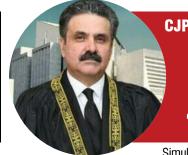
May 9 case: ATC acquits Shah Mehmood Qureshi, sentences Yasmin Rashid to 10 years in jail

In a verdict announced on Tuesday at Kot Lakhat Jail, Lahore, an anti-terrorism court acquitted former foreign minister and PTI leader Shah Mahmood Qureshi and six others in the May 9 case, and handed a 10-year prison sentence to nine accused, including senior PTI leaders Dr Yasmin Rashid and Mian Mehmoodur Rasheed



CJP reviews progress on judicial reforms, praise reduction in case pendency

The Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi, chaired

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Muharram 27, Wednesday, July 23, 2025



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Meeting on Security-related

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding security arrangements for Chinese citizens in



Govt building safe, business-friendly environment for Chinese community: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that the government was building a safe and business-friendly environment for the Chinese community in Pakistan.

"The confidence of Chinese companies in the Pakistani economy is extremely important for our economic future," the prime minister said while security arrangements for

Chinese citizens in Pakistan. He stated that multiple meas-

across the country, including in Islamabad. The prime minister said

that the Safe City projects were an excellent example of this increasing capacity.

He added that Safe City the country as per the international standards.

"China is our friendly country," said the prime minister stressing chairing a meeting regarding that the protection of Chinese brothers was the top priority of

the government. He said the China-Pakistan

between the two countries which had now entered its second phase, where business-to-business cooperation will be prior-

itized between the two countries. In light of the development of CPEC, the protection of Chinese projects were being built across nationals in Pakistan had gained even greater importance, the

> He directed that measures be taken on a priority basis at all airports across the country to facilitate the arrival and depar-

prime minister stressed.

ture of Chinese nationals. During the meeting, the

the security of Chinese nationals a highly important joint project the progress of special secu-construction across the country. rity arrangements for Chinese nationals throughout the country.

> interior minister informed the prime minister about the security arrangements

being implemented nationwide. In the briefing, it was stated that in light of potential terrorist threats, special security arrangements for Chinese nationals had been enforced.

The federal government and all provinces are working in full cooperation on this matter, the briefing highlighted adding that tant to the Prime Minister Tariq safe city projects were under Fatemi, and other senior officials.

Chinese nationals are being provided with security escort facilities for travel, the prime

minister was told. The meeting was also informed that all new housing projects will be equipped with cameras that meet Safe City

The meeting was attended by Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Minister of State Talal Chaudhry, Special Assis-

Pakistan cracks down on Indian proxy terrorists in Balochistan, foils plot



RAWALPINDI: Following the successful intelligence by the security forces in Kalat District of Balochistan on 19 July 2025, during which 4 x terrorists belonging to Indian proxy, Fitna al Hindustan were sent to hell; on 21 July 2025, a deliberate sanitization operation was conducted in the surrounding areas. stability and progress of

terrorists of Fitna al Hindustan were hunted down and successfully neutralized.

Terrorist hideout was also busted and a large quantity of weapons, ammunition and explosives was recovered.

Security Forces of Pakistan, in step with the nation, remain determined to thwart attempts by Indian proxies at sabotaging peace, During the conduct of Balochistan.

President, PM commend security forces for eliminating 8 terrorists of Fitna al Hindustan

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday commended the security forces for eliminating eight terrorists of Fitna al Hindustan in Kalat, Balochistan province.

The president said that the security forces took out the enemies of the country with display of bravery and professional capacity, adding the nation was standing with its brave forces in the fight against terrorism.

"The terrorists want to sabothe country which can never be allowed as the nation is united and the scourge of terrorism will be defeated at all costs," President Secretariat Media Wing, in a press release, quoted the president as saying.

The president also reiterated the resolve that the security forces would continue its operations till complete erad-



The prime minister appreciated the security forces for eliminating eight terrorists during two-day operation in Kalat.

He reaffirmed that nefarious designs of terrorists, who were inflicting harm upon the lives and properties of the innocent civilians, would be foiled.

The elements of Fitna al tage the peace and stability in Hindustan, who are enemies of the country's solidarity, will be rooted out," PM Office Media Wing, in a press release, quoted the prime minister as saying.

The prime minister further said that the government and the security forces were committed to complete elimination of terrorism from the country.

Climate crisis no longer hypothesis but 'terrifying reality': Ahsan Iqbal Veteran politician Mian billions in damages, he described change was no longer a looming environment, economy and future. on their climate finance commit-Azhar passes away after "Climate change has become ments. them as a harrowing testament to world has always the dangers of unchecked climate a serious threat to the future of humanity," he said, adding, "It is prolonged illness demanded 'Do More' from the change. Global South. Today, we demand: "These floods were not a fluke.

👺 Bureau Report

LAHORE: Mian Azhar, a seasoned politician and former Governor of Punjab, passed away on Tuesday after a prolonged illness, family sources confirmed. He was 83.

He was the father of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Hammad Azhar, and had been unwell for an extended period, during which he remained mostly out of the public eye.

Mian Azhar served as governor of Punjab from 1990 to 1993 and later played a pivotal role in the founding and leadership of the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-

Over his political career, he held several important portfo-



tial figure in Pakistan's political landscape.

In recent years, he had stepped back from active politics, while his son, Hammad Azhar, emerged as a prominent PTI leader, serving as a federal minister in various capacities.

Condolences poured in from political leaders and well-wishers across party lines, remembering Mian Azhar as a respectable figure who contributed significantly to the country's politics and public service.

Funeral arrangements will be announced by the family soon.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and in Pakistan," he highlighted the Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan profound impact global warming Iqbal on Tuesday said the climate was already having on the country's

threat but a "terrifying reality" that had already begun to severe-

ly impact vulnerable nations like Speaking at an event titled "From Planning to PRACTICE:

Advancing Climate Resilience

no longer a distant hypothesis. We are living in its consequences."

'Do More' from the global powers Ahsan Iqbal underscored the for environmental justice," he disproportionate burden shoul-

Citing the 2022 floods that dered by developing nations in the Global South, urging develsubmerged a third of Pakistan, oped countries to urgently deliver displaced millions and caused

They were a symptom of a planet in crisis," he said, adding that climate change was fueling erratic weather patterns, widespread flooding and escalating food insecurity across

UNSC adopts Pakistan-sponsored resolution on Kashmir, Palestine disputes

Spokesman Report

UNITED NATION: The UN Security Council Tuesday unanimously adopted a Pakistan-sponstates to take measures for the peaceful settlement of disputes —

The Council took action on the resolution at a meeting, organized under the "Mainteand security" agenda item, that effective implementation of the highlighted concerning trends 15-member body's resolutions for of protracted and unresolved

disputes threatening internasuch as Kashmir and Palestine. tional peace and security, and calling for reinforced collective efforts to address them one of the two signature events event, put the resolution to sored resolution urging member- nance of international peace proposed by Pakistan under its vote, and then banged the International Peace and Security presidency of the world body's power centre.

The Deputy Prime Minister leadership role in spearheading

Ishaq Dar, who especially came to New York over the weekend to preside over the high-level gravel confirming its adoption. The outcome reflected Pakistan's

and Foreign Minister, Senator

Council - a reflection of effective diplomacy in action. Tuesday's meeting was convened to debate "Promoting

adoption of a resolution by the

through Multilateralism and the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes". Continue on Page 7

lios and remained an influen-

Third meeting of CM Citrus Development Task Force held at Agriculture House Lahore

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The third meeting of the Chief Minister Punjab Citrus Development Task Force was held at Agriculture House, Lahore under the chairmanship of Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani, Minister for Agriculture & Livestock Punjab. Various proposals regarding citrus development were reviewed during the meeting. Vice Convener Citrus Development Task Force Punjab, Mohsin Shahnawaz Ranjha, and Secretary Agriculture Punjab, Iftikhar Ali Sahoo, also attend-

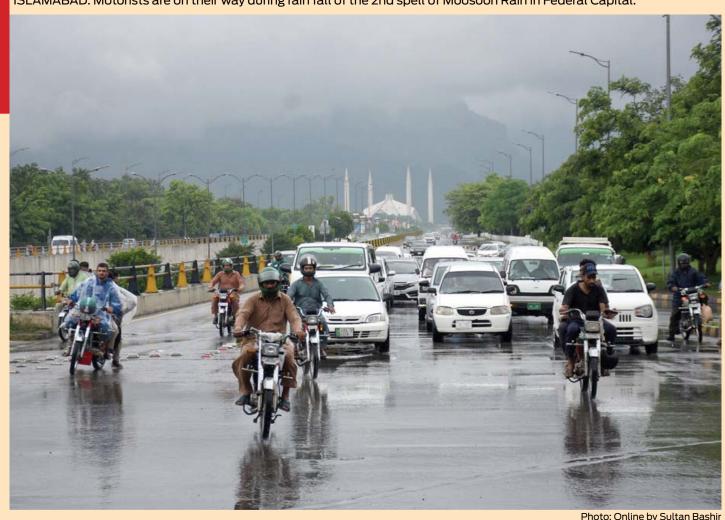


Speaking on the occasion, Minister Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani stated that under the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, steps are being taken for the revival and promotion of citrus fruits in the province. He emphasized that increasing citrus production is among the Punjab Government's key priorities. Citrus, particularly kinnow, is recognized as a signature fruit of Punjab. However, due to climate change, citrus orchards are deteriorating, and plants are increasingly affected by diseases and viral infections, resulting in reduced fruit size and shorter shelf life.

He announced that initiatives are being taken for establishing a Citrus Park, linking citrus orchards with the Kisan Card platform, and employing 100 interns and 100 young professionals annually during the threeyear project duration. He stressed the need to bring private fruit nurseries under a legal framework through registration and licensing, and to connect them with diagnostic laboratories. The Minister welcomed the Bank of Punjab's initiative to introduce a loan scheme of Rs. 30 million per individual for setting up citrus nurseries, calling it a positive step for agribusiness.

Rain in Federal Capital

ISLAMABAD: Motorists are on their way during rain fall of the 2nd spell of Moosoon Rain in Federal Capital.



Delegation led by tribal elder from Tori Mirali meets DPO regarding public grievances

Example 2 Correspondent

BANNU: A delegation of tribal youth from Tori Mirali, led by tribal elder Malik Waliullah Khan, met with District Police Officer (DPO) Wagar Ahmad to discuss serious local issues and public grievances.

