

Azad Kashmir PM vows public welfare, transparency, and strict rule of law enforcement

By Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: The Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has said that the government will take all possible steps to ensure public welfare, transparency, and the rule of law.

Addressing the Legislative Assembly session here today, the prime minister made it clear that transfers were made solely on the basis of administrative requirements.

The Prime Minister said that he has always rejected the practice of vindictive transfers adding that injustice will not be allowed to be done to anyone in future as well.

He assured that violations of rules and laws will be dealt with promptly and responsibly, wherever they occur. The Prime Minister reminded that he himself had been a part of the previous government and the highest number of additional charges were given during that period.

The Prime Minister said that efforts were currently afoot to finalize the PSC board. He said that administrative



shortcomings will be addressed in a timely manner so that better facilities can be provided to the public.

The Prime Minister said that the traffic problem in the capital Muzaffarabad is a serious challenge, for which a comprehensive strategy will be formulated.

"I will personally look into the issue of the alleged false FIR in Bhimber area raised by the former prime minister and necessary action will be taken in this regard", the PM said, adding that notice has been taken on Jatlan canal issue involving Rescue 1122.

Regarding the issue of ambulances pending in the Accountability Court, he said, a committee has been formed, which will present a workable solution to the problem within ten days. He stated that the tender for the Hijara Bypass has been awarded and work on it will begin soon.

Called on

Muzaffarabad: Ex Information Minister Sardar Abid Hussain Abid called on AJK Premier Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore and discussed public interest issues particularly Check Hospital Rawalakot and other development projects in Rawalakot constituency in Muzaffarabad.



AJK opposition leader meets Muslim Conference President to chart future strategy

By City Desk

RAWALPINDI: The Opposition Leader of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Shah Ghulam Qadir, held an important meeting with the President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, in Rawalpindi.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the prevailing political situation in Azad Kashmir, key challenges faced by the region, public issues, and future political strategy. The leaders also exchanged views on safeguarding the interests of the state, promoting democratic values, and ensuring an effective and proactive role of the opposition in protecting public rights.

Chairman of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference Youth



Wing, Sardar Usman Khan, was also present on the occasion.

Both leaders agreed to further strengthen mutual consultation and

political coordination for resolving public issues and addressing state affairs. They emphasized that joint political efforts would be pursued in

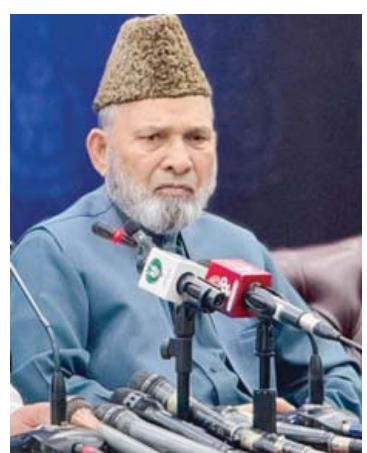
a more organized and coordinated manner in the future to serve the best interests of the people of Azad Kashmir.

Hurriyat Convener Safi Hails Jinnah as Visionary Statesman on Birth Anniversary

By Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Convener of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Ghulam Muhammad Safi, paid rich and heartfelt tribute to the Founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, on the occasion of his birth anniversary, describing him as the greatest benefactor of the Muslims of the Subcontinent and a visionary statesman of exceptional stature.

In his statement, Ghulam Muhammad Safi said that Quaid-e-Azam, through extraordinary foresight, constitutional struggle, and principled politics, transformed the dream of a free and sovereign homeland for Muslims into reality.



He emphasized that Quaid-e-Azam's leadership was marked by

tireless dedication, political wisdom, and unwavering resolve, which enabled the Muslims of the Subcontinent to emerge from subjugation, insecurity, and political marginalization as a dignified and self-respecting nation.

The Convener stated that Quaid-e-Azam's politics was firmly rooted in principles, justice, and constitutional supremacy.

He was a staunch advocate of democracy, religious freedom, and the rights of minorities. The establishment of Pakistan, he added, was not the outcome of any temporary or impulsive decision, but the result of a long, organized, and constitutional struggle, led with steadfastness and statesmanship by Quaid-e-Azam.

Foolproof security for 439 churches across Faisalabad region

FAISALABAD: The district police have completed security arrangements for Christmas celebrations here on December 25.

More than 3,400 police personnel including officers will provide security cover to 439 churches and other religious

worship places across the region.

The security personnel will be deployed in three lairs at Christmas and their surroundings.

The police spokesperson said here Wednesday that 339 Christmas rituals will be held in Faisalabad district, 9 in Jhang, 89 in Toba Tek Singh and 2 in Chiniot. Elite force and dolphin force will ensure effective patrolling on important roads, especially around the Churches.

AJK PM Honours Jinnah: Calls Him Architect of History and Geography

By Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has said that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was a great leader who changed not only the history but also the geography of the subcontinent. "Quaid-e-Azam not only defended the identity of Muslims as a separate nation but also translated this ideology into a political reality", the PM said, adding that his unwavering commitment to the cause of Pakistan, perseverance, honesty and integrity serve as a guiding light for the coming generations. In his special statement issued on the birth anniversary of the founder of Pakistan, Hazrat Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Prime Minister Rathore, while highlighting the Jinnah's visionary leadership and political foresight, said, "Mr. Jinnah had declared Kashmir as the jugular vein of Pakistan." Quaid-e-Azam always supported the Kashmiri people. Hazrat Quaid-e-Azam visited Srinagar four times and during his visits to the Valley, and expressed his love and solidarity with the Kashmiri people", the PM added. Referring to Jinnah's decision to appoint KH Khurshid as his private secretary, he said, it was a vivid manifestation of Quaid-e-Azam's trust in the Kashmiris and recognition of their capabilities. Emphasizing the deep allegiance and emotional bond of Kashmiris with Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he said that Quaid-e-Azam continues to live in their hearts.



Kashmir Struggle Continues on Principles Set by Quaid-e-Azam, Says Attique

By Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: The President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, has said that the Founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, ignited a ray of hope among the oppressed Muslims of the Subcontinent, united them as a nation, and secured for them a separate and independent homeland.



In his message on the birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan said that Pakistan was achieved under the visionary leadership of Quaid-e-Azam, and even today the people of Kashmir continue their struggle for accession to Pakistan in line with the same principles. He said that such great leaders are born once in centuries.

He further said that Pakistan is moving forward on the path envisioned by Quaid-e-Azam, and his warning has proven true that extremist Hindus would never allow Muslim minorities to live with dignity and respect. On December 25, the world witnessed the birth of the great leader who secured a separate homeland for the Muslims of the Subcontinent and is known globally as Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

DFP denounces attachment of Dr. Fai's property by Indian occupation authorities

By Abdul Majeed Tahir



SRINAGAR: Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (JKDFP) has strongly condemned the Indian occupation authorities' move to attach land belonging to a prominent US-based Kashmiri intellectual and lobbyist, Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai.

Terming it an act of vendetta, the DFP spokesman, Advocate Arshad Iqbal, said that the move

was part of a government policy aimed at silencing critical voices that have advocated the Kashmiris' just cause at the international level.

"Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai is one of the proud sons of the soil, who has long been a fearless advocate for the Kashmir cause at international forums," the spokesman said, adding that Dr. Fai is a strong proponent of Kashmiris' right to self-determination.

Such coercive acts, he said, could not deter Kashmiri activists from pursuing the collective cause for which the people have rendered unprecedented sacrifices.

Meanwhile, the spokesman also strongly condemned the dismissal of bail pleas of two sons of Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin and others by a Delhi court, terming it an age-old tactic to linger court proceedings and prolong their detention.

Jinnah's Legacy Guides Pakistan, Urges Youth Education on His Principles: Chaudhry Inaam Zafar

By City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Political and social leader Chaudhry Inaam Zafar said that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah shaped the politics of the Subcontinent through a legal and constitutional struggle, leading to the creation of Pakistan on the basis of the Two-Nation Theory, with equal rights for all citizens. He described Unity, Faith, and Discipline as the foundation of Jinnah's political thought and termed the Pakistani Armed Forces vital for national security.

Speaking on Quaid-e-Azam Day, he highlighted Jinnah's commitment to constitutional democracy, religious freedom, and the principles of justice, equality, and tolerance, as outlined in the August 11, 1947 speech. He said Quaid-e-Azam's legacy continues to guide modern Pakistan's governance and urged efforts to educate the public, particularly the youth, about his vision and the role of the armed forces.

Three dacoits arrested

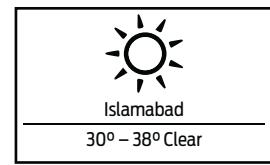
FAISALABAD: Ghulam Muhammad Abad police busted a three-member dacoit gang involved in more than one dozen of dacoity incidents here on Wednesday.



According to police spokesman, a police team conducted a raid and arrested ring leader Abdul Rehman alias Munna and accomplices Zubair and Dawood and recovered cash, cell phones and illicit weapons.

The accused were record holders and wanted by police in more than 12 dacoity cases.

Interrogation from accused in underway, however legal action has been initiated against them.


