diplomacy mechanisms. Relations among Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Afghanistan largely remain confined to the intergovernmental level, with few joint educational or cultural

transboundary water resources persist. Uzbekistan and Afghanistan continue to engage on the equitable distribution of the Amu Darya River's waters, particularly within the context of Afghanistan's Kush Tepa Canal project. At the same time, disagreements between Pakistan and Afghanistan remain over the use of the Kunar River, where Afghanistan is constructing a hydroelectric power plant. While both Uzbekistan and Pakistan support Afghanistan's aspirations to develop its agricultural and energy sectors, they also emphasize the importance of adhering to international environmental and water-use standards.

Fourth, radicalism and extremism remain serious regional threats. The presence of extremist groups in Afghanistan, such as ISIS-Khorasan and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), raises significant concerns and necessitates coordinated counterterrorism measures. Platforms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Termez Dialogue can play a vital role in building a comprehensive approach to regional security.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In the context of growing interdependence and the dynamic nature of global processes, cooperation between Central and South Asia is gaining particular relevance. This format holds the potential to become a model for "region-to-region" engagement, contributing to sustainable development, security, and mutually beneficial integration. However, the full realization of this interregional cooperation requires the institutionalization of relations.

1. One promising platform in this direction is the Termez Dialogue, which could function as a multi-level forum for both political and expert-level discussions on key issues of cooperation. This format should not be limited to state actors but should also include representatives from academic and business communities, facilitating the development of practical solutions. To deepen and expand interregional cooperation, it would be advisable to

initiate complementary dialogues in Peshawar and Kabul, modeled after the Termez Dialogue. Such initiatives would help decentralize communication and engage a broader range of stakeholders, representing a significant step toward establishing resilient interregional institutions capable of coordinating projects in transport, energy, education, and security.

2. To advance public diplomacy, humanitarian ties, and educational exchange, it is recommended to expand international scholarship programs, particularly in priority fields such as education, engineering, medicine, and scientific research. Such efforts would enhance mutual understanding among nations and help cultivate the human capital necessary for implementing joint projects.

3. A particularly relevant initiative could be the establishment of a Central and South Asian Joint University in Termez, envisioned as an academic hub uniting students, educators, and researchers from countries across both regions. The proposed university in Termez could evolve into a center of educational cooperation, a platform for transboundary scientific research, and a catalyst for innovation projects contributing to the region's sustainable development.

4. In addition, the establishment of a Museum of the Peoples of South and Central Asia in Lahore would promote cultural rapprochement, preserve historical heritage, and advance the idea of regional unity. The museum could host exhibitions, conferences, and cultural programs aimed at fostering mutual respect and interest among the societies of the region.

In conclusion, the formation of institutional mechanisms, the enhancement of humanitarian ties, and the strengthening of educational cooperation are essential for transforming Central-South Asian engagement into a sustainable and replicable model of interregional partnership.

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Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
114,102.23	114,113.93
Day's High	Day's Low
114,552.20	113,077.66
Index Value	Change
13,706,345,781	-11.70
Percentage	Time
-0.01%	5 Apr, 2025 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,596.35	+99.55
Percentage	Time
+1.17%	2 May, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
41,377.47	+60.04
Percentage	Time
+0.15%	5 May, 11:55 am GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
36,830.69	+378.39
Percentage	Time
+1.04%	2 May, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183.25	185.50
Bahrain Dinar	745.20	753.20
Canadian Dollar	205.10	207.50
China Yuan	37.59	37.99
Danish Krone	42.71	43.11
Euro	319.05	321.80
Hong Kong Dollar	35.9	36.25
Indian Rupee	3.23	3.32
Japanese Yen	1.96	2.01
Kuwaiti Dinar	908.40	917.90
Malaysian Ringgit	64.51	65.11
New Zealand \$	164.68	166.68
Norwegians Krone	26.74	27.04
Omani Riyal	729.30	737.80
Qatari Riyal	76.49	77.19
Saudi Riyal	75.00	75.55
Singapore Dollar	216.5	218.50
Swedish Korona	28.9	29.08
Swiss Franc	338.68	341.48
Thai Bhat	8.26	8.41
U.A.E Dirham	76.55	77.30
UK Pound Sterling	374.00	377.5
US Dollar	281.40	282.90