During the meeting, the delegation informed the DPO about concerns including the lack of financial record transparency from Mari Petroleum and SNGPL, the misuse of local resources, and the alleged violation of tribal rights.

The delegation highlighted that the denial of access to records by these companies not only undermines public trust but also causes



unrest at the local level.

DPO Waqar Ahmad assured the delegation that the rule of law and transparent accountability would be ensured at all costs. He emphasized that the police will play its role in resolving public issues and will make all institutions answerable within the legal framework.

The DPO, Wing Commander 243, and the Spinwam Brigade promised the Tori Mirali tribe that both companies will meet at the DC Office along with a 12-member

committee for a financial review. At that time, the tribe will also present its legal and constitutional demands, which will be ensured for implementation.

Pakistan Ulema Council meeting held at the Osmania University Razaabad

👺 Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The meeting of the Pakistan Ulema Council Division Faisalabad was held at the Osmania University Razaabad.

The meeting was presided over by the Central Deputy General Secretary of the Pakistan Ulema Council, Allama Tahirul-Hassan. Addressing the meeting, Allama Tahir-ul-Hassan said that he strongly condemns the brutal incident in Balochistan and demands that all the characters in the Balochistan incident be severely punished.

He further said in his address that he strongly rejects the order of a judge of the Islamabad High Court to establish a commission regarding blasphemy cases and demands that all cases of blasphemy and blasphemy be tried in the relevant courts.

The Pakistan Ulema Council is of the view that no innocent person should be punished and no criminal should

be pardoned. In addition, it was said in the conferences will be organized across



Allama Tahir-ul-Hassan added that for the stability of Pakistan and the elimination of terrorism, we stand with our Pakistan Army and security institutions and will foil every internal and external conspiracy.

On this occasion, it was also announced that the Seerat-un-Nabi meeting that Seerat-un-Nabi (PBUH) (PBUH) conference organized by the Pakistan Ulema Council Division Fais-

alabad will be held at the Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan Auditorium.

The conference will play an important role in establishing an atmosphere of love, tolerance and brotherhood throughout the country.

The special guest of the conference will be Allama Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, the Central Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council.

Addressing the meeting, Maulana Obaidullah Gurmani said that Pakistan has been taken in the name of Islam

and the law of Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) will also apply in this country. Qari Ismatullah Muawiyah, Mian Irshad Mujahid, Maulana Habib-ur-Rehman Abid, Maulana Yasir Alvi, Maulana Amin-ul-Haq, Maulana Sahibzada Izhar-ul-Haq Khalid and Qari Saeed Ahmed Sial, Hafiz Kifayatullah, Qari Kaleem Najm, Qari Yasin Ranjha, Sahibzada Hamza Tahir, Maulana Umar Waqas, Qari Hammad Shahid, Qari Mumtaz and other responsible persons participated.

AC Takht Bhai assures no inconvenience to locals from toll tax

15 Tariq khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: Assistant Commissioner Takht Bhai, Adnan Mumtaz, stated that the proposed toll plaza to be established in the Shergarh area of Tehsil Takht Bhai will not cause any inconvenience to the local population, as toll tax will only be collected from commercial vehicles. The objective of the project is to raise funds for the construction and maintenance of roads, which will ultimately improve the condition of road infrastructure in the area. He made these remarks during an important meeting attended by local administration officials, National Highway Authority (NHA) representatives, focal persons of elected members, and media representatives. According to the details, the special meeting was chaired by Assistant Commissioner Adnan Mumtaz and attended by Deputy Director NHA Harem Iqbal, Assistant Director Mushtaq Toro, TMO Takht Bhai Rehman Sher, Tehsildar Takht Bhai Roh-ul-Ameen, focal persons of MPAs from PK-60 and PK-61 Shahid Ali and Engineer Hameedullah, SHO Shergarh Jahangir Khan, and media representative Maqsood Khan. Addressing the meeting, Deputy Director NHA Harem Iqbal and Assistant Commissioner Adnan Mumtaz said that under the new federal government policy, only those highways that generate their own revenue will be provided with funds. If revenue is not generated, it will not be possible to allocate funds for the construction and maintenance of roads.

Bribery and Corruption-FESCÖ Ex-Executor Arrested from Faisalabad

Bureau Report

FAISALABAD: According to the spokesperson, a FESCO official involved in corruption and bribery has been arrested in a major operation of the FIA Faisalabad zone. The FESCO official was identified as Muhammad Waqas. The accused was posted as an Ex-Executor in FESCO. The arrested accused was posted in FESCO office Civil Lines. The accused illegally supplied electricity to a private housing socie-



Kashmiri rights suppressed by Indian stubbornness, says Sardar Attique



Spokesman Report

MUZAFFARABAD: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan has aid that the Indus Waters Treaty and Indian stubbornness have become the biggest obstacle in the path of the fundamental right of Kashmiris, the right to self-determination. He clarified that India has not only violated the spirit of the Indus Waters Treaty but has also put aside the United Nations resolutions through unilateral actions.

While talking to party leaders and journalists Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan said that on August 5, 2019, the Indian government committed constitutional, political and geographical aggression by revoking the special status of occupied Kashmir, which is a completely illegal and immoral act. He said that India has turned occupied Kashmir into a military camp, where the worst human rights violations are taking place continuously. The former Prime Minister further said that the Indus Waters Treaty can never be a substitute for the United Nations resolutions. Even today, the United Nations resolutions have an internationally recognized and legal basis for resolving the Kashmir issue. He called on the international community, especially the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and international human rights organizations to take notice of the human tragedy in occupied Kashmir and play their role in ensuring the legitimate rights of the Kashmiri people. He said that the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference will continue its struggle until the Kashmiris achieve their right to self-determination and the fundamental rights of the Kashmiris will not be compromised under any conspiracy or agreement he warned.

Attock Police crack down on law violators and drug dealers — 16 suspects arrested

👺 Raza Nagvi

ATTOCK: Attock police have launched a series of successful operations, arresting a total of 16 individuals for violations of Section 144 and drug trafficking. According to details, Attock Khurd police registered a case against 12 individuals for openly violating Section 144, which prohibits bathing and boating in the River Indus as per the Punjab Government's orders. Despite being warned, the suspects created chaos and chanted slogans at the Attock Khurd point of the river. The police arrested all 12 violators on the spot. The arrested individuals including Amjad Ali s/o Rasheed Khan (Peshawar), Usman Ali s/o Sher Muhammad (Nowshera), Dr. Suleman Azam s/o Muhammad Azam (Karak), Shahsawar s/o Niaz Ali (Nowshera), Muhammad Younas s/o Haji Allah (Peshawar), Abdul Basit s/o Sher Akbar (Peshawar), Arbaz Khan s/o Nadir Khan (Peshawar), Jehanzaib s/o Ali Akbar (Peshawar), Muhammad Umar s/o Ghulam Farooq (Peshawar), Ali Akbar s/o Syed Akbar (Peshawar), Abdul Wahab s/o Saleem Ameer (Peshawar), Shafiq s/o Roz Ali (Nowshera). All suspects were detained and locked up at the police station.

In a separate anti-narcotics campaign, four drug dealers were arrested $\,$ and large quantities of narcotics were seized. Hazro police, during a search operation near Chach Interchange, arrested Danish s/o Shakeel Ahmed (resident of Bara Hazro) and recovered 1,350 grams of hashish and 50 grams of ice (methamphetamine).

Attock Khurd police arrested Jameel s/o Fida Hussain (Attock City) with 1,440 grams of hashish.

ASI Yasir Ali, in charge of the Mankor Khushal Garh police post, arrested Rashid Mehmood s/o Muhammad Aslam (resident of High School Nara Jand) and seized 1,100 grams of heroin.

Meanwhile, Saddar Attock police arrested Muhammad Arif s/o Muhammad Yousaf (resident of Mirza) with 580 grams of hashish. Separate FIRs have been registered against all suspects, and further investigations are underway.

The District Police Officer (DPO) of Attock emphasized that operations against lawbreakers and drug traffickers will continue without discrimination to ensure peace and security in the district.



Namaz Timings

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)15	5
Bomb Disposal15	5
Fire Services Rawalpindi/	
Islamabad1122 & 16	5
Emergency Ambulance 1122 8	ι
& Rescue Services 4451122	2
Motorway Police9266044	í
Motorway Police9270601-20)
Women Delice	

Women Police Ctations

Stations		
Islamabad	9222596	
Rawalpindi	9270601-20	

ENQUIRY

PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
CAA	9281092
HAGDIE	

HOSPITALS

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

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886

CMSindh orders starting work on K-IV Lot-1, 2 in Sept

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, presiding over a meeting on the K-IV augmentation project, insisted that the work on all lots must be sped up with high quality, particularly on Lots 1 and 2 in September.

The meeting was attended by Minister Local Govt Saeed Ghani (on video link), Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, PSCM Agha Wasif, Chairman P&D Najam Shah, Secretary Local Govt Waseem Shamshad, PD K-IV Usman Moazam and others.

The K-IV project. been started with the support of the World Bank. During the briefing, the CM was told Key highlights from the meeting include the transmission of water from Reservoir One to the Y junction as part of Lot One. Lot Two will establish a water line from Reservoir Two to Sir Sved University, while Lot Three will lay a water line from Sir Syed University to Gul Bai. Additionally, Lot Four will create a water transmission system from Reservoir Three to Banaras.

The K-IV and BRT projects will share a 2.7-kilometre common corridor, featuring water pipelines that measure 96 and 72 inches in diameter. The 96-inch water line will be located near Aziz Bhatti Park and Urdu College, and the 72-inch line will also be established in the area. Notably, the work on the common corridor for K-IV and BRT has already been awarded, with plans to commence in September.

Ziauddin University hosts 24th ZU Dialogues 'Interfaith Harmony: Faith, Freedom & the Nation'

KARACHI: Ziauddin University hosted the 24th interactive series of ZU Pakistan: Interfaith Harmony: Faith, Freedom & the Nation."

The event served as a tribute to the inclusive ideals of Quaide-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, bringing together scholars, community leaders, and students to reflect on his enduring principles of unity, religious freedom, and equal citizenship, values that lie at the very foundation of Pakistan.