SERVICES
Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:41 am
Zohr	12:07 pm
Asr	3:27 pm
Maghrib	5:05 pm
Isha	6:34 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 &
& Rescue Services	445122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

Women Police
Stations

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Rawalpindi	9270601-20

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	921234-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	570886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8,	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8	9266316
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

Governor Punjab pays homage to Quaid-e-Azam MA Jinnah

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has said that the best way to pay tribute to the founder of Pakistan is to follow the guiding principles of faith, unity and discipline.

In a message on the eve of 149th birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he said Quaid's life is a beacon for the youth as he embodied perseverance, truth, honesty, unflinching resolve and indomitable will.

He said that under the passionate leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, our ancestors achieved a separate homeland after immense sacrifices and struggle.

The Governor Punjab said, "We should all demonstrate unity for the integrity, dignity and survival of this dear homeland."

He said, "Pakistan is a gift from Allah Almighty for us, for which we will have to maintain unity in our ranks and also put aside petty differences."

American Sikhs Pay Tribute to CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif met a seven-member delegation of "Sikhs of America," led by its Founding Chairman, Chand Hoque. During the meeting, the Chief Minister conversed with the delegation in Punjab.

The Sikh leaders appreciated her public welfare initiatives and lauded her government's significant steps for the protection and rights of minority communities.

They paid glowing tribute to the Punjab government for the implementation of the Sikh Marriage Act in the province.

The delegation also commended the peaceful organization of Christmas celebrations in Punjab and expressed satisfaction over the revival of the Punjabi language and the installation of Punjabi signboards.

The Chief Minister said that Gurdwara Kartarpur stands as Pakistan's undeniable message of peace to the world. She emphasized that the protection of Sikh heritage in Punjab is being carried out as a solemn duty and announced that the construction, renovation, and restoration of 56 historic Gurdwaras would be completed soon.

She added that repair and maintenance work on Gurdwaras across Punjab is progressing at a rapid pace to ensure that pilgrims do not face any inconvenience.

She added that historic and meaningful steps are being taken to promote religious tourism in Punjab and welcomed investment by Sikh brothers in religious tourism and the hospitality sector. She said that Pakistan seeks to project itself globally as a center of peace and interfaith harmony.

The Chief Minister reaffirmed that, like Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, respect for and support of the Sikh community remain among the government's top priorities, adding that every citizen of Punjab holds the global Sikh community close to his heart. She concluded by saying that the land of Punjab continues to emanate respect and love.



Ahlan Wa Sahlan Marhaba

ISLAMABAD: A view of the National Flags of Portrait of the President of Pakistan, PM of Pakistan and President of UAE along the Constitution Avenue during the preparation to welcome the President of the UAE Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who landing to Pakistan on Wednesday.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Russian Ambassador Briefs Future Pakistani Diplomats on Bilateral Ties and Ukraine Conflict

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Khorev informed future Pakistani diplomats about the key milestones of Russia-Pakistan relations and the current developments in bilateral dialogue. He noted that the two countries have achieved significant progress in political and economic cooperation.

The Ambassador also updated the students on the situation in and around Ukraine, focusing on the root causes of the Ukrainian crisis



and the destructive role of Western countries in destabilizing the Eurasian region.

In conclusion, Ambassador Khorev wished the future Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs employees success in diplomacy and service to their motherland.

Together with the Director General of the Foreign Service Academy, Syed Ali Asad Gillani, the Russian Ambassador took part in a tree-planting ceremony on the grounds of the educational institution.

Punjab Govt. Prioritizes Quality Healthcare: Dr. Ehsan Bhutta

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Provision of quality healthcare to patients is the top priority of the Punjab Government, said Secretary/ Chief Administrator Auqaf Punjab Dr. Ehsan Bhutta during his surprise visit to the Data Darbar Hospital. He stated that these initiatives are being undertaken in line with the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz and under the guidance of Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman, reflecting the government's strong commitment to strengthening public welfare institutions across the province. Dr. Ehsan Bhutta conducted a detailed inspection of medical facilities, administrative affairs, and sanitation arrangements, visited various wards, and interacted with patients and their attendants to listen to their concerns



regarding treatment.

He issued strict instructions to the hospital management to ensure cleanliness, discipline, staff attendance, and uninterrupted availability of medicines, while setting a seven-day deadline to improve overall hospital affairs. He

also directed the Director Projects to complete renovation and essential repair works within one month, emphasizing that no negligence in the health sector would be tolerated. Dr. Ehsan Bhutta further stressed that Data Darbar Hospital is a vital

welfare facility for devotees and the local community, adding that regular monitoring and surprise inspections would continue to ensure sustained improvement, as sincere service to humanity remains the cornerstone of a welfare-oriented society.

Faith, Unity, Discipline: Key to Pakistan's Prosperity, Says Ibrahim Murad on Quaid Day

Bureau Report


LAHORE: Former Provincial Minister and Chairman & President of the University of Management and Technology (UMT), Ibrahim Hasan Murad on the occasion of Quaid-e-Azam Day, stated that the golden principles of Faith, Unity and Discipline, envisioned by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, continue to serve as the strongest foundation for Pakistan's national development, stability and prosperity. He said that Quaid-e-Azam Day conveys a powerful message of national unity, collective responsibility and a renewed sense of duty.

The former Provincial Minister emphasized that Pakistan's bright future is closely linked with the quality education, training and character-building of the youth. He said that only by equipping young people with knowledge, skills and strong moral values can a strong, dignified and stable Pakistan be built. Quaid-e-Azam, he added, taught the nation to become responsible, principled and law-abiding citizens and by adhering to these principles, the formation of an exemplary nation becomes possible.

Ibrahim Murad concluded by saying that the principles laid down by Quaid-e-Azam are the true guarantee of Pakistan's strength, dignity and sustainable stability. On this Quaid-e-Azam Day, he urged the nation to pay tribute to the Founder of Pakistan and to renew its collective resolve for the country's progress, prosperity and stability, so that Quaid-e-Azam's dream may be translated into reality.

Investor Confidence on The Rise as CBD Punjab concludes another successful auction

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), has demonstrated strong investor confidence by successfully conducting another high-value commercial auction in Lahore Downtown. The auction of a 4.56-kanal mixed-use commercial plot marks yet another milestone in CBD Punjab's ongoing efforts to accelerate economic growth and promote planned urban development in Punjab.

The auction was conducted in a transparent and competitive manner, attracting participation from the private sector. The process was chaired by Chief Operating Officer CBD Punjab, Brigadier (R) Mansoor Janjua, ensuring strict adherence to merit and regulatory standards.

Following a transparent process, Atlas Engineering Private Limited emerged as the highest bidder, securing the premium plot at a rate of Rs 301 million per kanal, reflecting growing commercial value and strategic importance of Lahore Downtown as a prime investment destination in CBD Punjab. The successful bid underscores the private sector's trust in CBD Punjab's vision, planning standards and delivery capacity.

Speaking on the occasion, COO CBD Punjab Brigadier (R) Mansoor Janjua said, "The consistent success of CBD Punjab's auctions reflects robust investor confidence in our master-planned developments. These transparent auctions are not only unlocking the true commercial potential of Lahore Downtown but are also contributing directly to Punjab's economic growth, job creation and sustainable urban expansion..."

RPO Faisalabad Deploys 3,400 Officers for Tight Christmas Security

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: On the orders of RPO Faisalabad Sohail Akhtar Sukhera, security arrangements have been completed across the region for Christmas. More than 3,400 officers and personnel will be on duty for the security of 439 religious rituals for Christmas across the region. Regarding Christmas, 339 religious rituals will be held in District Faisalabad, 9 in District Jhang, 89 in District Toba Tek Singh and 2 in District Chiniot. Security duty will be deployed in three levels for Christmas. Security arrangements will be made foolproof across the region for Christmas. On the occasion of Christmas, the Christian community will be able to perform their religious rituals in a peaceful environment. Elite force troops will ensure effective surveillance on important highways and especially around churches.



Group Chairman/Chief Editor: Almass Ayoub Sabir
 Vice Chairman: Asim Nazir Ahmad
 Editor: Naveed Ahmad Khan
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: Amjad Mehmood
 Bureau Chief Karachi: Khurram Jaffrani (jaffrani@adplus.pk)
 Bureau Chief Lahore: Syed Afraz Ali Nazish (afrazalishah@gmail.com)
Head Office: AIMS Building, Street No. 4, H-8/1, Islamabad. spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
Phone: +92 51 2227123, **WhatsApp** +92 346 5008408
Karachi Office: A111, Block C, Gulsha-e-Jamal, PRECHS, Karachi Phone: 021-33399390 Email: spokesmankarachi@gmail.com
Lahore Office: 7-E, Samanberg, Johar Town. spokesmanlahore@gmail.com
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Pakistan Railways Faces Pension Liability Crisis Despite Revenue Turnaround

The National Assembly Standing Committee on Parliamentary Affairs Wednesday urged the Pakistan Railways (PR) for the development of a sustainable model for providing relief to pensioners, including all beneficiaries covered under the Prime Minister's package.