Pakistan's Business Community seeks rationalization of policy rate

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that the business, industry and trade community of Pakistan is disappointed with the monetary policy as it continues to be based on a heavy premium vis-à-vis Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) only reduced the policy rate by a mere 100 basis points (bps) in its Monday meeting against the proposal and expectation of the industry; i.e. 500 bps reduction.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh highlighted that the CPI, as per government's own statistics, stood at 0.30 percent in April 2024; but, the policy rate continues to be 11.0 percent as of today – which reflects a premium of 1,070 basis points (bps) as compared to inflation and it makes no



economic sense, he added. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh continued that, after deliberations from the apex trade and industry platform with all industries and sectors, FPCCI had demanded a single-stroke rate cut of 500 basis points during the Monday's monetary policy committee (MPC) meeting to rationalize the key policy rate; and, align it to the vision of special investment facilitation council (SIFC) – and, the Prime Minister's vision for industrial development, import substitution and export growth. Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, explained that, just over the last couple of days, OPEC+ has announced to enhance their oil output by 411,000 barrels per day for the month of June 2025 and oil prices are also down 3.9 percent for the global benchmark, i.e. Brent and is trading at \$58.9 per barrel.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik held a meeting with Mr. Wille Eerola, Honorary Consul General of Pakistan in Finland, and Mr. Alexandre Eykerman, Regional Director for the Middle East at Wärtsilä on Monday.



Photo: Online

Amended Tax Ordinance will devastate the economy, says Faisal Moiz Khan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Faisal Moiz Khan, President of the North Karachi Association of Trade and Industry (NKATI), has strongly rejected the recently promulgated Tax Laws (Amendment) Ordinance 2025, criticizing it for being issued without consultation with stakeholders or any debate in Parliament. He warned that this amended ordinance could lead to the destruction of the country's economy.

Expressing deep concern over the ordinance, Faisal Moiz Khan said the move undermines the sanctity of judicial decisions, violates taxpayers' constitutional right to due process, and promotes a coercive tax



regime. He stated that the ordinance grants the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) excessive powers, allowing it to immediately freeze bank accounts, confiscate properties, and seal factories without any prior notice or warning—even after a decision has been made by a higher court. He described this as a blatant insult to the Constitution, the judiciary, and economic freedom.

Presidential Ordinance is a conspiracy to provoke business community

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, the President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, the President of All Karachi Industrial Alliance, the Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board, and the President and former provincial minister, Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Monday that comprehensive tax reforms are indispensable to reposition Pakistan's economy on a sustainable footing.

He said that excessive strictness in collecting taxes will harm instead of benefit, as it will discourage businesses.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that a large number of taxes is making the system more complex, while the focus of tax policy should not be only on increasing revenue but also on ease of doing business and global competitiveness.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that



the current tax structure is complex, non-transparent, and unfair, hurting the business community and making efforts to expand the tax net difficult.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the burden on taxpayers is continuously increasing. At the same time, there is a

lack of effective action against tax defaulters, which is discouraging taxpayers and encouraging tax evaders.

The business leader added that the Federal Board of Revenue should be given complete autonomy, and the need for contact between taxpayers and tax collectors should be reduced through automation and digitalisation so that problems like corruption and delays are reduced.

However, instead of increasing tax collection, these powers will lead to a huge increase in corruption, while the country will experience a decrease in business ease.

He demanded that the business community have legitimate reservations about this Ordinance, which should be considered and withdrawn.