In his address to students, Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, Patron-in-Chief of the Pakistan Hindu Council, emphasized that young Pakistanis should move beyond religious labels. "When you graduate and step into the world, don't see yourself or others as majority or minority, see yourselves as Pakistanis. That's the only way to honor Quaid's vision of a united nation built on mutual respect and shared values," he said.

Speaking to the audience, Amir Shahzad, Convener of ZU Dialogues, echoed Jinnah's iconic words: "You are free to go to your temples. You

any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan." He emphasized that these words are not just histor-Dialogues, titled "Jinnah's Vision of ical, they form the foundation of Pakistan's constitutional commitment to religious freedom, tolerance, and inclusivity.

Reflecting on the importance of interfaith harmony, inclusion, and unity, Sardar Amar Singh, Chairman of the Pakistan Khalsa Sikh Council, said that "This is the Pakistan that Quaid-e-Azam envisioned, one where every community is respected. If we become honest and truthful, the vision behind our independence will truly be realized. Initiatives like the Kartarpur Corridor symbolize the peace and unity we must continue to strive for."

Dr. Syed Muzaffar Hussain, faculty member at Ziauddin University, Dr. Huma Ghaffar, faculty at the School of Nursing and Midwifery at Aga Khan University, former Caretaker Minister of Education, Sindh, Rana Hussain and Dr. Pamela Marshall, Dean, Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, of Ziauddin University also spoke.

The panel discussion was moder-



ated by Dr. Sumaira Punjwani, Prin- and Midwifery. The session concluded allowing students to actively partic- further encouraging a spirit of cipal, Ziauddin College of Nursing with an interactive Q&A session, ipate and engage with the speakers, dialogue, critical thinking, and unity.

Visit

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Moazzam Manawar Sheikh, Executive Director, AIMS Education System Presenting the Souvenir to Dr. Mehmet Toyran, Education Attaché at the Turkish Embassy in Islamabad on his visit at AIMS School, Dr. Tahir Shah (Assistant Edu attache) and others also present on the



CCP approves Global Logistics merger involving CMA CGM and Borusan

₿ PNP

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved the acquisition of Borusan Act, 2010 read with Competi- in France, operates worldwide ("Borusan") by CMA CGM S. action involves the acquisition it is present through its logisagent.

and logistics.

The proposed merger was filed and received under incorporated in Türkiye. Section 11 of the Competition

A., a global player in shipping of Borusan from Borusan tics arm, CEVA Logistics Paki-Holding AS and Borusan Yatirim ve Pazarlama AS, both and Ocean Pakistan Pvt. Ltd.

CMA CGM, headquartered

stan Pvt. Ltd and CEVA Air On the other hand, Borusan provides third-party logistics services, primarily in Türkive, Tedarik Zinciri Cozumleri tion (Merger Control) Regula- in container shipping and port with negligible presence in ve Teknoloji Anonim Şirketi tions, 2016. The subject trans- terminal services. In Pakistan, Pakistan through a local

PODA, District Population Office Conduct Workshop on Reproductive Health and Menstrual Hygiene Management

ISLAMABAD: PODA, in collaboration with the District Population Office, Gujrat, conducted a workshop on reproductive health, menstrual hygiene management, and urinary tract infections for the staff of over 20 basic health units of the district at the seminar hall of the Family Health Clinic. The activity is part of the project Reduce Early Marriages to Enhance Gender Equality, supported by the Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad from December 2022 to

November 2025. The participants highlighted that child marriages are prevalent among recommended rate set by WHO, i.e., 12. health, education, and equal opporthe migrated population that has been residing in the district for several years. A majority of participants themselves had hemoglobin levels below the SDGs 3, 4, and 5 related to women's



Umer Farooq, District Population Welfare Officer, emphasized building alliances and collaborations to achieve

tunities. "Women's effective role in spreading awareness through all available channels regarding reproductive well-being and rights guaran-

tees a visible and significant presence of women's health needs and solutions on the front," Umer Farooq said.

The participants unanimously expressed their concerns, including the high rate of maternal and infant mortality, excessive bleeding, and sudden rise in blood pressure among young pregnant child mothers—issues directly associated with the incidence of child marriages. Appreciating the leadership of Chief Minister Punjab Mariam Nawaz, they underscored the urgent need to amend the current Punjab Child Marriage Restraint Act, aligning it with the ICT Child Marriage Restraint Act passed a couple of months ago, to ensure the minimum age of marriage for both girls and boys is 18 years, with a National Identity Card as a mandatory requirement.

Pakistan Alternative Energy Association organized Renewable Energy Conference



ISLAMABAD: The conference focused on promoting alternative energy sources in Pakistan, including solar power, wind energy, mini-hydro systems, biofuels, and electric vehicles (EVs).

Many experts, professionals, and industry leaders joined the vent. The conference included presentations on PAEA's history and activities, the potential of biofuels, mini hydropower, and Pakistan's clean energy future. PAEA hosted the event and welcomed all the guests warmly.

The Federal Minister Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Admiral Muhammad Asif Sandila, Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan, General Haroon Sikander Pasha, General Salahuddin, Abbas khan. Add secretary ministry of communication, ijlal Ahmad khan, joint secretary economic affairs division, Shah jahan mirza, DG PPIB and irfan ullah khan, ministry of energy KPK participated.

Mr Nasir Qureshi, president Islamaabd chambers, PAEA Chairman Aamir Hussain, along with founding members Abdul Nasir Rehman, Zia Ullah Khan, Muhammad Shahzaib, and Mian Waqas Azfar, welcomed the guests and shared their vision for a clean and energy-independent Pakistan.

The event ended with a strong message: Pakistan needs a united effort to move toward renewable and clean energy sources. PAEA invited all professionals, companies, and youth to join hands and be part of this journey

Cyclathon in DHA raises funds to sponsor schooling for 100 underprivileged girls



KARACHI: A unique girls-only cyclathon was recently held in Karachi with a powerful purpose—to raise funds for the education of girls from underprivileged communities.

Organised by the Al Furqan Welfare Organization, the special fundraising event drew enthusiastic participation from nearly 90 women cyclists who pedalled through Phase 8, DHA, with a

shared goal of empowering young girls through quality education. The initiative, titled Cycle for Education '25, aimed to sponsor the academic journey of 100 deserving girls enrolled in various

schools and communities supported by the organisation. Thanks to overwhelming support from donors, participants, and well-wishers, the event successfully met its fundraising target, paving the way for brighter futures for these young learners.

Women cyclists from renowned groups such as Special Olympics Pakistan, Ride Roll and Lead, and Wings on Wheels took part in the ride, lending their strength and solidarity to the

The success of the event was made possible by the generous contributions of key sponsors including Bank AlFalah, Rotary Club of Karachi New Central, and NRQ Dental.

Essential logistical and security support was provided by Sindh Police, the Emergency Squad (Rescue 1122 Sindh), and DHA Security, ensuring a safe and seamless experience for all participants.

Editorial/Opinion

Wednesday, July 23, 2025

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Heavy rains trigger floods, landslides in Jammu and Kashmir

eavy rains pounded parts of Jammu and Kashmir along the Line of Control (LoC), unleashing flash floods and landslides that damaged infrastructure and killed a schoolchild, officials told Anadolu on Tuesday.

The hilly districts of Rajouri and Poonch saw rivers and streams swell, inundating low-lying areas, washing away vehicles, and damaging buildings.

Vikas Kundal, a senior official in Poonch, said a landslide struck a school, killing one child and injuring at least 23 others.

"We are taking every possible measure to safeguard lives and have advised people from low-lying areas to move to safe places in view of the risk of flash floods," Kundal told Anadolu. "We have deployed teams of emergency and relief, including medical teams, to reach affected areas."

In neighboring Rajouri, authorities ordered schools closed after rising water levels in the Dharhali and Saktoh rivers posed further danger.

A red alert has been issued in 12 districts — Kathua, Samba, Udhampur, Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban, Reasi, Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch, Baramulla, and Anantnag — due to expected heavy rainfall and heightened risk of flash floods, officials said.

The Indian Meteorological Department in Srinagar had already issued an alert for July 21–24 warning of heavy rain with risks of flooding and landslides.

The region has increasingly seen erratic weather patterns in recent years, with intense heat waves and untimely showers amplifying climate-related disas-

Ajaz Rasool, an environmental expert, told Anadolu that Kashmir "is no exception" to the global impacts of climate change.

"It is due to various stress factors including the unnecessary human activity on ecologically fragile zones which definitely has an adverse effect," Rasool said.

"Now it is to time to act strategically to save our environment rather than waiting for disasters to happen," Rasool cautioned.

This year also recorded the hottest June in the region since 1978.

Replacing India with China in SAARC: A Strategic Masterstroke

Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was envisioned as a platform for unity, prosperity, and regional integration among the diverse and populous nations of South Asia. With over two billion people and a wealth of natural and human resources, the SAARC region held tremendous promise. Yet despite this potential, SAARC has remained paralyzed-reduced to ceremonial meetings, unfulfilled resolutions, and a legacy of frustration. The principal reason for its failure has been the hegemonic posture and political intransigence of India, which consistently prioritized its own bilateral disputes over collective regional interests. Whenever India had tensions with Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, or Sri Lanka, it weaponized its influence within SAARC to paralyze the forum, suffocating any genuine attempt at regional cooperation.

Now, a new door has opened, and through it lies the opportunity for a historic transformation. Pakistan and China are reportedly working toward creating a new regional bloc that excludes India—the very actor that has repeatedly blocked progress—and instead includes

willing and cooperative regional players. Foreign direct investment is also expected to surge. China, the world's second-largest source of outbound FDI, invested over \$136 billion globally in 2023. In the current SAARC bloc, most Chinese FDI is confined to Pakistan. But a restructured bloc with China at the center could see FDI flows jump from the current \$10 billion to over likely target special economic zones, Arabian Sea, while South Asian goods

or decades, the South Asian digital infrastructure, energy projects, manufacturing clusters, and agricultural modernization—unlocking employment and industrialization at a scale the region has never witnessed before.