The meeting was chaired by its Chairman, MNA Rana Idris Sharif Khan, who highlighted that such a sustainable model should ensure long-term financial viability while safeguarding the welfare and entitlements of all concerned pensioners.

Member Finance Railway briefed the committee that Pakistan Railways (PR), an attached department of the Railways Division, was the only government department that pays pensions to its retired employees from its own resources.

He further apprised the committee that the Pakistan Railways (PR) was facing substantial and rapidly growing pension liabilities i.e. Commutation, Leave Encashment, Prime Minister's Assistance Package and Benevolent Fund related claims without a dedicated pension fund. Pension expenditure has grown at a rate significantly higher than operational revenues, placing persistent pressure on the budget of Pakistan Railways and constraining investment in core railway operations. Pakistan Railways (PR) has been undertaking operational and financial reforms aimed at improving revenue generation, controlling expenditures, and reducing dependence on government support.

He said that Pakistan Railways (PR) has demonstrated a gradual but sustained improvement in its financial and operating performance. The operating performance of PR shows a significant turnaround. Revenue increased from Rs. 48,649 billion in FY 2020-21 to Rs. 93,601 billion in FY 2024-25. Operating losses of Rs. 8,196 billion in FY 2020-21 and Rs. 8,460 billion in FY 2022-23 were reversed to an operating surplus of Rs. 0.412 billion in FY 2023-24, which further improved to Rs. 2.417 billion in FY 2024-25. This improvement reflects enhanced operational efficiency and expenditure control.

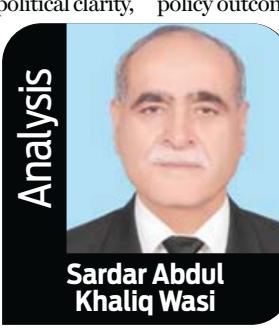
The additional Secretary finance briefed the committee that despite fiscal constraint, considerable budgetary allocation has been consistently provided to Pakistan Railways which amounts to Rs. 70 bn in Current Fiscal Year. The annual pension expense of Pakistan Railways is lower than the grant provided by the Government during the preceding years and that, during 2022-23 & 2023-24, an additional grant of Rs. 2.5 bn and Rs. 2 bn respectively was also arranged by Finance Division to help Pakistan Railways to clear its pension backlog. Therefore, the accumulation of arrears of pension should have been avoided.

December 25: A Shared Birthdate, Two Defining Leadership Journeys

December 25 stands as one of the most profound dates in Pakistan's national history—a day inseparably linked with leadership, vision, and destiny. It marks the birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, whose constitutional foresight, political clarity, and unwavering resolve transformed the dream of a separate homeland into reality. Quaid-e-Azam's life symbolizes discipline, rule of law, democratic governance, and economic self-respect—principles that continue to define Pakistan's ideological foundations. That this very date includes Quaid's 149th birthday also marks the birth of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, not merely a coincidence of the calendar, but a symbolic continuity of leadership across generations. December 25 thus connects the birth of a nation's founder with the emergence of a modern statesman whose political journey has been deeply rooted in strengthening the state, stabilizing democracy, and advancing national development.

His formal entry into politics in the early 1980s coincided with a phase when Pakistan urgently needed economic direction and administrative coherence. As Finance Minister and later Chief Minister of Punjab, Nawaz Sharif focused on industrial revival, infrastructure expansion, and governance efficiency. These early experiences shaped his understanding of statecraft and laid the foundation for what would later become his defining hallmark as Prime Minister: development-driven governance rooted in economic self-reliance.

Serving as Prime Minister on three occasions, Nawaz Sharif articulated a clear and consistent



Analysis
Sardar Abdul Khalil Wasi

political philosophy. At its core lay the belief that political sovereignty is incomplete without economic strength, and that nations command respect through development, stability, and institutional maturity. This worldview distinguished his leadership from populist or reactionary models and translated into tangible policy outcomes across successive tenures.

Few civilian leaders in Pakistan's history have left such a visible imprint on infrastructure development. The motorway network—initiated during his first tenure and expanded later—revolutionized internal connectivity, trade mobility, and regional integration. These were not mere roads but strategic economic arteries designed to reduce regional disparities and stimulate commerce. Energy projects, urban mass transit systems, and industrial zones followed the same logic: development as the engine of national progress.

Equally significant was his commitment to economic liberalization and privatization. At a time when inefficient state-owned enterprises were draining national resources, Nawaz Sharif pursued market-oriented reforms to enhance efficiency and attract investment. While debated, history increasingly recognizes that these policies aligned Pakistan with global economic practices and modernized key sectors of the economy.

On the strategic front, Nawaz Sharif demonstrated decisive statesmanship during the defining moment of 1998, when Pakistan conducted nuclear tests under immense international pressure. This decision cemented Pakistan's status as a nuclear power, strengthened national deterrence, and reinforced public confidence in civilian leadership acting firmly in the

national interest.

During his third term, Nawaz Sharif further expanded Pakistan's strategic horizon by laying the foundation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Envisioned as a long-term partnership, CPEC aimed to overcome chronic energy shortages, infrastructure deficits, and connectivity challenges. Today, it remains a cornerstone of Pakistan's economic planning and regional integration.

Beyond policies and projects, Nawaz Sharif's political wisdom is reflected in his consistent advocacy for constitutional supremacy, civilian governance, and institutional balance. His political journey—marked by setbacks, disqualifications, and comebacks—illustrates patience and faith in democratic struggle rather than retreat or confrontation.

For his followers, Nawaz Sharif's politics has never been about personal glorification. It has been about building systems that outlast individuals—roads that connect generations, power plants that sustain industry, and institutions that anchor governance. Even outside office, his influence continues through ideas, mentorship, and strategic guidance.

Today, his political vision is carried forward through continuity rather than symbolism. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif reflects administrative discipline and crisis management at the federal level, while Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif represents a reform-oriented, development-focused leadership in Punjab.

As an architect of Pakistan's development-centric politics and a statesman shaped by experience and restraint, Nawaz Sharif occupies a distinct place in contemporary history. His legacy stands not as a chapter closed, but as a living continuum—guiding Pakistan's democratic journey in the spirit of December 25, a day forever associated with leadership, vision, and national purpose.

Quaid's Vision, Modern Might: Pak-China Warrior IX Military Drill Signals Pakistan's Growing Strategic Confidence

The Pakistan-China partnership, established in 1951, has evolved into a uniquely resilient "All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership" grounded in mutual security interests, regional stability, and long-term strategic alignment. Beginning with Pakistan's early recognition of the People's Republic of China, the relationship has strengthened across decades through consistent political cooperation, expanding economic ties, and deeply rooted defense collaboration. This trust intensified after the 1960s, when Western arms embargoes pushed Pakistan toward China as its primary and most reliable defense partner. Over time, foundational agreements and sustained military cooperation—extending even to nuclear assistance in the 1990s—cemented the relationship as one of exceptional strategic depth and reliability.

In recent decades, the partnership has advanced far beyond arms procurement into comprehensive co-production and co-development programs, exemplified by the JF-17 Thunder fighter aircraft and extensive naval cooperation, including fast attack craft, frigates, and submarines. China has also become a major supplier of advanced artillery and air defense systems, enabling Pakistan to expand its technological capabilities and operational readiness. Economically, the launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has transformed the relationship into one of deep structural interdependence. As a flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative, CPEC links Gwadar Port with Xinjiang through a vast network of energy, transport, and

digital infrastructure, reshaping Pakistan's economic landscape while giving China a secure and direct trade route to the Arabian Sea. This blend of military, economic, and infrastructural integration has elevated the partnership to a level of enduring strategic significance for both nations.

Further providing a tangible, practical, and highly visible demonstration of their enduring defense ties, strategic alignment, and shared, non-negotiable commitment to effectively battling contemporary and highly complex security challenges, including the persistent regional threat of cross-border terrorism

and extremism that plagues the region, the specialized and highly trained forces of the Pakistan Army and the elite contingents of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China, specifically drawn from the strategically important Western Theater Command, have recently and successfully started their flagship, high-intensity joint military exercise, appropriately code-named, "Warrior-IX," marking the highly significant ninth edition in this crucial, annually held series of bilateral counter-terrorism drills, an exercise which is officially commenced and rigorously executing at the sophisticated, high-tech facilities of the National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC), strategically located in Pabbi, which is widely recognized as one of South Asia's premier specialized counterterrorism training facilities, the