Mian Zahid Hussain expressed hope that if the government and institutions seriously implement reasonable reforms, revenues will increase, the economy will be stable, and dependence on international financial institutions will be reduced.

easypaisa Digital Bank Posts Strong Q1 2025 Results. PACRA Upgrades Rating to A+

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The easypaisa Digital Bank reported a profit before tax of PKR 840 million, compared to PKR 1,028 million for the same period last year. Despite the decline in the SBP discount rates from 22% to 12%, total revenue grew by 36.2%, driven by strong growth in the deposit and lending portfolios. Net markup income rose by 24.2%, while non-markup income recorded an increase of 55.6%, supported by higher digital revenues from cash transactions, online payments, bundles, corporate disbursements, collections, and insurance services.

The Board of Directors of easypaisa Digital Bank approved the financial statements for the quarter ended March 31, 2025, during its meeting held on April 23, 2025.

The increase in administrative expenses reflects



continued investments in technology infrastructure, talent acquisition, and process enhancements to support the Bank's long-term growth and sustainability.

As of March 31, 2025, easypaisa Digital Bank's customer deposits reached PKR 101 billion, representing a 59.7% increase, driven by the successful introduction of new savings products – digital term deposits and savings pockets. The Bank maintained an industry-leading CASA ratio of 98.7%, with a cost of deposits at a low 1.4%.

SECP issues compliance checklists for REIT Management Companies and Section 42 Companies

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has issued checklists for obtaining licenses for Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) Management Companies and companies licensed under Section 42 of the Companies Act, 2017 (Associations with Charitable and Not-for-Profit Objectives). This initiative is part of SECP's ongoing efforts to enhance regulatory clarity, promote ease of doing business, and improve the efficiency of regulatory processes.

The checklist for REIT Management Companies is designed to assist sponsors, promoters, and other stakeholders in understanding and fulfilling the procedural and documentation requirements prescribed under the Non-Banking Finance Companies (Establishment and Regulation) Rules, 2003 and the Real Estate Investment Trust Regulations, 2022. It provides structured guidance on the prerequisite



sites for obtaining SECP's permission to establish a Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC)

and applying for a license to undertake REIT management services. The checklist is avail-

able on SECP's official website at www.secp.gov.pk/licensing/nbfc/reit-management-services.

By consolidating key regulatory steps into a single, accessible document, the checklists are expected to significantly reduce processing times, minimize incomplete or deficient applications, and streamline the licensing process for both applicants and the regulator.

To further institutionalize stakeholder facilitation, SECP has introduced additional channels for complaint registration and resolution across all Company Registration Offices (CROs). These include a dedicated hotline helpline (051-9195307, available during business hours) and an online complaint portal (<https://xs.secp.gov.pk>, accessible 24/7). These measures aim to improve accessibility, ensure timely grievance redressal, and strengthen stakeholder engagement.

The initiative underscores SECP's commitment to transparency, service delivery, and regulatory responsiveness.

From Pakistan to the Makkah: Zong 4G Ensures Pilgrims Stay Connected During Hajj 2025

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading technology innovation company, is partnering with the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) for Hajj 2025 in a strategic initiative that will facilitate over 91,000 Pakistani pilgrims with free SIMs and international roaming services, ensuring uninterrupted communication during their sacred journey.

Khurram Ishaq Director LDI & International Business at Zong 4G stated, "It's a privilege to serve the Hajj pilgrims of Pakistan on their sacred journey. At Zong 4G, we see this initiative not just as a service, but as our civic duty—to ensure every pilgrim stays connected with their loved ones and receives the support they need, no matter where they are. Through seamless international roaming, dedicated data for essential apps, and on-ground assistance in Saudi Arabia, we are proud to enable a spiritually enriching and worry-free experience."

FBR to set up a facilitation counter for taxpayers' guidance

KARACHI: Senior officers of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) held a meeting on Monday with various associations of the business community to discuss ways for enhancing transparency and efficiency and devising a taxpayer facilitation mechanism.