The digital revolution would also accelerate. China's Digital Silk Road offers undersea cables, fiber optics, cloud computing, AI platforms, and next-gen telecom. Expansion of this model to the region could lift over 300 million

region could deliver high-speed internet to over 400 million currently underserved users, transforming education, healthcare, banking, and governance. Regional cloud computing systems, digital currency interoperability, and fintech solutions would enable real-time trade,

financial inclusion, and cyber-resilience. China's BeiDou satellite navigation system could replace the region's dependence on U. S. GPS, empowering the bloc with sovereign control over aviation, logistics, and defense mapping—an essential step in building technological independence.

Strategically, the inclusion of Afghanistan is a geopolitical pivot. Afghanistan connects the bloc to Central Asia and, through China and Pakistan, to Iran and the Middle East. With Iran's Chabahar Port and Pakistan's Gwadar Port acting as twin maritime gateways, and with China constructing transit and trade corridors through the region, this alliance becomes a global artery of commerce. Central Asian energy and \$100 billion by 2035. These funds would minerals could flow southward to the

and Africa. Transportation costs across the region could fall by 30-50%, according to the Asian Development Bank, directly improving the competitiveness of exports and reducing the price of imports.

The human impact is equally transformative. With China's support, the

people out of poverty by 2040 through job creation, industrial expansion, and rural upliftment. Unemployment across Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan could decline by 15 to 20%, and access to clean water, electricity, healthcare, and digital

literacy would expand exponentially. China's model of non-interferenceunlike Western or Indian modelsensures that sovereignty remains intact. Beijing does not fund regime change, nor does it meddle in domestic politics. It delivers roads, power plants, ports, and platforms—not political ultimatums. It respects its partners and uplifts their capacity.

India's exclusion is not an act of retaliation but of necessity. Its leadership has repeatedly failed to grasp the essence of regional cooperation. New Delhi's rigid nationalism, refusal to separate bilateral issues from multilateral platforms, and its track record of stalling progress made SAARC unworkable. Its foreign policy has alienated neighbors and irritated allies. Even its Western backers are increasingly wary of India's refusal to align on key global issues, such as sanc-

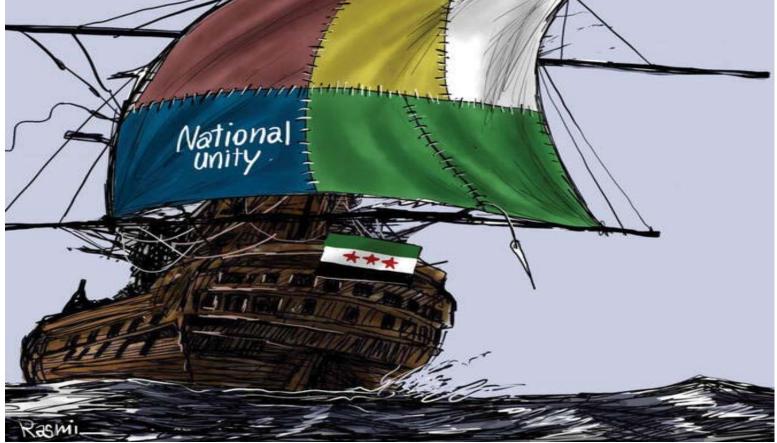
find shorter, cheaper routes to Europe tions on Russia or trade cooperation. India sees itself as a regional giant, but in practice it has been a disruptive force in South Asian diplomacy.

This realignment offers South Asia a future where roads replace borders, where fiber optics replace fences, and where mutual progress replaces mutual suspicion. It envisions a regional community where ports connect producers to consumers, where satellites link students to teachers, and where dignity replaces desperation. The potential is no longer theoretical. It is tangible, measurable, and achievable—if the political will aligns with regional ambition.

South Asia has waited long enough. While other regions moved forward, we remained frozen in a structure designed to fail. But with China's entry and India's exclusion, we now have the opportunity to design a platform that works-for people, for peace, and for prosperity. It is not merely about replacing a nation with another. It is about replacing a mindset of dominance with one of partnership. It is about building a future that no longer depends on the whims of one capital but is driven by the shared dreams of a billion

If the vision is pursued with clarity and courage, this new South Asian bloc-backed by China's resources and guided by mutual interest-will not only transform the region. It will set a global example of how fractured regions can reinvent themselves, not through confrontation, but through cooperation.

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

"Who's Truly Dangerous: The Building or the System?"

profoundly as the recent, tragic collapse of a building in Lyari. Following that catastrophe, the city's administrative machinery appeared less concerned with accountability and more preoccupied with self-preservation. Seizing the moment, officials swiftly issued notices declaring

43 apartment buildings constructed in the late 1990s in Gulistan-e-Jauhar as "extremely unsafe," "unfit for human habitation," and recommended immediate evacuation. These sweeping pronouncements were not based on any scientific survey or credible inspection only a **Dr. Muhammad Tayyab** general public notice. The impact was devastating:

property values plummeted overnight, and thousands of residents, including myself, who has lived in one of these buildings for 25 years, were plunged into panic and uncertainty.

These suspicions are amplified when one considers Karachi's lucrative real estate market, where land value in prime areas is skyrocketing. There is a pattern: buildings once labeled "unsafe" often end up being replaced by expensive commercial ventures. Original residents are either coerced into accepting meager compensations or entangled in protracted legal battles, losing their homes and dignity alike. Are these 43 buildings the

latest targets in a broader real estate scheme? Perhaps the most egregious failure in this episode is the administration's utter disregard for the affected residents. Not only were they excluded from the decision-making process, but no dialogue, assistance, or rehabilitation

arachi's catalogue of civic issues plan was offered. No alternate housing, no is long, but few incidents have financial compensation, and no opportushaken public confidence as nity to challenge or defend against the allegations. This is a blatant violation of fundamental human rights. The Constitution of Pakistan guarantees every citizen the right to due process, legal recourse, and protection against arbitrary eviction.

This is not merely a case of 43 buildings under scrutiny it is a litmus test for Karachi's

> urban governance, its transparency, and its commitment to justice. If such practices become precedent, any building at any time could be summarily declared unsafe, displacing families without cause. This undermines constitutional order, erodes public trust, and invites civil

Khan Singhanvi What's urgently needed is an impartial, science-based, and transparent assessment of the buildings in question. Institutions like NED University, NESPAK, PEC, or any internationally accredited firm must conduct thorough structural audits. If danger truly exists, a full public report must be released, residents must be briefed, and fair compensation along with alternate housing must be arranged. But if no significant threat is found, then labeling these homes "unsafe" was a grave injustice, and those responsible must be held accountable.

The Sindh government, SBCA, and other related bodies must also re-evaluate their operational protocols. A regulatory mechanism should be established mandating structural audits of all buildings every three to five years. A transparent, accessible digital database should document each building's structural status, maintenance needs, and safety

rating. This will not only empower residents but also enable responsible and data-driven administrative decisions.

Moreover, civil society and independent media must play their role in holding such opaque decisions to account. Institutions that act under the guise of public interest while serving private agendas must be exposed. If these reckless declarations continue without scientific merit or legal backing, public confidence in the state will collapse, breeding social disorder and political instability.

The judiciary, parliament, and human rights commissions must also treat such matters with urgency. It is the state's obligation to protect not endanger its citizens' lives and properties. If any eviction is deemed necessary, it must be preceded by scientific validation, legal sanction, and a humane, just alternative.

In conclusion, no modern society can function on arbitrary notices or bureaucratic whims. The foundation of good governance lies in transparency, empirical analysis, inclusive dialogue, and constitutional integrity. In a city like Karachi already grappling with insecurity, poverty, and crumbling infrastructure such irresponsible actions deepen public despair and cast a shadow over the legitimacy of the state itself.

It is imperative that this premature and unsubstantiated declaration be withdrawn immediately, a formal investigation launched, and if necessary, a science-backed solution pursued. Anything less will push hundreds of families into darkness not just metaphorically, but in real terms of homelessness, emotional trauma, and economic loss. If ignored, this issue could spiral into mass legal resistance, civic unrest, and systemic instability an outcome no society can afford.

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The Benefits of Cycling in Pakistan: A Sustainable Solution to Urban Transportation'

traffic jams, severe energy crises, and fatal noise and air pollution, largely due to the excessive use of bikes and heavy cars. These vehicles consume large amounts of fuel, emitting carbon dioxide

and other harmful pollutants that contribute to climate change, noise pollution, and air pollution. In contrast, bicycles offer a sustainable and environmentally friendly alternative, requiring mere pedaling that is beneficial for human health and doesn't pollute the environment.

Bicycles have numerous benefits that make them an attractive alternative to bikes and cars. They require narrow roads, reducing the need for

extensive infrastructure and minimizing urban fitness but also reduce expenses and contribute to sprawl. Additionally, bicycles require minimal water for washing, making them a water-efficient mode of transportation. Most importantly, bicycles are affordable and accessible to everyone, generating fewer accidents and traffic jams compared to other

Despite these benefits, people in Pakistan continue to prefer driving bikes and cars, largely due to elitism and a lack of awareness about the health and environmental benefits of cycling. The luxurious use of grand cars by politicians, notables, and bureaucrats has also contributed to the perception that cycling is a sign of stigma and low social status. However, this perception is entirely incorrect, as cycling is widely used in developed countries like the Netherlands, Japan, China, and Europe to reduce traffic congestion and carbon emissions.

In these countries, cycling is not only a mode of transportation but also a way of life, promoting physical fitness, environmental sustainability, and community engagement. Unfortunately, Pakistan

akistan's cities are plagued by chaotic lacks cycling infrastructure and awareness about its benefits. To promote cycling, we need to develop dedicated bike lanes, bike-sharing systems, and public awareness campaigns. By doing so, we can reduce traffic congestion, save energy, and prevent respiratory diseases.

By adopting cycling as a mode of transportation,

we can reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, decrease air pollution, and promote a healthier lifestyle. Bicycles should be used for short trips, such as going to schools, colleges, universities, offices, and shopping malls. People should also walk for short distances (1-4 km) and use bikes Khalil Rehman Gharshin or cars for longer distances. This

will not only promote physical a more sustainable environment.

Moreover, cycling can help reduce traffic congestion, a major problem in many cities. By promoting cycling, we can create a more sustainable and livable environment for ourselves and future generations. Environmental awareness should be spread to highlight the benefits of cycling in reducing climate change. If we don't act now, we'll face severe consequences of climate change and noise pollution, which will have far-reaching impacts on our health, economy, and environment.