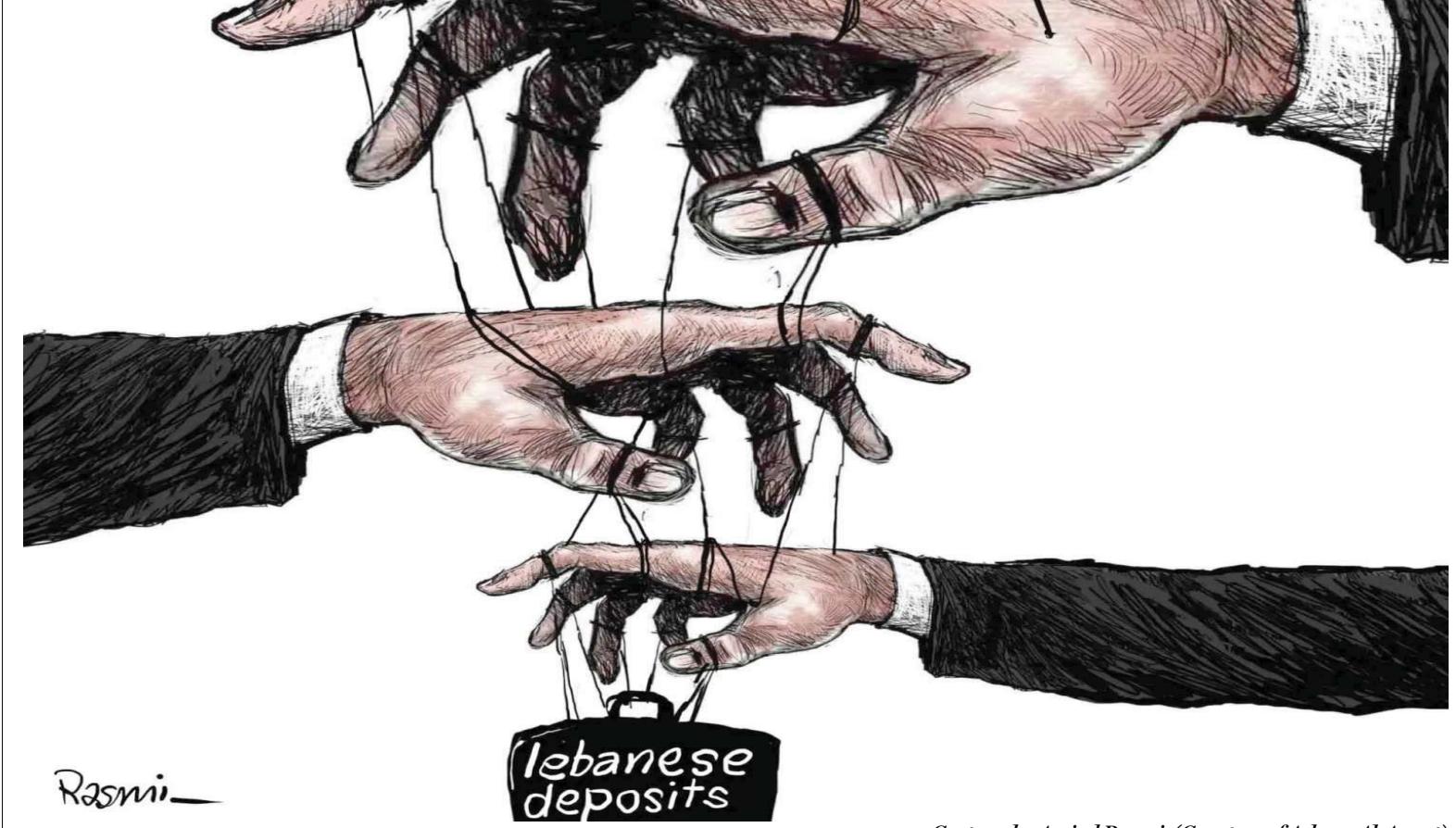
very selection of which location reflects the two nations' deep, joint dedication to actively maintaining regional peace and stability in an increasingly complex and strategically volatile regional environment. This highly focused exercise, which will run for several intensive weeks from late November through to the middle of December, will concentrate its intensive, demanding training

efforts on the complex and highly relevant subject of "joint anti-terrorist elimination and suppression operations," utilizing highly realistic, real-world simulated scenarios and highly advanced counter-terrorism tactics that are meticulously

designed to rigorously test and significantly enhance the participants' skills in complex urban warfare, hostage rescue, close-quarters combat, and targeted strikes; the entire training regimen is purposefully structured with the clear, primary, and measurable aim of significantly enhancing technical and tactical interoperability between the specialized contingents and task forces of both militaries in highly dynamic, complex joint operational scenarios, simultaneously and vigorously working to hone the professional skills of the participating soldiers through highly rigorous, specialized training and to actively promote the crucial, two-way exchange of advanced warfare techniques, cutting-edge technologies, and proven best practices to ensure both allied forces are maximally equipped to effectively counter

the complex, continually evolving, and transnational threat of terrorism and internal insurgency in the broader region. The highly successful and collaborative conduct of Exercise Warrior-IX therefore stands as a powerful, unambiguous, and practical testament to the robust, reliable, and continually deepening military-to-military relations and the continued, unwavering strategic alignment between these two Iron Clad Brothers, emphatically reaffirming their deep mutual trust and their shared, unshakeable commitment to proactively fostering and ensuring long-term regional security, building upon a foundational partnership that has consistently, reliably, and strategically proven its remarkable resilience, undeniable value, and enduring relevance across multiple decades and through numerous complex geopolitical shifts and security challenges.

In line with Quaid-e-Azam's vision of building Pakistan into a modern and powerful state, the Pak-China Warrior IX military drill reflects the country's growing strategic confidence. Through close coordination with its iron-clad friend China, Pakistan has emerged as a strong and resilient nation, fully aligned with the true ideals of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The deepening Pak-China defence partnership continues to reinforce Quaid's Pakistan by enhancing national security and stability. On the occasion of Quaid-e-Azam's birthday this year, Pakistan stands renewed—equipped with robust and foolproof defence capabilities that inspire confidence and satisfaction among its people.



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

True identity of nations

The true identity of nations is not revealed in times of comfort and luxury, but in the moments of hardship and trial. During prosperity, peace, and stability, every society appears organized, united, and strong. Yet, when storms rise when injustice, poverty, oppression, or external threats surround a people then the true character of a nation is tested. It is in these moments of darkness that one can see whether a nation is built upon mere slogans or upon moral courage, endurance, and sacrifice.

History bears witness that all great nations have defined their greatness through trials. When the Roman Empire faced invasions, when Japan was devastated by atomic bombs, when Germany was reduced to ruins, or when the early Muslims were tested by persecution and migration from Makkah these were the turning points that revealed their true strength. The nations that endured with faith, discipline, and unity rose again with greater power and dignity. Japan, after the Second World War, emerged from ashes to become an industrial giant through sheer willpower and discipline. Germany turned its humiliation into triumph through knowledge and perseverance. The Muslims, through the patience of migration and the courage at Badr, set an eternal example of faith and steadfastness.

The destiny of nations lies in the hands of individuals; Each individual is a shining star in the nation's fate."

This means that the rise and fall of a nation depend upon the character of its people. If individuals become weak, selfish, or corrupt, the entire nation suffers decline.

In times of trial, the real test of a nation lies

in its leadership, institutions, and people. Are the leaders honest and selfless? Are the institutions strong, fair, and accountable? Are the citizens willing to sacrifice personal comfort for the common good? If the answer is yes, that nation emerges from crisis even stronger than before. If not, trials become the cause of its destruction. Hence, civilized nations convert crises into opportunities, while weak nations collapse under their weight.

This saying is profoundly relevant to today's Pakistan. Inflation, insecurity, political chaos, economic hardship, and moral decline have surrounded us from all sides. Yet, if we unite, restore integrity and justice, and revive the spirit of hard work and sacrifice, these very trials can become our new beginning. Nations are not recognized in moments of ease, but in the depth of adversity. If we learn to light a candle of hope in this darkness, it can become the dawn of a brighter future.

Moments of trial serve as mirrors in which nations see their true reflection. They test the purity of a nation's character. If people respond to hardship with blame, fear, and hopelessness, they lose their moral right to exist. But if they embrace patience, unity, and sacrifice, they rise to become an example for generations to come. History remembers only those nations that prove themselves in times of trial.

Therefore, one must remember this timeless truth: the glory of nations is not built in comfort but forged in the fire of struggle, sacrifice, and faith. Trials strengthen the foundations of a nation. Those who have the courage to walk through darkness are the ones who deserve the light of a new dawn. That is the essence of the saying: "Nations are not known by their moments of comfort, but by their darkness of trial."



Analysis
Muhammad Asif

political philosophy. At its core lay the belief that political sovereignty is incomplete without economic strength, and that nations command respect through development, stability, and institutional maturity. This worldview distinguished his leadership from populist or reactionary models and translated into tangible policy outcomes across successive tenures.

Few civilian leaders in Pakistan's history have left such a visible imprint on infrastructure development. The motorway network—initiated during his first tenure and expanded later—revolutionized internal connectivity, trade mobility, and regional integration. These were not mere roads but strategic economic arteries designed to reduce regional disparities and stimulate commerce. Energy projects, urban mass transit systems, and industrial zones followed the same logic: development as the engine of national progress.

Equally significant was his commitment to economic liberalization and privatization.

At a time when inefficient state-owned enterprises were draining national resources, Nawaz Sharif pursued market-oriented reforms to enhance efficiency and attract investment.

While debated, history increasingly recognizes that these policies aligned Pakistan with global economic practices and modernized key sectors of the economy.