It was decided in the meeting that a facilitation counter will be set-up for the guidance and facilitation of taxpayers while a dedicated what's-app number was also provided to the business community for lodging complaints of corruption or malpractices.

PSL Pakistan Super League X Cricket

Karachi Kings Defeat Lahore Qalandars by 4 wickets at their home ground Lahore

Asim Tanveer

LAHORE: PSL 10, Karachi Kings defeated Lahore Qalandars by 4 wickets at their home ground. Khan Niazi blew away Shaheen & Co's wickets, Karachi Kings won the losing match. In PSL 10, Karachi Kings crushed Lahore Qalandars in Lahore, snatching the match that got out of hand in the last 15 balls, Khan Niazi blew away Shaheen and Harris' wickets and gave Karachi Kings a 4-wicket victory with a smoky innings.

The important battle in HBL PSL 10 was played between the Lahore Qalandars team and Karachi Kings. The match was very interesting. Rain intervened in the middle but then the rain stopped, the ground was prepared and the innings was limited to 15 overs per innings. Till then, the Lahore team was batting very well and scored a lot. In the first seven overs, but after that, when the innings resumed, they were able to score around 70 in the next 8 overs, due to which the Lahore Qalandars team scored 160 runs for 8 wickets and played 15 overs. This score was 167 at Duckworth, thus Karachi Kings got a target of 168 runs to win.

Karachi Kings won the toss and invited Lahore to bat first. The highlight of Qalandars' innings was opener Fakhar Zaman's 51 runs, which he scored in 33 balls, which included three sixes and four fours. Muhammad Naeem showed even more aggressive batting. He played a brilliant innings of 65 runs in 29 balls. Five sixes and six fours were the highlight of his innings. Abdullah Shafiq could score 18 runs in 11 balls. Daryl Mitchell was dismissed on the first ball. Sam Piling could also score only two runs in three balls. Sikandar Raza played an innings of 8 runs in 6 balls. Asif Ali scored two runs in 2 balls. In the final overs, Shaheen Shah Afridi was also out for zero and he wasted two balls. The Lahore Qalandars team failed



to score any big score in the last overs. The importance of his innings can be gauged from the fact that when his fifth wicket fell, the score was 149 and 13.3 overs were played. In the next 9 balls, he scored 11 runs and lost three wickets.

For Karachi Kings, Abbas Afridi bowled brilliantly and dismissed four players for 27 runs in three overs. Mir Hamza took one wicket for 20 runs in three overs. Hasan Ali was very expensive. He was hit for 42 runs in three overs but he managed to get one out. Aamir Jamal also got 33 runs in three overs. He got one out.

In reply, Karachi Kings' innings started with aggression. Captain David Warner and Tim Seifert showed aggression. They started with 40 runs in 3 overs. Here David Warner scored 24 runs off 13 balls and was bowled clean by Harris Rauf. Two sixes and two fours

were hit, but the next casualty was Tim Seifert who had scored 24 runs off 10 balls. He was hit by a six and four fours. He was bowled by Asif Afridi. James Mains was also out for 13 runs, when three wickets fell on 74 runs, it was 6.4 overs to play, but after that Saad Baig played good hits and took his team's score to 100 runs in 9 overs, which meant that the team needed 68 runs to win in the next 36 balls. The next over proved to be terrible for the Kings. Daryl Mitchell gave 2 runs in the over and took the valuable wicket of Saad Baig, who went for 25 runs, he played 15 balls. In the next over, Karachi Kings got their first boundary after 14 balls. They could have made 110 runs for 4 wickets in 11 overs. After taking a six from Khushdil Shah in the next over, Harris Rauf was caught by Mohammad Naeem and wrapped up the innings for