In conclusion, promoting cycling in Pakistan can have numerous benefits for the environment. health, and economy. By working together, we can create a more sustainable future for ourselves and future generations. It's essential that we take action now to promote sustainable modes of transportation like cycling and reduce our reliance on fossil

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President Abbas discusses latest developments in occupied Palestinian Territory with Pope Leo XIV

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RAMALLAH: President Mahmoud Abbas Monday discussed the latest developments in the difficult situation in the occupied Palestinian territory during a phone call with Pope Leo XIV of the Vatican.

President Abbas briefed the Pope on the dire conditions the Palestinian people are enduring as a result of the ongoing genocidal war in the Gaza Strip, marked by killings, starvation, and widespread destruction—the most recent being the destruction of the Holy Family

The President reiterated the Pales- tinian priority of achieving a cease- fire, securing the release of hostages,





facilitating the entry of medical and condemned, stressing that such acts and their families in Rome. humanitarian aid, enabling the must never be repeated. He stressed State of Palestine to fully assume that Palestinian Muslims and Chrisits responsibilities in the Gaza Strip, and releasing the Palestinian funds withheld by Israel, which has severely exacerbated the already dire

President Abbas called on the Pope to direct his prayers and appeals to world leaders to stop the killing, starvation, and settler terrorism against the Palestinian people, to halt the assaults on Islamic and Christian holy sites, and to prevent the acts of terror committed by the colonists in

tians stand united in their pursuit of freedom and independence.

The President praised the Vati-

can's honorable stance in upholding international humanitarian law and its repeated calls to achieve peace in the land of peace, reaffirming the State of Palestine's commitment to strengthening its close relations with the Vatican, which recognized the State of Palestine in 2015.

His Excellency also expressed the Palestinian leadership's appreciation the village of Al-Taybeh, which he for the Vatican's decision to host and respect international and humaniemphasized are unacceptable and treat wounded children from Gaza tarian law and the holy sites."

He extended an invitation to Pope Leo XIV to visit the Holy Land and to pray in the Church of the Nativity and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the realization of peace and an end to wars.

For his part, the Pope affirmed the Vatican's call for respect of international and humanitarian law, the importance of ending wars and suffering, and the need to halt violations of holy sites.

He said: "We pray for peace. Yesterday, we made an appeal before the faithful to stop the war and to

Experts term cartelization, outdated farming practices amid flawed policy major reasons behind sugar crisis

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Experts at a seminar termed cartelization, elite capture, outdated farming practices, and the absence of a proper policy framework sugar crisis in the country.

Pakistan: Causes, Consequences and Cure", was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) to deliberate upon the structural, economic, and political challenges driving the country's recurring sugar crisis since long.

Dr Sajid Amin Javed, SDPI's Deputy sugar sector reform must involve all the stakeholders, including farmers, practices like India's controlled deregulation model and the Philippines'

dies and trickled down the effects to the last partners of the nexus mainly farmers and consumers," he said.

Sugar sector possesses a politas the main causes behind the ongoing ical shield, as most of the sugar mills' owners are politicians, who influence The seminar, titled: "Sugar Crisis in the policy and practice at government level, he said, adding that "Deregulation should begin at the industry level, gradually dismantling cartelization while ensuring protection for vulnerable groups, especially the farmers and consumers.

Dr Kashif Salik, SDPI Research Fellow, stressed the need to demystify Executive Director, emphasized that sugar crisis, framing it not as a seasonal shortage but a recurring an systemic failure of the successive governbeverage & sweets manufacturers, ments. He said cartelization remains industry and consumers. "The current a major issue that's why the governsugar policy protects mill owners. We ment is contemplating to deregulate need to learn from international best the sector under strict IMF conditions that prohibit subsidies.

Prof. Dr Muhammad Ismail

phased deregulation systems that grad- Kumbhar, Cane Expert, Sindh Agriually deregulated the industry's subsi- culture University, Tando Jam painted a bleak picture of sugarcane production, particularly in Sindh. "Outdated cultivation techniques, declining cane recovery rates due to climate change, and the monopolistic role of politically backed sugar mills' owners have led to delayed payments and exploitation of small farmers and cane growers," he said. With only 25-30 of Sindh's 40+ mills operational and water scarcity worsening, the farmers have to face both financial and environmental pressures, he maintained.

Dr Kumbhar called for urgent policy reforms, including a revision of the national sugar policy, payments to farmers within 15 days, and a halt to sugar exports until domestic demand is met. He emphasized that sugarcane is a "delta crop", which consumes disproportionate water and a threat to sustainability of agroecological zones already under biggest stress. "Sugar is not just an economic issue," he said,



adding that "it's a structural failure marked by elite capture, with political families owning the majority of sugar

To a question, Dr Kumbhar highlighted political ownership of sugar mills as a long-standing issue. "An amount of PKR 36 billion in cane payments has been overdue in Sindh

since 2014-15, he informed.

Sibte Hassan Sherazi, Additional Cane Commissioner of Punjab, highlighting the government's efforts towards deregulation, said that the Punjab has initiated PKR 40 million project to monitor cane quality. "Our labs are checking discrepancies between reported and actual sugar production.

There's often a 1.5% mismatch," he said, suggesting the third-party audits and farmers education to grow high quality

Prof. Muhammad Asif Kamran, Director Agriculture Policy, University of Faisalabad, criticized the poor data management system and the lack of digital transparency in sugar stock and production. "We need a centralized digital dashboard to track sugar stocks and guide export-import decisions," he argued. He also proposed a shift towards sugar beet, a less water-intensive crop, and presented global examples of shifting consumer preferences towards alternatives like jaggery. He also proposed deploying blockchain technology to ensure digital payments and traceable production and distribution, aiming to curtail manipulation and inefficiencies. Dr Kamran further noted that per capita sugar consumption in Pakistan remains alarmingly high even with prices recently crossing

'Healing in the Shadow of Loss' launch sparks dialogue on grief, culture, & community

Naveed Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: The cozy ambiance of Biblio Café on Agha Khan Road, F-6, came alive here on Tuesday evening, with heartfelt conversation as it hosted the launch of Healing in the Shadow of Loss, a poignant self-help debut by author Saira Sheikh.

The event drew an eclectic mix of literary and intellectual voices, including Dr. Ageela Asif (Assistant Professor, COMSATS University), renowned photojournalist Mobin Ansari, Rai Riaz Hussain (former Press Secretary to the Prime Minister), LalaRukh Dhar (Director, Staff College), and Dr. Rubia Usman (Consultant Physician), among others. Their participation underscored the wide relevance and emotional resonance of Sheikh's work.

Sheikh, a Pakistani expatriate and Cardiff University MBA graduate, is known for balancing multiple roles entrepreneur, mother of two, and now, published author. Her transition into writing stems from a personal the Shadow of Loss offers a nuanced approach to grief, blending emotional



lived experience. Her entrepreneurial spirit, expressed through a home-based soy candle business, reflects the same personal resilience and creative drive found in her writing.

The event was moderated by Mona Raza, literary influencer and founder of Readers Lounge—Pakistan's largest journey of transformation. Healing in female readers Facebook group. Raza, a prominent voice in the local #bookstagram community, has spent over seven and devoted readers. The audience's intelligence with cultural insight and years cultivating reading culture across diversity highlighted growing interest

digital and traditional platforms. Her stewardship of the evening's proceedings reflected her commitment to literature that engages with real human expe-

Islamabad's literary and intellectual circles turned out in force for the launch, which brought together established writers, rising voices, and members of Sheikh's inner circle—family, friends,

in self-help literature rooted in local cultural contexts.

A deeply engaging discussion served as the evening's centerpiece, offering rare vulnerability and insight. When asked by Raza what prompted her to turn personal healing into a public work, Sheikh reflected, "Writing became my sanctuary when traditional forms of processing grief felt insufficient. I realized that many of us in Pakistani society are expected to move through loss quietly, without acknowledgment of the complex emotions involved. This book emerged from my desire to create space for that acknowledgment."

Responding to an audience question about cultural stigma surrounding grief, Sheikh noted, "We often hear phrases like 'time heals everything' or 'be strong,' but rarely do we create space for people to actually feel their emotions fully. My work challenges the notion that healing must happen in isolation or within

predetermined timeframes." Following the formal program, Sheikh took time to sign copies and engage in one-on-one conversations, furthering the book's mission to cultivate community-based healing. "My



this book will help normalize conversations about grief in our society. We need to move beyond the expectation that people should heal quietly and quickly. Real healing requires community, understanding, and the courage to sit with difficult emotions rather than rushing through them."

Published by Tanzeela K Hassan of Thazbook, Healing in the Shadow hope," she shared, visibly moved, "is that of Loss is being lauded as a milestone 👺 **Photos: Sultan Bashir**

in Pakistan's growing indigenous selfhelp genre. Early reviews from mental health professionals and literary critics alike have praised its cultural nuance, emotional authenticity, and accessible prose. Sheikh's ability to translate complex psychological concepts into everyday language is being recognized as both timely and transformative.

Pakistan Faces FDI Credibility Crisis: Azfar Ahsan

Example 2 Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Muhammad Azfar Ahsan, Pakistan's former Minister for Investment, has raised serious concerns about the country's foreign direct investment (FDI) trends, calling attention to what he terms a "crisis of credibility" despite a rise in gross inflows.

"Pakistan's FDI inflows may be climbing on paper, but a silent exodus is underway. This contradiction points to a much deeper issue, one of eroding trust, not expanding growth," Ahsan said in a statement released today.

He noted that gross FDI inflows rose by 27%, from USD 3.17 billion in FY24 to USD 4.03 billion in FY25, but net FDI increased by only 4.7%, moving from USD 2.35 billion to USD 2.46 billion. "This modest net gain reveals underlying weakness, not strength," Ahsan emphasized.

foreign investment actually declined by 8%, from USD 1.96 billion to USD 1.81 billion. Private foreign investment also dropped by nearly 15%, from USD 2.47 billion to USD 2.10 billion, a clear indicator of waning investor confidence.

He further highlighted a major reversal in portfolio investment, which shifted from an inflow of USD 120 million to an outflow of USD 355 million, a swing of USD 475 million. "This is not just a statistical shift, it reflects anxiety, unpredictability, and growing disillusionment with Pakistan's policy environment," he said.