On the strategic front, Nawaz Sharif demonstrated decisive statesmanship during the defining moment of 1998, when Pakistan conducted nuclear tests under immense international pressure. This decision cemented Pakistan's status as a nuclear power, strengthened national deterrence, and reinforced public confidence in civilian leadership acting firmly in the

national interest.

During his third term, Nawaz Sharif further expanded Pakistan's strategic horizon by laying the foundation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Envisioned as a long-term partnership, CPEC aimed to overcome chronic energy shortages, infrastructure deficits, and connectivity challenges. Today, it remains a cornerstone of Pakistan's economic planning and regional integration.

Beyond policies and projects, Nawaz Sharif's political wisdom is reflected in his consistent advocacy for constitutional supremacy, civilian governance, and institutional balance.

His political journey—marked by setbacks, disqualifications, and comebacks—illustrates patience and faith in democratic struggle rather than retreat or confrontation.

For his followers, Nawaz Sharif's politics has never been about personal glorification. It has been about building systems that outlast individuals—roads that connect generations, power plants that sustain industry, and institutions that anchor governance. Even outside office, his influence continues through ideas, mentorship, and strategic guidance.

Today, his political vision is carried forward through continuity rather than symbolism. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif reflects administrative discipline and crisis management at the federal level, while Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif represents a reform-oriented, development-focused leadership in Punjab.

As an architect of Pakistan's development-centric politics and a statesman shaped by experience and restraint, Nawaz Sharif occupies a distinct place in contemporary history. His legacy stands not as a chapter closed, but as a living continuum—guiding Pakistan's democratic journey in the spirit of December 25, a day forever associated with leadership, vision, and national purpose.

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IS 9th Media Forum

Pakistan and China Pledge United Front Against Disinformation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-China Institute (PCI), in collaboration with China Economic Net and Embassy of Peoples Republic of China organized the 9th CPEC Media Forum, bringing together senior Pakistani and Chinese officials, diplomats, media leaders, and representatives of Chinese enterprises to reinforce media collaboration around CPEC 2.0, promote fact-based narrative building, and respond to rising challenges of misinformation,

disinformation, and "fake news" targeting Pakistan-China cooperation.

Attaullah Tarar, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, traced his long engagement with Pakistan-China relations "as a student, as a bureaucrat, and now as a minister," describing himself as "a product" of exchange programs between IDCPC and PMLN and portraying the relationship as a lived national story passed through families. He said Pakistan's bond with China is unique, asserting that while others

may claim strong ties, "no other country can claim that they are iron brothers or sisters."

Dr. Shezra Mansab Ali Kharal, Minister of State for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, shared reflections from her recent visit to China as a Dong Feng Scholar, describing it as a period in which she "learned a lot" and gained deeper insight into "the people of China" and their growing focus on "building bridges."

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman, Pakistan-China



Institute, framed the forum within a broader strategic moment for Pakistan's external relations, referencing his recent travel to Moscow.

Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, Ambassador of China to Paki-

stan, Zheng Qingdong, President and Editor-in-Chief of Economic Daily, Yang Chunyan, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Foreign Languages Press, Hu Pingping, Journalist & Associate Senior

Translator, Asia-Africa Language Programs Center, China Media Group, Hamid Mir, Senior Journalist (Geo News), Mohammad Malick, Senior Journalist (ARY News), Liu Yonggang, Acting

Chief Executive Officer, CSAIL (China Three Gorges South Asia Investment Limited, C-SAIL) and Mustafa Hyder Sayed, Executive Director, PCI also speak on the occasion.

Rawalpindi Business Chamber hosts Ambassador Dr. Oumer Oba for Business Talks

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: H. E. Dr. Oumer Hussein Oba, Ambassador-designate of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, paid a maiden visit to the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) on Wednesday to discuss bilateral cooperation, and highlight extraordinary investment opportunities within Ethiopia's flourishing economic sectors.

The meeting covered a broad range of issues, including trade, investment, institutional linkages, and future collaborations. Both sides discussed mechanisms for seamless cooperation to further strengthen bilateral relations between the two nations.

Addressing the business gathering representing various economic sectors of Pakistan, the Ambassador



briefed them on the home-grown economic reforms undertaken by the Ethiopian government. These reforms have created massive business opportunities in five primary sectors including agriculture and agro-processing, manufacturing, mining, tourism, and ICT, he added.

The Ambassador also urged the business community to participate in the high-level "Invest in Ethiopia" forum, scheduled for

March 26-27, 2026 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The event is expected to bring together over 700 international investors, policymakers, and development partners from across the globe.

He assured the RCCI that the Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad would provide full support to Pakistani businesses looking to explore the untapped potential of bilateral economic relations.

H. E. Usman Shaukat, President of the RCCI,

welcomed the Ambassador and highlighted the growing cooperation between the Embassy and the Chamber. He emphasized that people-to-people relations are the key drivers of economic diplomacy, requiring a concentrated focus from both sides to bring the two nations closer.

The President further highlighted the immense potential for trade and investment, praising the economic development achieved by Ethiopia under the leadership of Prime Minister H. E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed.

Senior Vice President Mr. Khalid Farooq Qazi, Vice President Mr. Fahad Barlas, and Former President Mr. Raja Amer also spoke regarding the future of Ethiopia-Pakistan relations. The discussion concluded with a Q&A session and a cake-cutting ceremony organized by the RCCI to celebrate Christmas.

PIDE Examines Pakistan's Shift to Outcome-Based Education

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) convened a policy seminar to examine Pakistan's transition to a Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) based curriculum and assessment system, with a particular focus on how national policy frameworks are being implemented in classrooms across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). The seminar explored why outcome-based reforms, despite being fully operational in examinations, continue to face significant challenges at the teaching and learning level.

The seminar was moderated by Dr. Faheem Jehangir, Dean (Policy), PIDE/PD, and RASTA, who steered the discussion toward the broader policy relevance of education reforms and their implications for human capital development and long-term economic outcomes.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Aliya Khalid, Senior Departmental Lecturer at the Department of Education, University of Oxford, and Principal Investigator of a multi-year research project on SLO implementation in Pakistan. Drawing on interna-

tional literature and Pakistan-specific evidence, Dr. Khalid explained that SLO-based reforms are part of a global movement aimed at shifting education systems away from rote memorization toward conceptual understanding, skills development, and application of knowledge.

Adding to the discussion, Dr. Nadeem Javaid, Vice Chancellor PIDE, stressed that education reforms must be firmly rooted in Pakistan's contextual realities rather than relying on imported frameworks. He

noted that teaching culture, parental expectations, language policy, and entrenched power dynamics significantly influence classroom practices, often shaping how reforms are absorbed or resisted.

The discussion was led by Dr. Ahsan Ul Haq Satti, Associate Professor and Director of the Center for Economic Modeling and Data Analytics (CEMDA) at PIDE, who commended the study for shifting the reform debate from policy intent to policy experience.

Financial sector faced AI, blockchain and organized crime threats in 2025, Kaspersky reports

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Kaspersky Security Bulletin provides a review of the major cybersecurity trends of the year and offers a look towards the future of cybersecurity, focusing on the financial sector in its first part. According to the report, in 2025, the financial sector navigated a rapidly evolving cyber landscape, with malware spreading through messaging apps, AI-assisted attacks, supply chain compromises, and NFC-based fraud.

Based on Kaspersky Security Network statistics for the year (from November 2024 to October 2025), 8.15% of users in the finance sector faced online threats and 15.81% faced local (on-device) threats. 1,338,357 banking trojan attacks were detected by the company's solutions. 12.8%

of B2B finance sector companies faced ransomware this year – that marks a 35.7% increase in unique users in 2025 compared to the same period of 2024.

The company's experts highlight the following cybersecurity trends and cases shaping the financial sector in 2025. The financial sector faced a series of unprecedented supply chain attacks, which are incidents that exploit vulnerabilities in third-party providers to reach their primary targets. Secondly,

organized crime is increasingly combining physical and digital methods, creating more sophisticated and coordinated attacks.

Financial institutions faced threats that blend social engineering, insider manipulation, and technical exploitation.

Cybercriminals increasingly exploit popular messaging apps

to spread malware, shifting from email phishing to social channels. This year, AI-enabled malware has increasingly incorporated automated propagation and evasion techniques, allowing attacks to spread faster and reach a larger number of targets. This automation also shortens the time between malware creation and deployment.

Android malware using ATs (Automated Transfer System) techniques automate fraudulent transactions, altering transfer amounts and recipients in real time without the user noticing. NFC-based attacks have also emerged as a key trend, enabling both physical fraud in crowded places and remote fraud via social engineering and fake apps mimicking trusted banks.

Crimeware attackers increasingly embed malware commands

in blockchain smart contracts, targeting Web3 to steal cryptocurrencies. This method ensures persistence and makes the infrastructure extremely difficult to remove. Using blockchain for C2 operations allows attackers to maintain control even if conventional servers are shut down, highlighting a new level of resilience in cyberattacks.

Ransomware attacks remained a persistent threat for the financial sector with 12.8% of B2B finance organizations affected in November 2024 through October 2025.