9 runs. Then with 48 runs remaining in 18 balls, Shaheen came and took a six from Irfan Khan Niazi. After 2 balls, Niazi hit another six. There were 34 runs on 14 balls. Then another 6, then a single. Shaheen gave away 21 runs. Now 27 runs were left on 12 balls. Harris Rauf was brought in. Irfan Khan hit him for a 6 on the first ball. Then 6 then 4. When the over ended, Karachi was only 7 runs away in the last over. 41 runs were scored on the last 12 balls. 20 were scored in this over. Daryl Mitchell came in the last over and sent Nabi back on 15 as soon as he came. Now there were 6 runs on 4 balls. Niazi hit a six to end the match in 14.3 overs, Kings won the historic 4-wicket victory in Lahore. Niazi scored 48 not out runs on 21 balls. 5 sixes and 2 fours. Shaheen got 41 runs in 3 overs, no wickets. Harris Rauf took 3 40 runs scored in the overs, 2 wickets

taken. Daryl Mitchell took 2 wickets for just 9 runs. Karachi Kings came in third place with 10 points, Lahore Qalandars are fourth. Quetta is first and Islamabad is second.

UNODC, Netherlands embassy hold Football Clinic in Islamabad to empower young girls

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in close partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) organized a high-impact football clinic for young girls in Islamabad on Monday.

The theme was "Building Bridges Through Sports", the initiative exemplified the power of sports in fostering inclusion, resilience, and peaceful communities particularly among youth.

As many as 35 girls, aged 14-18, from Islamabad Model College for Girls participated in the clinic.

The clinic aimed to inspire teamwork, leadership, and mutual respect through structured sporting activities serving as a platform for promoting social cohesion and preventing violent extremism (PVE) at the grassroots level.

In his opening remarks, Troels Vester, UNODC



Country Representative in Pakistan said that, "At UNODC, we firmly believe that when young people especially young girls are given meaningful opportunities to participate, to lead, and to shape decisions that affect their lives, they become powerful agents of resilience against the forces of radicalization and violence."

Representing NACTA, a senior official highlighted the importance of

youth engagement and gender-responsive initiatives in achieving the goals of Pakistan's National Policy on Preventing Violent Extremism (NPVE).

Henny Fokel de Vries, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Islamabad, commended the initiative, stating, "Sport has the extraordinary ability to unite, empower, and inspire. We are proud to support efforts that strengthen

community ties and offer young people a safe and constructive outlet to thrive." Kayanat Bokhari, a professional footballer and youth mentor, encouraged the girls to pursue their goals with passion and perseverance.

The clinic included a range of engaging activities such as Freeze Tag with a ball, dribble relay, the Pass & Move Challenge, and small-sided matches.

Australia, India maintain top positions after annual update to Men's Rankings

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Australia maintain a comfortable lead at the top of the ICC Men's Test Team Rankings table while India continue their hold on the number one positions in the ODI and T20I rankings after the annual updates.

The latest rankings, which rate all matches played since May 2024 at 100 per cent and those of the previous two years at 50 per cent, see a record 100 teams listed in T20Is after the annual update.

Australia, who won 2-0 in Sri Lanka after beating India 3-1 at home in their most recent series, maintain their top position in Tests though the lead is reduced from 15 to 13 points.

England have moved into second place after 2-1 series wins over New Zealand and Sri Lanka and a 3-0 win over the West Indies. But more than these victories, their rating has improved because of the removal of their results in 2021-22, when they lost



all three series.

South Africa and India have dropped a place each, but the remaining places remain unchanged with only 10 teams ranked as of now. Ireland need to play one more Test in the next year to acquire a ranking while Afghanistan need to play three more.

In the ODI table, India have improved their lead from 12 to 15 points.

India's victory in the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 was the highlight of a successful period over the past year but what also mattered were three other series – a 3-0 home win against England, a 2-0 win over Sri Lanka in a three-

match away series and a 2-1 win in South Africa.

New Zealand, who made the final of the Champions Trophy, have edged ahead of Australia to second place but Sri Lanka are the biggest improvers – up two places from sixth to fourth, leapfrogging Pakistan and South Africa.

Afghanistan have gone past England while the West Indies have moved above Bangladesh to take ninth position.