Most alarming, Ahsan stated, is the 92% surge in repatriation of profits and capital, which jumped from USD 818 million to USD 1.57 billion. "This is not routine profit-taking; this is a silent vote

According to him, the total of no confidence from existing investors," he asserted.

While foreign public investment outflows decreased by 41% (from USD 503 million to USD 295 million), Ahsan said this isolated figure "cannot mask the larger withdrawal underway. It's like celebrating less rainfall during a storm, technically true, but contextually meaningless."

Ahsan underscored that while capital is entering, long-term commitment is not. Several global firms have exited the Pakistani market in recent quarters. which he described as a red flag for those who look beyond the headlines.

He reiterated that these developments align with forecasts he has made repeatedly since the start of the year. "Despite positive intent, I consistently projected that total FDI would remain flat, and unfortunately, that is



exactly what has happened. All of our forecasts over the past three years have been proven accurate," he noted.

"As a public policy advocate, I consider it a responsibility to present data-driven, constructive feedback to decision-makers. even when it's uncomfortable. Our stance has always been principled and honest, not cosmetic or politically convenient."

Ahsan emphasized that while peer economies like Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and several countries in Central Asia, the Middle East, and Africa are making strides in attracting sustained, long-term foreign investment, Pakistan is slipping off the radar of global investors.

"This is not a crisis of capital. It is a crisis of credibility. We are not just losing investment, we are losing investor trust," he warned. "In today's global marketplace, Pakistan is increasingly seen as a high-risk, low-conviction desti-

While some investors are still drawn to distressed assets or short-term arbitrage opportunities, he said, very few are willing to make long-term strategic investments in Pakistan. "The business climate remains unstable, riddled with policy U-turns, inconsistent regulations, and fragile governance."

He urged that investor trust

cannot be built on spread- tives must be replaced with real sheets or presentations alone. "It requires stability, predictability, and rule of law. Investors need clarity: Will the tax regime change overnight? Will their of systemic inefficiencies, institucontracts be honored? Can they last-minute hurdles? These questions are often left unanswered, or worse, ignored."

He stressed that attracting FDI is not enough, retaining and growing it requires deep structural reforms. "We need a rulesbased system where investor rights are protected, repatriation policies are consistent, and institutions are autonomous and required to compete globally." immune from political interfer-

"The time for cosmetic fixes of our performance. Inflated projections and feel-good narra-

reform." Ahsan called for a complete

overhaul of the investment ecosystem, including the removal tional continuity, and enhanced repatriate their profits without transparency. "To rebuild global investor confidence, we need credible governance and a long-term commitment to policy stability." He also emphasized that Paki-

stan's investment institutions must be led by "credible, competent, and globally respected professionals, not political placeholders. Only then can we begin to inspire the kind of investor confidence

"We may win headlines with large numbers," Ahsan concluded, "but trust, not transactions, is the is over," he said. "We need an currency that sustains investhonest, data-driven assessment ment. And once that trust is lost, it is the hardest currency to



	Fluctuation		
Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index			
Current	Prev. Close		
139,419.61	138,217.58		
Day's High	Day's Low		
139,901.77	138,197.81		
Index Value	Change		
25,478,715,625	+1202.03		
Percentage	Time		
+0.87%	22 Jul, 2025 4:30 pm		
Europe: FTSE 100 Index			
Index Value	Change		
9,023.81	+10.82		
Percentage	Time		
	22 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT+1		
+0.12%			
	GMT+1		
USA: Dow Jones	GMT+1 ndustrial Average		
USA: Dow Jones I Index Value	GMT+1 ndustrial Average Change		
USA: Dow Jones Index Value 44,387.85	GMT+1 ndustrial Average Change +64.78		

-0.11%	GMT+9
Open Market	Forey Dates

Change

Time

22 Jul, 3:45 pm

-44.19

Index Value

39.774.92

Percentage

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	186	191
Bahrain Dinar	763	773
Canadian Dollar	210.50	215.50
China Yuan	39.25	39.65
Danish Krone	44.17	44.57
Euro	334.40	338.40
Hong Kong Dollar	35.81	36.16
Indian Rupee	3.22	3.31
Japanese Yen	1.9150	2.0150
Kuwaiti Dinar	931.7	943.70
Malaysian Ringgit	66.4	67
NewZealand \$	167.36	169.36
Norwegians Krone	27.53	27.83
Omani Riyal	747.70	757.70
Qatari Riyal	77.43	78.13
Saudi Riyal	76.75	77.4
Singapore Dollar	221.9	226.9
Swedish Korona	29	29.30
Swiss Franc	352.88	355.63
Thai Bhat	8.57	8.72
U.A.E Dirham	78.90	79.55
UK Pound Sterling	386.4	390.4
US Dollar	287.20	288.70

TCL Launches Its Most Premium TV Yet - The C7K QD-MiniLED Series

Example 2 Commerce Desk

LAHORE: TCL, Pakistan's No.1 LED TV brand, proudly announces the launch of its most premium television, the TCL C7K QD-MiniLED TV, officially available across Pakistan. As the flagship model in TCL's 2025 QD-MiniLED lineup, the C7K sets a new benchmark for ultra-luxury home entertainment in the country.

Majid Khan Niazi, Director of Marketing at TCL Middle East and Africa, shared his views: "The launch of the C7K is a major milestone in our journey of innovation. It's a complete package, stunning visuals, immersive sound by Bang & Olufsen, and powerful features tailored for today's digital lifestyles. We're excited to bring this flagship to Pakistani consumers who demand the very best."

RCCI to host health expo, summit on July 29

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) is set to host a two-day Health Expo and Summit on July 29, aimed at exploring the export potential of Pakistan's health and pharmaceutical sectors while addressing key challenges faced by the industry.

RCCI President Usman Shaukat remarked that Pakistan holds significant untapped potential in the pharmaceutical export market due to its advanced drug manufacturing capabilities, skilled workforce, and the rising global demand for affordable medicines. "Pakistan is recognized for producing high-quality generic drugs at competitive prices, making its pharmaceutical products highly attractive to global markets seeking cost-effective healthcare solutions," he said in a statement issued by RCCI on Tuesday. President further noted that despite its strengths, pharma sector remains underutilized due to regulatory hurdles, limited research and development, and stiff international competition.

President FPCCI meets Field Marshal Asim Munir along with Trade & Industry's delegation

Example 2 Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI; President ECO-CCI and VP CACCI, has said that FPCCI extends its deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), for graciously meeting with the trade and industry delegation led by Dr. Gohar Ejaz, HI, SI (Civ).

We salute the Field Marshal's exemplary commitment to engagement with the business community - demonstrating both patience and concern for economic issues faced by the businesses and the people of Pakistan, he added.

During the highly-productive meeting, the delegation commended the government and SIFC's monumental efforts that have brought much-needed economic stability to the country and thanked the Field Marshal for his unwavering support and resolve.

The delegation presented a comprehensive overview of the challenges faced by the indus- recently enacted expansions of the Federal



trial sector - with particular emphasis on the Board of Revenue's (FBR) powers.

business community is immensely thankful to

Field Marshal Asim Munir for immediately directing that the new provisions; particularly those added under Sections 37A and 37B of the Sales Tax Act 1990, pertaining to arrest and detention; be held in abeyance; and, for instructing the FBR to enter meaningful and solution-oriented dialogue with stakeholders and address their concerns.

Additionally, the GHQ will support economic activities in the country through the platform of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC); fostering an environment of collaboration and trust.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh assured that the business community's leadership remains united, committed and unwavering in its efforts to steer the economy towards a brighter, more secure and globally competitive future. Together, under the Field Marshal's guidance, we believe Pakistan can unlock its full potential, restore investor's confidence, drive inclusive growth and ensure $\label{thm:maintained} \mbox{Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh maintained that the} \quad \mbox{prosperity for the generations to come, he}$

Called on

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Khazar Farhadov, the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, called on Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, and Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Senior Vice President FPCCI, at the FPCCI President Secretariat in Islamabad.



Increase in taxes significantly reduced rice exports - Rafiq Suleman

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Following the government's imposition of an additional 2% tax on exporters, Pakistani rice exporters failed to fetch expected prices in the global market, leading to a significant decline in rice exports during the fiscal year 2025. A key reason behind this has been the rapid drop in international rice prices.

In this regard, Rafiq Suleman, former Chairman of the Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan (REAP) and Convener of the Rice Committee of the FPCCI, said that the government's decision to impose a 2% tax was not appropriate. If the government had formulated policies in consultation with REAP leadership, not only could rice exports have been increased, but more foreign exchange could have been brought into the country.

Rafiq Suleman stressed the need to focus on agriculture and improve crop yield. He stated that farmers must be provided with affordable pesticides and seeds so they can work properly and grow quality crops to ensure better yield. He noted that despite numerous challenges, exporters have worked hard to export rice from Pakistan-an effort he called a "jihad" that deserves praise.



warned that due to the 2% tax, next year's rice exports would not reach even \$3.5 billion, let alone \$4 billion.

Current export figures confirm this, with rice exports totaling \$3.2 billion. If more pressure is placed on exporters through taxation, exports will decline further. The government must play its role by providing

He further added that he had clearly cheap electricity, eliminating excessive taxes, and offering as many benefits as possible to exporters to keep the wheels of the economy moving smoothly.

REAP Chairman Malik Faisal and Senior Vice Chairman Javed Jelani are making strong efforts for rice exporters, but the government must also take their suggestions into account.

Extensive product range with top exhibitors

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: From decorative and furniture fabrics to wallpaper, flooring and carpets, to mattresses, bed linen and table linen - Heimtextil brings together a diverse product range for holistic interior design from 13 to 16 January 2026. Interior designers and buyers from the hospitality and retail sectors find the latest textile and non-textile material innovations under one roof. Leading brands and promis-



ing newcomers have already cient trade fair visit. announced their participation. The new hall layout creates targeted synergies for an effi-

Textile interior design solutions are more varied than ever before. They include wallpaper,

ture fabrics, flooring, bed and table linen, mattresses, bathroom and decorative textiles, and much more. Interior designers, architects, retail and hospitality buyers are looking for the full range. Products combining innovative functionality with modern design are in demand. At Heimtextil, professionals find everything they need for textile interior design – and much more: non-textile flooring makes its debut in 2026.

sun protection systems, furni-

World's No.1 PHEV Brand, BYD, Brings Game-Changing **Technology to Pakistan**



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: As countries around the world accelerate the shift away from internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, Pakistan is gradually aligning itself with global trends through policonsumer interest in electric vehicles. The government's New Energy Vehicle (NEV) policy, aimed at reducing carbon emissions and improving urban air quality, has already opened

the door to electric mobility. According to Lei Jian, Country Head of BYD Pakistan, the company's Dual Mode architecture has been under development for over two decades. first mass-produced PHEV back in 2008," he shared. "With a vertically integrated the country.

supply chain and constant R&D, we've built a platform that's both intelligent and efficient. The engine only activates when it's needed, making long-distance travel stress-free."