In 2025, financial cyber threats evolved into a complex landscape, with attacks hitting businesses and end users alike. Criminal groups increasingly combined digital tools, insider access, AI and blockchain to scale operations, forcing organizations

to secure not only their systems but also the human networks that support them," said Fabio Assolini, Head of the Americas & Europe units at Kaspersky GReAT.

Kaspersky predictions for what finance cybersecurity might face in 2026 include that criminal groups will increasingly rewrite and scale banking trojans distribution and abuse messaging apps like WhatsApp to target corporate and government organizations that still rely on desktop-based online banking. The trade in realistic deepfakes and AI-powered

campaigns is expected to expand even more, fueling scams around job interviews and offers, driving underground demand for tools that fully bypass Know Your Customer (KYC) verification.

As Lumma, Redline and other

stealers are still active, Kaspersky

expect to see the appearance of regional info stealers, targeting specific countries or regions, expanding the use of malware-as-a-service model. NFC as a key technology used in payments, Kaspersky expected to see more tools, more malware and attacks directed against NFC payments, in all types. Fraud will remain a major threat to end users, but its delivery methods will keep

evolving. The threat of counterfeit smart devices sold already infected with trojans (such as Triada) will continue to evolve.

Kaspersky experts recommend monitoring accounts and transactions regularly for suspicious activity. Disable NFC when not in use, and utilize wallets that block unauthorized communication.

Protect your financial transactions by adopting Kaspersky Premium with the Safe Money

feature, which verifies the authenticity of known online payment systems and banking websites.

Financial organizations can embrace an ecosystem-based cybersecurity strategy that unites people, processes, and technology. Deploy integrated platforms to monitor and control all attack vectors with rapid detection and swift response across the organization. Solutions from the Kaspersky Next product line can help with this goal, as they provide real-time protection, threat visibility, investigation, and EDR/XDR capabilities scalable to organizations of any size and in any industry.

Stay current with the threat landscape using Kaspersky threat intelligence. To learn more about relevant cybersecurity solutions to mitigate risks, financial organizations can visit the website.



Hashoo Foundation, UNODC Lead Second Pitch Fest Transforming Gulibagh into a SMaRT Village

In a landmark celebration of youth innovation and social impact, Hashoo Foundation (HF), in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), and with financial support from the European Union (EU), proudly hosted its second Pitch Fest, spotlighting youth-led social enterprises developed by young Agents of Change at the Social Lab, Swat, under the Partnerships for Change Project-Phase II.

Following the resounding success of the Pitch Fest of Cohort I, the second Pitch Fest

provided 16 exceptional Agents of Change from Cohort II a platform to present their community-driven social enterprises to an audience of local administration, regional entrepreneurs and innovators, each presenting community-focused social enterprises addressing pressing local challenges. The start-ups, ranging from cultural preservation and livelihood creation to sports-based youth engagement, demonstrated the extraordinary potential of social entrepreneurship to counter extremism, foster belonging, and advance sustainable peace, transforming the selected community of Gulibagh,

into a SMaRT (Sustainable Methods and Resilient Technologies) village. Each idea was evaluated for viability, creativity, and measurable social impact, underscoring the catalytic role of youth-led solutions in community transformation.

Acknowledging HF's role, Dr. Muhammad Qasim Khan, Director General KPCVE commended how the project created much-needed NGO-academia-industry linkages. He noted that when universities, civil society organizations, and industry collaborate to empower youth, they create a condu-

tive environment for meaningful and sustainable impact. Emphasizing the importance of such initiatives in fostering long-term peace and stability in fragile economies, he further highlighted the model's scalability for the wider province, and even across Pakistan, as a blueprint for sustainable, community-driven development.

Echoing this vision, Mahwish Afridi, Project Lead, Hashoo Foundation, noted: "The Social Lab continues to prove that when youth, especially those belonging to peripheral regions, are empowered with knowledge, mentorship, and resources, they become architects of meaningful change. These social enterprises reflect Hashoo Foundation's commitment to inclusive growth, community ownership, and sustainable peacebuilding."

Implemented on ground by Hashoo Foundation in partnership with the University of Swat and KPCVE, the initiative builds on the Foundation's flagship Social Lab and its award-winning SMaRT Village model. Under the Education 4.0 framework, youth participants received future-ready technical and soft skills training, along with procuring necessary equipment and machinery to implement their social enterprises in the selected community of Gulibagh, transforming it into a SMaRT Village.



Emphasizing the importance of such initiatives in fostering

Current	Prev. Close
170,830.22	171,073.73
Day's High	Day's Low
171,587.32	170,641.13
Index Value	Change
19,822,559,750	-243.51
Percentage	Time
-0.14%	24 Dec, 2025 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	Change
9,870.68	-18.54
Percentage	Time
-0.19%	24 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	Change
48,716.54	+274.13
Percentage	Time
+0.57%	24 Dec, 12:18 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	Change
50,344.10	-68.77
Percentage	Time
+0.14%	24 Dec, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	187	190
Bahrain Dinar	743.95	753.95
Canadian Dollar	204	207.5
China Yuan	39.39	39.79
Danish Krone	43.81	44.21
Euro	331	334.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.8	36.15
Indian Rupee	3.02	3.11
Japanese Yen	1.7850	1.8850
Kuwaiti Dinar	911.9	921.9
Malaysian Ringgit	67.75	68.35
New Zealand \$	161.43	163.43
Norwegian Krone	27.6	27.90
Omani Riyal	729.1	739.1
Qatari Riyal	76.47	77.17
Saudi Riyal	74.85	75.5
Singapore Dollar	217.25	222.25
Swedish Korona	30.11	30.41
Swiss Franc	351.34	354.09
Thai Bhat	8.73	8.88
U.A.E Dirham	76.6	77.45
UK Pound Sterling	379.5	383
US Dollar	281.05	283.1

Transparent Privatization Process of PIA Will Attract More Investment in the Country, Malik Bostan

Commerce Desk



KARACHI: Malik Mohammad Bostan, Chairman of the Exchange Association of Pakistan, the representative body of money changers in Pakistan, has hailed the government's transparent process of privatizing PIA (Pakistan International Airlines), calling it a positive step for the better future of the country. He stated that the country's economy is undoubtedly moving towards stability, and the continued transparent privatization of PIA will bring more investment into Pakistan. He expressed happiness over the possibility of the military fertilizer sector joining the Arif Habib Consortium. He further added that the policies, laws, and procedures set by the government were strictly followed, and international best practices were implemented for the privatization process. As a result, the transparent privatization process has been completed, and it is hoped that the Cabinet will approve the privatization of PIA without delay.

Malik Mohammad Bostan congratulated Arif Habib, the head of the successful bidder Arif Habib Consortium, for securing 75% shares in the privatization process, and praised the government for completing the first phase of privatization in a transparent and speedy manner. He mentioned that all the business entities involved in the privatization process had strong reputations and trustworthiness. He also appreciated the personal efforts of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in achieving this milestone in the privatization of the national airline. According to Bostan, the government's trust in the business community will yield positive and long-term results.

Chairman NAB addresses anti-bribery awareness seminar at UMT

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The University of Management and Technology (UMT), in collaboration with the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Lahore, organized an Anti-Bribery Awareness Seminar. Chairman NAB, Lt. Gen. (R) Nazir Ahmed, attended the seminar as the Chief Guest.

The event was attended by Director General NAB Lahore, Mirza Faran Baig, former Provincial Minister and President UMT, Ibrahim Hasan Murad; Rector UMT, Dr. Asif Raza; Chief Advisor Lt. Gen. (R) Javed Hasan; along with senior NAB officers. A large number of students and faculty members participated in the seminar.

During his welcome address, President UMT Ibrahim Hasan Murad stated that youth are the future of the nation and their moral development is a critical need of the time. He emphasized that integrity and transparency form the foundation of strong national leadership and he added



that the complete elimination of bribery and corruption is essential for sustainable national

development. He also appreciated NAB's role in ensuring the rule of law and effective accountability.

DG NAB Lahore Mirza Faran Baig highlighted that NAB Lahore is actively implementing preventive initiatives, including awareness seminars, engagement with educational institutions and an effective complaint redressal mechanism, which have produced encouraging results.

In his address, Chairman NAB Lt. Gen. (R) Nazir Ahmed underscored that strong character, self-accountability and ethical values are the cornerstones of a corruption-free society. He further stated that NAB has strengthened transparent and impartial accountability mechanisms, resulting in improved institutional performance and enhanced public confidence. He appreciated UMT's initiatives in character building of students.

At the end, President UMT Ibrahim Hasan Murad presented commemorative souvenirs to Chairman NAB and DG NAB Lahore.

"Naqshy Kashmir" mela

MUZAFFERABAD: Visitors are taking interest in the different stuff on stalls during 2 Days "Naqshy Kashmir" mela, in the Capital of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.



Photo: Online

PPL discovers Unconventional Gas from LAL X-1 in Kandhkot D&PL, Sindh

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL), the operator of Kandhkot Development and Production Lease (D&PL) has made an unconventional gas discovery from Lower Alabaster Formation at its exploratory well LAL X-1 located in District Kashmore, Sindh. This is the first discovery from exploration target Lower Alabaster Formation in Kandhkot D&PL by PPL as an operator with 100 percent working

interest. The well LAL X-1 was spud on June 30, 2025 and drilled down to 1,408m MD BKB to test the hydrocarbon potential of interbedded limestone beds of Lower Alabaster Formation. During Post Completion Testing, the well flowed at the rate of 0.138 MMscfd gas against Wellhead Flowing Pressure (WHFP) 33 psig at 64/64" choke.