India are also clear on top in the Men's T20I Team Rankings even though their lead over Australia is reduced from 10 to nine points.

The past year saw them

win the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, followed by 3-0 sweeps over Bangladesh and Sri Lanka apart from other series wins over England, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

There are no other changes in the top six with England, New Zealand, the West Indies and South Africa following in that order. Sri Lanka have overtaken Pakistan to seventh position while Ireland are now ahead of Zimbabwe, in 11th position.

The biggest gain in terms of rating points is for Canada, whose nine-point surge lifts them into 19th position and ahead of Oman, who are the biggest losers in terms of ranking points, with an eight-point drop.

Bahamas (up eight places to 51st) and Estonia (up seven places to 61st) are the biggest gainers in Saturday's update, which sees 100 teams ranked as they have all played at least eight T20Is in the past three years. When the global rankings were launched in 2019, there were 80 ranked teams.

Fatima Sana shortlisted for ICC April Player of the Month

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The International Cricket Council (ICC) Monday announced the shortlist of contenders in line to win the ICC Men's and Women's Player of the Month awards for April.

The ICC Women's Player of the Month nominees comprise three leading all-rounders who played starring roles in last month's hotly contested ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025 Qualifier in Pakistan.

Fatima Sana was in inspired form during April, leading Pakistan to claim a World Cup spot with a string of memorable performances during an unbeaten week on home soil. Kathryn Bryce also enjoyed a stellar month leading Scotland, and ended as the competition's leading run-scorer. Hayley Matthews of the West Indies completes the shortlist, and will be aiming to win her fourth Player of the Month accolade with

runs and wickets flowing during the month.

The ICC Men's Player of the Month shortlist features standout performers in the Bangladesh-Zimbabwe Test series and an emerging New Zealand pacer.

Bangladesh all-rounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz made telling contributions at both ends of the crease in Bangladesh's tied Test series against Zimbabwe, earning his first nomination for ICC Men's Player of the Month. Likewise on the opposing side, Zimbabwe's Blessing Muzarabani enjoyed significant success with the ball in hand to earn his side a share of the spoils. New Zealand's Ben Sears becomes the third and final name on the shortlist after blistering spells in his side's 3-0 ODI sweep over Pakistan.

An independent ICC Voting Academy and fans around the world will now be invited to cast their votes to decide the winners, which will be announced next

week. Fans are now able to vote for their favourite performers at icc-cricket.com/awards.

ICC Women's Player of the Month Nominees for April:
Kathryn Bryce (SCO)

Scotland's talisman once again demonstrated outstanding form in an ICC qualifying event despite falling short of sealing a spot at this year's ICC Women's Cricket World Cup. Leading from the front, the 27-year-old skipper blasted 293 runs over her five games at an average of 73.25 which included notable knocks of 91 against hosts Pakistan, 60 against Thailand and a glittering 131 not out against Ireland. Beyond her batting prowess, Bryce also contributed with the ball, taking six wickets during the competition and was ultimately named the Player of the Series.

Hayley Matthews (WI)

A shining light for the West Indies in an otherwise disappointing campaign, Matthews

began her Qualifier with a mesmerizing all-round display against Scotland in Lahore, taking four for 56 and striking an unbeaten 114 albeit in defeat. Her tournament-leading 13 wickets at 15.84 included spells of four for 24 against Ireland and two wickets apiece against Pakistan and Bangladesh, before the dramatic final match-up against Thailand, where Matthews' explosive 70 in 29 balls saw the islanders fall agonizingly short of snatching a World Cup spot on account of net run rate.

Fatima Sana (PAK)

The Pakistan captain enjoyed a fruitful Qualifier as leading wicket-taker for her side with 12 wickets in her five outings at an average of 12.25. After a modest start to her competition, Fatima came to life with four for 23 against Scotland and three wickets each against West Indies and Thailand. With the addition of 103 runs in the lower order, the 23-year-old made progress up the



ODI Bowling and All-Rounder Rankings, and seeks to win her first Women's Player of the Month crown, and first for Pakistan since Sidra Ameen won in November 2022.