Danish Khaliq, Vice President Sales and Strategy a cy direction and growing BYD Pakistan, explained how PHEVs redefine the hybrid driving experience. "This isn't about incremental improvement, it's a leap," he said. "The electric motor does the heavy lifting. The combustion engine exists to support, not lead.

With BYD positioning Pakistan as a key regional market and setting up its local production plant, the groundwork is being laid for a future where plug-in "We launched the world's hybrid electric vehicles serve as a key option for widespread NEV adoption in

DPS World Pakistan 2025 to Bring Global Printing and Signage Innovations to Lahore

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: DPS World

Pakistan 2025, 7th International Digital Printing and Signage Exhibition is all set to take place from 25 to 27 July 2025 at Expo Centre Lahore. Organized by Fakt Exhibitions (Pvt.) Ltd., the event will connect top manufacturers, solution providers, and industry professionals under one roof to explore the latest trends and technologies shaping the future of the digital printing and signage industry.

More than 100 national and international companies will showcase their latest and most innovative solutions printers and large-format

- from advanced digital displays to laser cutting machines, inks, substrates, and modern signage systems. The exhibition will serve a wide range of industries including advertising, packaging, retail, and textiles.

Attendees can expect live demonstrations, new product launches, and the opportunity to network with global and local experts, helping them find new business ideas and practical solutions.

Saleem Khan Tanoli, CEO of Fakt Exhibitions (Pvt.) Ltd., said: "DPS World Pakistan is where innovation meets opportunity. As businesses evolve and embrace digital transformation, this event creates the perfect space for industry players to connect, collaborate, and grow. This event brings the world's top digital printing and signage technologies to Pakistan?

As demand for faster, smarter, and more sustainable printing solutions continues to rise, DPS World Pakistan 2025 arrives at the perfect time for businesses looking to upgrade their operations and stay competitive in a rapidly changing

Khawaja Rizwan and Rao Sajid meet with Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani

👺 Kiran Δsim

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister and Chairman Senate of Pakistan Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani was met by PPP South Hunjab Senior Vice President Khawaja Rizwan Alam and PPP Multan District General Secretary Rao Sajid Ali at the Chairman Senate of the constituency. House Islamabad.

presented Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani with the people. a bouquet of flowers and congratulated him on his honorable acquittal in the TDAP mega scandal. Speaking on the occasion, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani said that truth always wins. I have always followed the path of law and constitution.

This is why Allah always prevailed and those who made accusations had to eat their faces. In the past, he was jailed for false accusations, but he fought a legal battle against these accusations and Allah granted him success.

Gilani thanked Khawaia Rizwan Alam dance. and Rao Sajid Ali and further talked to

and said that in the 2024 general elec- amount because we wanted the people tions, PPP candidate Mehr Irshad Sial will contest from this seat.

This seat was forcibly snatched away, but in the by-elections to be held on September 10, the PPP will win the seat that was forcibly snatched away with the strength and support of the people

He further said that the PPP has On this occasion, both leaders always done politics for the service of

> The past of the PPP is a witness that whenever the PPP has come to power, the farmers, laborers, students, traders, industrialists, in other words, every section of the population living in the country has become prosperous.

> During the PPP's tenure, the agricultural sector has developed. We gave the farmers their legitimate right to their

During our tenure, the wheat rate was stable, the farmers were prosperous, and wheat did not have to be On this occasion, Syed Yousuf Raza imported from outside due to its abun-

We increased the salaries of governthem about the by-election of NA-175 ment employees by a huge historical support of the people.

to come out of the swamp of inflation and embark on the journey of pros-

On this occasion, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani further said that PPP South Punjab President Makhdoom Syed Ahmed Mahmood, Senior Vice President Khawaja Rizwan Alam and Chief Coordinator South Punjab Abdul Qadir Shaheen should issue instructions to the office bearers of the entire South Punjab regarding the campaign and preparations for the by-election in NA-175, and all the office bearers and workers should play their full role in this election and win the seat that was forcibly snatched away in 2024.

It has to be withdrawn with the power and support of the people. Just as the PPP achieved historic victories in the by-elections held in Multan and Rahim Yar Khan, similarly the PPP will achieve victory in the by-election held in Muzaffargarh with the hard work of its office bearers and workers and the full



Annual Report

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Shoaib Ahmed Siddiqui, Chief Information Commissioner, along with Mr. Ijaz Hassan Awan, Information Commissioner, presenting the bi-annual report to the Honble Chief Justice of Pakistan at the Supreme Court of Pakistan on Tuesday.



Pakistan Services Limited announces strategic partnership with AKD Group and Mr. Dawood Jan Muhammad

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Services Limited, the Owner & Operator of the Pearl-Continental Hotels & Resorts wishes to inform its valued stakeholders about recent developments regarding its shareholding structure following the public disclosures made on the Pakistan Stock Exchange Limited.

Pakistan Services Limited has been informed that Hashoo Group has entered into a strategic arrangement with Mr. Dawood Jan Muhammad and AKD Group in respect of the shares of Pakistan Services Limited.

The current transaction is a financing arrangement that represents the initial phase of this process, and which will result in streamlining and consolidation of Hashoo Group's shareholding in Pakistan Services Limited. It is important to emphasize that this is not a divestment transaction and that control of Pakistan Services Limited remains entirely with the Hashoo Group and the Hashwani Family.

This transaction will be a significant milestone in respect of Pakistan Services Limited growth and strategic

positioning. This initiative is designed Resorts, Board of Directors, manageroadmap for operational efficiency and shareholder value through improved allocation of resources and to support long-term growth of Pakistan Services Limited and its fast-growing portfolio of hospitality assets.

We would like to assure all stakeholders that this development will not impact the strategic direction of Paki- leading hospitality company and is stan Services Limited, the daily operations of Pearl-Continental Hotels &

to optimize its structure and sets the ment structure, employees. Our commitment to delivering excepto strengthen our market position in tional hospitality services remains the hospitality sector and enhance unwavering and Pakistan Services Limited continues to pursue its longterm vision of excellence in Pakistan's hospitality & tourism sectors.

> We continue to work closely with our Partners to strengthen financial resilience and support sustainable growth.

Pakistan Services Limited is a committed to transparent communication with all stakeholders

Brilliant Success of Pakistan Peoples Party in the Recent Senate Elections

Asim Tanveer
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MULTAN: Senior leader of Pakistan Peoples Party and former member of Punjab Assembly Syed Ahmed Mujtaba Gilani, political and social leader Mian Muhammad Azeem Saeed have said that the brilliant success of Pakistan Peoples Party in the recent Senate elections is not only a victory of democracy but also a proof that the people and elected representatives are once again trusting the policies of the party leadership. They said that the emergence of PPP as the majority party in the Senate is a positive and encouraging change in the political landscape of the country. In a joint statement, they congratulated the party leaders and workers including President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto and Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and said that Pakistan Peoples Party has always prioritized ideological politics, public service and federal unity. This party has raised its voice for the supremacy of the Constitution, the autonomy of Parliament and the rights of the poor people in every era. Today, the majority in the Senate is the result of the party's principled struggle, which includes the sacrifices of the workers, the insight of the leadership and the trust of the people. Syed Ahmed Mujtaba Gilani said that the dynamic leadership and vision of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has given a new ray of hope to the young generation in politics. He added that the PPP has now become stronger, more organized and more active than before, and after achieving a numerical superiority in the Senate, it will play an effective role in legislation, accountability, and protection of public interests.

Midnight rain alert: NDMA warns of flood risk in Northern, Central regions

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued a flash flood and urban inundation

warning for Islamabad, Chakwal, Muzaffarabad, and several areas of North and Central Punjab, citing heavy rainfall expected around midnight in the early hours of Wednes-

NDMA, in its alert, urged residents especially in low-lying and flood-prone areas to stay vigilant, avoid flooded roads and underpasses, ensure proper drainage, and refrain from dumping trash into drains.

NDMA has advised vulnerable residents to

secure electrical appliances, avoid contact with electricity poles and unsafe structures, and follow local administration instructions in case of emergency.

UNSC adopts Pakistan-sponsored

Continued from Page 1

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who opened the debate, commended DPM/ FM Dar for convening the debate and for utilizing the Council's presidency to put forward a resolution urging all Member States to make full use of the tools in collective pursuit of global peace, saying "This is needed now more than ever."

'The architects of the United Nations Charter recognized that the peaceful resolution of disputes is the lifeline when geopolitical tensions escalate... when unresolved disputes fuel the flames of conflict ...and when states lose trust in each other," the UN chief said.

Analysts say no crisis illustrates the gap between words and action better than the Council's resolution of April 21, 1948, which called for a plebiscite, to be held under the UN auspices, to allow the people in the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir

to determine their own future. Under the terms of the resolution, the Security Council urged all member-states to utilize effectively the mechanisms for pacific of disputes.

settlement of disputes as outlined in Article 33 of the United Nations Charter. These include negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.

In this regard, the Council reaffirmed its role, under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, to recommend appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment for the peaceful settlement of disputes, including by taking into consideration that legal disputes should, as a general rule, be referred by the parties to the International Court of Justice.

The Council encouraged the Secretary-General to ensure that the United Nations is able to lead and support mediation and preventive diplomacy efforts and to continue to use his good offices. It also calls on member states to support and cooperate with the UN chief in this regard.

The resolution requests the Secretary-General to provide, one year following the adoption of this resolution, concrete recommendations for further strengthening the mechanisms for peaceful settlement

The Council also urges regional and sub-regional organizations to enhance their efforts for peaceful settlement of disputes, consistent with the United Nations Charter and relevant Security Council resolutions.