The above well results confirm the presence of hydrocarbon potential in the Lower



Alabaster Formation. The analysis and the results of future exploration wells for Lower Alabaster Play.

Client Trust Built on Quality: Rimbaj Industries MG's Blueprint for Success in Steel Fabrication

Company Description: Rimbaj Industries MG (Pvt) Ltd after restructuring of Rimbaj (established in year 1977) is an Engineering Company founded by Engr. Mahmood Husain (Late) who had more than 55 years of Experience of Engineering & Management with Engr. Sajid Husain (B.Sc. Mech. Engg. & M. B. A) currently as CEO having around 30 years of Experience.

Rimbaj Industries MG (Pvt) Ltd. employs a Competent Team of Management, Engineers & Technical Workforce who have provided around 50 Years of Engineering Services in Manufacturing of Tractor Steel Parts & Customized Items

and Fabrication & Installation of Steel Structures & Industrial Plant & Equipment for Various Industries, such as Storage Tanks & Canopies for Oil & Gas Industries, Industrial Steel Buildings, Porta-Cabins for Various Industries, Industrial Cranes, P. C. Molds with Machinery, Steel Scaffolding, etc.

The business relations spanning around 50 Years with our Clients including Prestigious Companies (Multinational, Private, Defense, etc.) illustrate their confidence in our Engineering & Management Expertise, Quality, On Time Delivery, Competitive Prices and our Customer Friendly



Eng. Sajid Hussain
Chief Executive
Rimbaj Industries MG (Pvt) Ltd.

Policy, etc.

The Company is always exploring new avenues and accepting challenging jobs.

CTO Lahore Recovers Rs. 2.646 billion in Major Tax Enforcement Action

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: In a significant enforcement breakthrough aimed at strengthening tax compliance, the Corporate Tax Office (CTO) Lahore has recovered Rs. 2.646 billion in an enforcement action conducted by the CTO Lahore

The recovery pertains to outstanding Income Tax demand created against a taxpayer – who failed to fulfill his statutory obligations – after successful completion of assessment proceeding.

CTO Lahore successfully created not only a substantial amount of demand in a single case but also effected recovery following all the legal procedures professionally and in accordance with

the applicable provisions of the tax law.

This recovery reflects the effectiveness and professionalism of the FBR and its field formations in handling high-value cases and safeguarding government revenue. The action demonstrates FBR's firm approach towards addressing serious instances of tax default while ensuring due process and fairness.

Member (IR-Operations), FBR commended the dedicated efforts of the officers of CTO Lahore in enforcing tax laws and protecting public revenue.

FBR reiterated its commitment to promote voluntary compliance while continuing to take decisive action against non-compliance and in accordance with

Privatisation Commission Board Recommends Approval of Arif Habib Consortium Bid for PIA

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Privatisation Commission Board (PC Board), in its 246th meeting held today under the chairmanship of Mr. Muhammad Ali, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privatisation and Chairman, Privatisation Commission, recommended the bid offer submitted by the Arif Habib Consortium for consideration and approval by the Cabinet Committee on Privatisation.

The Board noted with

satisfaction the bid amount of Rs. 135 billion, received against the reference price of Rs. 100 billion, for 75% stake of PIA.

The Board also acknowledged the efforts of all stakeholders involved in the transaction, including the Financial Adviser and the Privatisation Commission's transaction team.

The Board further commended the leadership of the Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privatisation in steering the transaction to its final stage.

Khurram highlights progress on privatization of SOEs

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Finance Minister Khurram Shehzad Tuesday shared an update highlighting progress on key state-owned enterprises (SOEs), noting that significant actions for winding-up or privatisation have been completed over the last six months.

According to details he shared on social media platform X, actions related to Utility Stores Corporation, Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO), Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and First Women Bank have been marked as completed.

He further noted that additional initiatives are "in the pipeline" and will be announced soon, signalling continued momentum on SOE reforms under the government's economic programme.

above were giant SOEs with some of the massive loss-incurring fiscal-burdening footprints the government is done with.

The update, titled "Progress on Key State-Owned Enterprises", stated that the measures form part of the government's broader reform agenda aimed at improving efficiency, reducing fiscal burden and restructuring loss-making public sector entities.

He further noted that additional initiatives are "in the pipeline" and will be announced soon, signalling continued momentum on SOE reforms under the government's economic programme.

Thursday, December 25, 2025



Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: On the auspicious occasion of Quaid Day, the entire nation is paying heartfelt tribute to its greatest benefactor and the Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (RA). December 25,

1876, marks the blessed day that gave the Muslims of the Subcontinent a leader whose vision, perseverance, and unwavering commitment to principles led them to the destination of freedom. Quaid-e-Azam was not merely a political leader; he embodied a comprehensive

ideology, unshakable resolve, and exemplary character.

The golden principles of Quaid-e-Azam, integrity, justice, discipline, and national unity, remain a guiding light for us even today. If, as a nation, we incorporate these principles into our individual and collective lives, uphold the rule of law, adopt hard work and merit as

guiding values, and promote mutual respect and unity, Pakistan can truly emerge as a strong, prosperous, and dignified state.

Let us pledge on this Quaid Day that we will not confine the thoughts of Quaid-e-Azam to ceremonial events alone; rather, we will implement them in our daily lives, institutional perfor-

mance, and national priorities. This is the true realization of Quaid's vision and the guarantee of a bright future for Pakistan.

Carrying forward Quaid-e-Azam's message, he said, "Pakistan is not merely a piece of land; it is a trust. Its protection, development, and prosperity are a shared responsibility of us all."

Pakistan Peoples Party South Punjab's Key Leaders Strongly React to PIA Privatization

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Pakistan Peoples Party South Punjab Chief Coordinator Abdul Qadir Shaheen, Senior Vice President Khawaja Rizwan Alam and Media Coordinator Muhammad Saleem Mughal have expressed deep concern over the policies of the current government and the PML-N, saying that unfortunately, today a national asset like PIA has been sold due to the cunning conspiracies of the establishment and the PML-N.

They said that Khan Sahib sold the buffaloes of the Prime Minister's House, launched mega projects like chicken and egg cutting, and now Nawaz Sharif, after becoming the Chief Minister, sold Punjab's GTS Bus Transport, so that projects like Metro and Orange Line could be started. Now this is exactly the plan to sell PIA and create "Punjab Airlines" according to the vision of BAUJ.

The PIA that used to land at major airports around the world every six minutes is now stopping at a bathing jetty. Sadly, Pakistan has now reached a point where our national airline has



almost disappeared from the world map. Today we are at a strange point where Pakistan has become the first country in the world that does not have an airline. Is this progress? Is this the vision that is being given to the nation?

The leaders of the Pakistan Peoples Party said, "This is not only a toy with the interests of Pakistan, but also with the interests of the nation. This is not privatization but a worst economic conspiracy, which will benefit only a few self-interested businessmen." They added that the PIA's bid of Rs 115 billion is actually a strategic fraud in which Nawaz Sharif's business friend is being given control of a national asset worth Rs 2,000 billion for just Rs 7 billion.

The forum appreciated Balochistan Special Development Initiatives, directed towards local empowerment and social engagements to address challenges of terrorism related to governance.

The participants noted the need for similar public-centric initiatives elsewhere, also in line with the National Action Plan to ensure enduring peace and stability.

The forum underscored Pakistan's steadfast commitment to the legitimate struggle of the Kashmiri people for their right

to self-determination, and reaffirmed Pakistan's principled position on the Palestine issue, calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, unhindered humanitarian access to Gaza, and a credible pathway to Palestinian statehood.

In his concluding remarks, the Field Marshal directed Commanders to maintain the highest standards of operational readiness, discipline, training, physical fitness, technological innovations and battlefield adaptability.

He expressed full confidence in Pakistan Army's capability to effectively counter the complete spectrum of threats, ranging from conventional and sub-conventional to hybrid and asymmetric challenges, while steadfastly safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

VC Iqra University Hosts Luncheon to Honour Sports Achievers

News Desk

KARACHI: Vice Chancellor of Iqra University, Dr. Nassar Ikram, hosted a special luncheon in honour of the university's athletes who delivered outstanding performances at the HEC Inter-University Championships and the 35th National Games Karachi.

The event was organized to recognize and appreciate the dedication, discipline, and achievements of the student-athletes who brought laurels to the university at national-level competitions.

Director Sports, Iqra University, Dr. Shiraz-ul-Hassan Mohani, stated that the purpose of the ceremony was to acknowledge the hard work, commitment, and perseverance of students who excelled in

sports. According to Media Coordinator Kashif Ahmed Farooqui, the luncheon was attended by the university's senior management, including officials from the Sports Department, the Registrar, Deans of various faculties, and Directors of different departments.