ICC Men's Player of the Month Nominees for April:
Mehidy Hasan Miraz (BAN)

Nominated for the first time for the ICC Men's Player of the Month award and aiming to be the first Bangladesh player to win since Shakib al Hasan in March 2023, Mehidy enjoyed a prolific April with bat and ball, ending the two-Test encounter as the Player

taking three wickets in the first innings and with a healthy lead of 82 heading into the second, Muzarabani conspired to rip through Bangladesh's top and middle order to claim six for 72 and set up a thrilling three-wicket victory in Sylhet.

Ben Sears (NZ)

Having made his ODI debut for New Zealand in February, Sears has already shown plenty of promise, and caps a fine spell in the format with his maiden nomination for Men's Player of the Month. Drafted in for the second of three matches against Pakistan, Sears starred alongside Jacob Duffy and Will O'Rourke to unleash a fearsome spell of fast bowling in Hamilton and take his first ODI five-wicket haul (five for 59). He then went back-to-back in Mount Maunganui, returning figures of five for 34 to claim the Player of the Series in a commanding 43-run victory and ensure the 3-0 sweep.

Calls on

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Pakistan People's Party calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Monday.



Photo: Online

Pakistan's brave armed forces ready to confront enemy: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday reiterated that the entire nation stood united with the armed forces of Pakistan against any aggression from India, emphasizing that the brave armed forces were always ready to confront the enemy.

He was talking to a delegation of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) led by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari which met him here at the PM House.

The delegation included

Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Naveed Qamar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti, and Senator Saleem Mandviwalla.

PM Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that while Pakistan desired peace and stability in the region, it possessed the capability to deliver a strong and effective response in defense of its sovereignty.

Described India's provocative behavior following the Pahalgam incident as deeply regrettable, the prime

minister noted that Pakistan not only expressed concern over the Pahalgam incident but also called for an impartial and independent investigation.

He firmly rejected India's baseless attempts to link Pakistan to the incident without any evidence.

The prime minister criticized India's unilateral and illegal suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, calling it an act of "water aggression," which was unacceptable as water represented a red line for the people of Pakistan.

He further stated that

Pakistan was actively pursuing diplomatic efforts to expose Indian aggression, and that he had met with ambassadors from several countries to present Pakistan's perspective.

PM Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan will also raise this issue at the United Nations Security Council in order to expose India's true face and its nefarious designs to the world.

The meeting also discussed transfer of electricity distribution companies to provincial governments. It was decided that within two months, the

distribution companies will be handed over to the provinces.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, federal ministers Ahad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Ahsan Iqbal, Azam Nazeer Tarar, Attaullah Tarar, Ali Pervaiz Malik, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Rana Mubashir Iqbal, Advisor to Prime Minister Rana Sanaulah, Dr. Tauqir Shah, Minister of State Abdul Rehman Kanju, and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Talha Burki were also present at the meeting.

Pakistan has suffered most from terrorism, says NA Speaker



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Monday said that Pakistan has suffered the most from terrorism, sacrificing over 90,000 lives, and once again offered an independent investigation

into the Pahalgam incident.

Chairing the National Assembly session, the Speaker informed the House that the Pahalgam incident was discussed in the House Business Advisory Committee meeting.

He said members strongly condemned the attack and voiced serious concerns over Indian threats of a water blockade and military aggression following the incident.

He said that Pakistan's position on the matter has always been clear and consistent, adding that the true facts behind the Pahalgam incident are well known to all.

Ayaz Sadiq also thanked members of the Senate for passing a unanimous resolution on the issue, calling it a reflection of national unity.

"Pakistan has been on the frontlines in the fight against terrorism and understands the pain of such tragedies better than any other country," he said.