"Around the world," the UN Secretary-General said in his remarks, "we see an utter disregard for — if not outright violations of — international law — including international human rights law, international refugee law, international humanitarian law, and the UN Charter itself, without any accountability.

"These failures to uphold international obligations are coming at a time of widening geopolitical divides and conflicts," with staggering costs — measured in human lives, shattered communities, and lost futures, Guterres said.

"We need look no further than the horror show in Gaza - with a level of death and destruction without parallel in recent times."

Diplomacy, he said, may not have always succeeded in preventing conflicts, violence and instability, but it still holds the power to stop them.

Federal Minister Chairs High-Level *Meeting*

Sontinued from Page 8

During the meeting, the Minister emphasized the need for transparency and fairness in the sugar supply chain. He also directed all provincial governments to provide detailed compliance reports within 24 hours and asked them to enhance monitoring at the district level to curb any illegal practices by mill owners. The Minister further stated that the Ministry will work in close coordination with relevant enforcement bodies including the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and provincial food authorities to take legal action against violators.

Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain reiterated the government's unwavering commitment to protect the rights of consumers and maintain price stability in essential commodities. He urged all stakeholders to act responsibly and cooperate fully with the government to ensure smooth supply and fair pricing of sugar across the country.

Finance Minister expresses Confidence in Competition Commission's Performance in Senate

跨 Continued from Page 8

He also informed the Senate about the establishment of a dedicated Market Intelligence Unit within the CCP, which proactively monitors market distortions, price manipulation, and other potential violations of competition law. This unit has so far identified 170 potential violations across sectors such as banking, e-commerce, telecom, and real estate, with

28 inquiries already initiated. Highlighting the Commission's role in facilitating investment, he said that CCP's Mergers Department approved 69 transactions during the data-driven analysis of various current year, resulting comple-

tion of transactions worth \$30 million in foreign direct investment (FDI). Moreover, the Exemptions Department granted 83 exemptions, helping to ease business operations.

The finance minister also acknowledged CCP's efforts in raising public awareness about competition law through outreach programs and issuing policy notes to promote reforms in key economic sectors.

He added that a Centre of Excellence has also been established within the Commission to conduct research and market sectors.



Finance Minister expresses confidence in Competition Commission's performance in Senate

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance, Mr. Aurangzeb Khan, while addressing the Senate, expresses satisfaction over the performance of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), stating that the Commission's new Chairman and Members has brought significant improvements, particularly in reducing the number of pending court cases.

The Finance Minister requested the Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue to invite Dr. Kabir Sidhu, Chairman CCP, for a detailed briefing to appreciate the true extant



Commission.

of reforms undertaken by the the past two years, the CCP's new management has actively The finance minister pursued litigation in various fines exceeding Rs. 1 billion. Of

from 577 to approximately 300—a clear reflection of the Commission's dedicated efforts.

Responding to a motion moved by Senator Mohsin Aziz, the Finance Minister emphasized that a transparent and action against violators. robust regulatory framework is essential in a market-based that CCP's Cartels Department and ensure accountability. In the current fiscal year, while this context, he highlighted the Office of Fair Trade final-CCP's recent performance ized 13 investigations related as crucial and deserving of to misleading advertisements

He shared that the Commission issued 11 major orders in the past year alone, imposing informed the House that over courts, which has resulted in this amount, approximately Rs.

reducing the backlog of cases 120 million has already been recovered. The inquiry process has been expedited, the issuance of show-cause notices has become more efficient, and the overall hearing mechanism has improved to ensure timely

The Minister further stated onomy to foster competition—completed 20 inquiries during and deceptive marketing. These investigations have led to the issuance of show-cause notices and the initiation of formal

Continued on Page 7

Rise of China is a stabilizing force for global politics, says experts

ISLAMABAD: Experts term chapter contributors, and the rise of China as a stabilizing force in global poli- ciated the official launch of a tics. They were speaking at timely and thought-provoking the launch of the book titled new volume that explores the "China's Globalisation and the complex dimensions of China's New World Order" organized by the Institute of Regional

The book, edited by Dr Adam Saud and Dr Najim- brought together a diverse deen Bakare and recently published by Palgrave Macmillan, presents critical yet divergent views of regional and global behaviour of China gled understanding of China's in the context of world order rise in the 21st century.

The editors of the book, other relevant experts appreglobal behaviour and regional engagement from multiple Studies (IRS) here on Tuesday. international perspectives. They shared that the book group of scholars and practitioners from Asia, Europe, and the Americas to offer a comprehensive and multi-an-



The speakers at the launch book, Dean of the Faculty ceremony included President of Humanities and Social IRS Ambassador Jauhar Sciences at Bahria Univer-Saleem; the editors of the sity, Islamabad, Dr Adam

sity of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Dr Najimdeen Bakare; chapter contributors, Dr Azam Khan from University of Sargodha and Dr Rizwan Zeb from Air War College Karachi; as well as subject matter experts Pakistan's former ambassador to China, the US, and the UN, Amb Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, former President of the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) Amb Dr Raza Muhammad, and Director Research at the Centre for International Strategic Studies (CISS) Dr Bilal Zubair.

Saud and Professor, Univer-

PM Shehbaz vows to transform **National Police Academy into** premier institution

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday visited the National Police Academy (NPA) and addressed the training standards. 52nd Commons Batch of Assistant Superintendents of Police (ASPs), announcing a comprehensive overhaul of the institution, aligning it with the standards of the Pakistan Military Academy

During his visit, the Prime Minister also inaugurated the 'Raising the Standard: NPA Tactical Firing Range and Elite Police Training Facility', a state-of-the-art complex designed to provide hands-on tactical training to police officers. He also performed the groundbreaking ceremony of the new ASP Hostel, aimed at providing modern residential facilities for trainee officers

The Prime Minister outlined a bold vision for the Academy's revival, announcing the launch of a Master's Degree Program for trainees and the establishment of a 25-acre state-ofthe-art campus. A new elite training he added.

school, complete with a modern firing range, will also be built. Collaboration with international partners. including China and the United Nations, is planned to upgrade

"We aim to equip our officers not only with weapons but also with modern technology and critical thinking. From hostels to classrooms, the entire structure will be refurbished," said the Prime Minister. He also announced training exchanges and pledged that foreign trainees would once again be welcomed.

Reflecting on his tenure as Chief Minister of Punjab, PM Shehbaz highlighted his contributions to national security, including the establishment of the Elite Force, the Safe City Project, Punjab Forensic Science Agency, and the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD).

"Merit has always been the cornerstone of my administration. I suspended senior officers for bypassing recruitment protocols, such is the importance of integrity,"

Federal Minister Chairs High-Level Meeting with Sugar Sector Stakeholders



Example 2 Commerce Desk

culture departments, and key stakeholders from across the country. The meeting was convened to review the current situation of sugar pricing and compliance with the government's notified ex-mill rate of Rs. 165 per

The Minister expressed grave concern over reports that several

sugar mills are not complying with he fixed price and are co ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for to artificial inflation in the sugar National Food Security and Research, market. He made it clear that the Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain, chaired a government will not tolerate such high-level meeting today with repre- manipulation of the market, which sentatives of the Pakistan Sugar Mills places an unfair burden on the Association (PSMA), provincial agri- common citizen. He issued a strict warning to the PSMA, stating that if the association fails to play its due role in ensuring compliance among its members, the government will be compelled to initiate a countrywide crackdown against mills involved in hoarding, profiteering, or overpricing.

Continued on Page 7

RCCI to Organize 2-Day Med-Health Expo & Summit on July 29

Example 2 Commerce Desk

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) is set to host a two-day Health Expo and Summit on July 29-30, medicines. "Pakistan is recognized aimed at exploring the export potential of Pakistan's health and pharmaceutical sectors while addressing key challenges faced by the industry.

RCCI President Usman Shaukat shared that Pakistan holds signifi-

cant untapped potential in the pharmaceutical export market due to its advanced drug manufacturing capabilities, skilled workforce, and the rising global demand for affordable for producing high-quality generic drugs at competitive prices, making its pharmaceutical products highly attractive to global markets seeking cost-effective healthcare solutions, he said.

Audit Exposes Rs244 billion over billing fraud by 8 Discos in Pakistan

跨 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The latest report from the Auditor General of Pakistan revealed that power distribution companies have been involved in widespread overbilling and financial fraud, resulting in a staggering loss of Rs244 billion to consumers.

The audit is focusing on eight companies: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO), Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO), Hyderabad Electric companies overbilled 278,649 performance metrics. Feeders responsible officials, according Supply Company (HESCO),

Supply Company (PESCO), Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO), Sukkur Electric Power Company (SEPCO), and Tribal Areas Electric Supply Company (TESCO). In light of rising inflation and high tariffs, this fraudulent behaviour places an additional burden on low-income households.

The report reveals systematic overbilling to hide operational failures. Auditors found that five consumers by Rs 47.81 billion Multan Electric Power Company in just one month. During the

(MEPCO), Peshawar Electric 2023-24 financial year, these companies billed over 900 million extra units without justification.

Some companies claimed refunds of billions for errors, but provided no evidence to support their claims. Auditors demanded verification records to confirm these claims. Qesco emerged as the worst offender, overbilling under the guise of "adjusting theft and losses, instead passing agricultural consumers by Rs148 billion through inflated tube well bills. This practice hid poor across the companies facilitated

with records withheld from audi-

tors despite requests. Consumers received partial refunds, including Rs 5.29 billion for incorrect meter readings and Rs 2.18 billion in credit adjustments from Pesco. However, auditors noted a lack of transparency in these processes. Rs22 billion in extra billing occurred load" to cover technical losses, further eroding trust. No action has been taken against the to the report. Companies failed



high tariffs. It undermines trust the costs on to consumers. The audit recommends strict penalties and recovery measures

in the power sector and highlights the need for regulatory to prevent recurrence and restore reforms. financial discipline. This fraud

Experts call for stronger oversight, transparent billing, and of Pakistan report.)

on households already facing anti-corruption measures to protect consumers. The government must act swiftly to recover funds and hold companies accountable for their actions. (Data source: Auditor General

Rs18.64 billion in inflated bills, to address inefficiencies, such as exacerbates economic pressures Published by: Almass Ayoub Sabir from Zero Point Printers Rawalpindi