"No nation has paid a higher price in this war than Pakistan. We have repeatedly called for an independent investigation into the Pahalgam incident, and the entire nation is united on this issue."

UAE Ambassador meets Pakistan Railways Minister to strengthen freight cooperation

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi met with Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Pakistan, Hamad Obaid Alzaab on Monday.

The meeting focused on strengthening collaboration between Pakistan Railways and the UAE in the freight sector, said a news release.

During the meeting, the UAE envoy expressed interest in a long-term agreement between Karachi Gateway Terminal, a subsidiary of AD Ports Group, and Pakistan Railways for the development and operation of dedicated freight train services.

This proposed partnership aimed at providing a significant boost to Pakistan's freight transportation capacity.



The UAE's cooperation will help increase Pakistan Railways' market share in the freight sector, enhance its multimodal transport capabilities and contribute to the modernisation of its freight services.

Pakistan's nuclear power an eyesore for enemies, says PM AJK

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that he is the Prime Minister of the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir and a representative of 20 million Kashmiris. He said this while talking to a delegation of the 15th National Workshop Balochistan that called on him here today. Speaking on the occasion, the PM said that the Maharaja's agreement that India shows was a fake document. He said that with abrogation of Articles 35A and 370, that fake agreement was also canceled. He said that Pakistan is militarily stronger than India. "India will receive a swift and harder response from Pakistan if



it attempted to commit any form of aggression", he said. He said that Pakistan's nuclear power, which serves as a potential deterrent against foreign aggression, was an eyesore for its enemy. "Modi

does not have the courage to cross the international border, however, we need to be extra cautious, vigilant and united in the face of conspiracies being hatched against our beloved moth-

erland", he remarked. "In the presence of the brave Army, India will think ten times before resorting to any adventure", the PM added. "My pain is that my children are being martyred every day

in occupied Kashmir", the PM said, adding that Kashmiris were being blinded and brutalized, killed, maimed and murdered by the Indian occupation forces every now and then. Thousands of Kashmiris including top rank Hurriyat leaders, human rights defenders and civil rights activists have been booked under infamous laws and left to rot in jails. Lauding the Kashmiris' resilience in the face of Indian state terrorism, he said, "The brave Kashmiris have kept the freedom movement alive there by laying down their lives". The Prime Minister said that in 2019, India killed two crows and the PAF shot down two of their planes and one of the pilots was arrested from his home town Bhimber.

Sanam Javed sent to jail on 14-day remand in February 8 rally case

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A local court has sent PTI activist Sanam Javed to jail on a 14-day judicial remand in connection with a case registered over a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf rally held on February 8, where she and others were accused of road blocking and raising anti-state slogans.

Sanam Javed was produced before the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) on Saturday after completing a six-day physical remand. The police sought an exten-



sion of her remand, but Duty Judge Irfan Haider rejected the request, as well as her lawyer's plea for her discharge from the case. The

other charges in the FIR are bailable, and that the terrorism charges were added nearly 80 days after the incident.

Pakistan envoy urges UNSC to ensure self-determination right for Kashmiri people

MOSCOW: Ambassador of Pakistan to Moscow Muhammad Khalid Jamali has urged the United Nations Security Council to ensure the right to self-determination for the people of Kashmir to eliminate the root causes of escalating tensions in the region.

"I believe that the root cause of the problem in [Indian] Jammu and Kashmir is the right to self-determination for the Kashmiri people, which was promised to them by the international community through various UN Security Council resolutions. This needs to be addressed for a permanent, sustainable and durable peace," he said in an interview with TASS, the Russian state-owned news agency, published on Monday.

Asked whether Pakistan was approaching Russia to take part in the investigation into the attack in Pahalgam, the ambassador said, "We are open [to it]. We want this investigation to be conducted and this blame game to stop."

"There are incidents from time to time, and without addressing the root causes, Pakistan is blamed for this," Jamali pointed out. He recalled that in connection with the Ukraine conflict, Russia has also always pointed to the need to address the root causes.


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