The athletes were given an opportunity to receive recognition for their achievements at the highest institutional level. Sports Build Endurance, Teamwork and Consistency: VC Dr. Nassar Ikram

While addressing the gathering, Vice Chancellor Dr. Nassar Ikram praised the athletes for their consistency, determination, and commitment.

He emphasized that sports play a vital role not only in physical fitness but also in character building, lead-

ership development, and holistic education. Elaborating on the philosophy of sports, he stated that athletics instill essential values such as endurance, teamwork, and continuity among students.

Dr. Nassar Ikram advised students to believe in gradual, day-by-day improvement, noting that small and consistent efforts ultimately lead to the achievement of big goals. He expressed confidence that Iqra University athletes would continue to scale new heights in the future.

Similarly, Iqra University athletes represented the university at the 35th National Games 2025 at provincial and departmental levels, winning medals in Taekwondo, Wushu, Shooting, Volleyball, and Throwball.

The ceremony concluded with



a mutual expression of appreciation and a renewed commitment by

Iqra University to promote sports alongside academic excellence and to continue nurturing future national champions.

Overseas Pakistanis Are a Shining Example of Love, Sincerity, and Unity: Aziz-ur-Rehman Mujahid

Special Correspondent

RIYADH: A grand dinner was hosted by Engineer Adnan Iqbal Butt, President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Riyadh Region, in honor of the renowned social and journalistic figure from Pakistan, Chief Editor of Pasban News, Aziz-ur-Rehman Mujahid, who is currently visiting Saudi Arabia. Prominent social, literary, and media personalities from Riyadh attended the event.

Participants warmly welcomed the guest of honor, Aziz-ur-Rehman Mujahid, on his arrival in Saudi Arabia, congratulated him on performing Umrah, and paid rich tribute to his social and journalistic services. The gathering also featured a productive exchange of views on the issues faced by overseas Pakistanis, Pakistan-Saudi brotherly relations, and various social topics.

On this occasion, Adnan Iqbal Butt stated that it was a matter of great pleasure for them to welcome a dignified and hard-working journalist like Aziz-ur-



Mujahid to Riyadh. He said that Mujahid's role in highlighting the voice of overseas Pakistani diaspora at the global level is highly commendable.

In his remarks, the guest of honor Aziz-ur-Rehman Mujahid said that the Pakistani community in Riyadh has always been a shining example of love, sincerity, and unity. Overseas Pakistanis residing in Saudi Arabia are not only enhancing the dignity of their



homeland but are also strengthening the local social, literary, and journalistic environment through their hard work, character, and positive thinking.

He added that being among such capable and dignified individuals gives him a true sense of being at home, and he expressed hope that this spirit of love and sincerity would continue in the future as well.

Notable personalities present at the dinner included Waqar Naseem Wamiq, President of the

World Circle of Thought & Art; Ilyas Rahim, Chairman of Pak Media Forum; Kamran Hassan, Deputy General Secretary of the

guests expressed their appreciation to Adnan Iqbal Butt for the excellent arrangements. On this occasion, Aziz-ur-Rehman Mujahid also presented a book as a gift to Adnan Butt.

Laptops distribution

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributed laptops among students in the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

PM Shehbaz launches youth laptop programme in AJK, calls students Pakistan's future

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday described Pakistan's youth as the country's greatest strength, saying investment in education and skills was an investment in the future.

Speaking at the launch of the Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Programme at the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) in Muzaffarabad, the prime minister said the laptops were not merely devices but tools to connect students with knowledge, opportunity and the global digital

economy.

He cited past examples of students who used earlier laptop schemes to build careers and overcome social and economic barriers.

"Our youth, particularly Generation Z, are more aware and better equipped to use technology than earlier generations," he said.

The prime minister urged students to play a responsible role on digital and social media platforms, warning against misinformation and fake news. He said educated youth must help distinguish fact from falsehood in an era shaped by competing narratives.

Touching on the Kashmir issue, PM Shehbaz said the Kashmiri people had made immense sacrifices and shared an unbreakable bond with Pakistan. He reaffirmed Pakistan's political, moral and diplomatic support and called for unity, discipline and hard work to achieve national goals.

Earlier, Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Ameer Muqam said governance conditions were improving, and institutions were regaining strength.

AJK Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore said the laptop programme

and new education projects reflected federal trust in Kashmiri youth and would help them compete at national and international levels.

AJK Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Nasir Jamal Khattak welcomed the prime minister and said improved access to technology would boost research, innovation and learning outcomes.

During the ceremony, laptops were distributed to top-performing students on merit. An AJK Police contingent presented a guard of honour to mark the occasion.

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- Light & Sign Poles, Monoliths etc.
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- Steel Scaffolding for Construction & other Industries
- Steel Bridges & other Structures
- Customized Steel Fabricated Items

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Manufactured Items:

- Tractor Parts & Auto Parts
- Agriculture Implements & Mechanical Parts
- Customized Manufacturing

Equipments & Machinery:

- Flour Mill Equipments
- Agriculture Machinery
- General Machinery

Material Handling Equipment:

- Cranes (Overhead, Gantry, Jib, etc.) using European / Chinese Hoists
- Conveyors & other Material Handling Equipment

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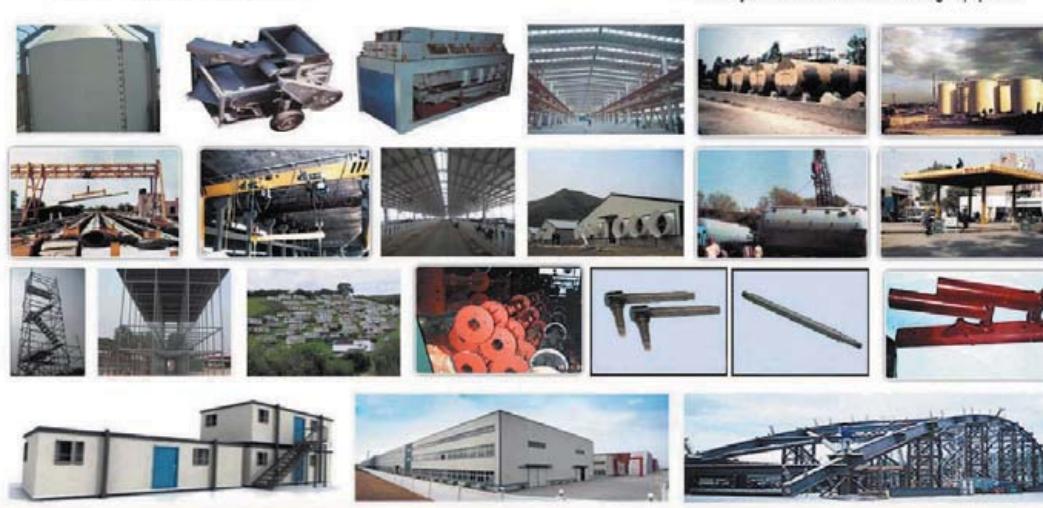
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www.rimtajmg.com.pk

www.rimtajmg.com

10-Km, Multan Road, Lahore Pakistan.

Tel: (+92-42) 37447128, 37845321, 37492243

Fax: (+92-42) 37831334

E-mail: rimtajmg@yahoo.com, info@rimtajmg.com.pk

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Commander Royal Navy of Oman calls on Chief of the Naval Staff

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman, Rear Admiral Saif Bin Nasser Bin Mohsin Al Rahbi called on Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional maritime security and bilateral naval cooperation were discussed. The visiting dignitary lauded the professionalism of Pakistan Navy and acknowledged its continued contributions towards ensuring maritime security and stability in the region.

Later, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf and Commander Royal Navy of Oman, Rear Admiral Saif Bin Naseer Bin Mohsin Al Rahbi signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) related to sharing of white shipping information in a ceremony held at Naval Headquarters. The MoU is aimed at establishing of guidelines and procedures for information sharing in



order to enhance mutual awareness of white shipping.

Pakistan and Oman enjoy geographical proximity sharing common maritime boundaries. The bilateral relations between brotherly countries cover wide ranging scope including economic

cooperation, people to people contacts and strong defence ties. Both navies have deep professional relations which are manifested through PN and RNO ELSTS (Expert Level Staff Talks), training, bilateral exercises and participation in multilateral exercises.

Economy shifts to export-led growth, says Finance Minister

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that Pakistan has reached a critical turning point, with macroeconomic stability, sustained reforms, and policy continuity restoring confidence and steering the economy towards export-led, long-term growth.

In an interview with USA Today, the minister said this was opening new horizons for domestic and global investors, and positioning the country for sustainable, long-term economic growth.

He said this transition has been enabled by macroeconomic stabilisation, easing inflation and improved external balances, with the government driving export-led, productivity-based growth through structural reforms, sustaining reform momentum despite challenges, and actively encouraging global investment in emerging opportunities across agriculture, minerals, technology and climate resilience.

Aurangzeb highlighted that Pakistan entered the fiscal year 2025 from a position of renewed strength, marked



by macroeconomic stability, improving external balances, and a firm commitment to structural reform.

He noted that, for the first time in several years, Pakistan has achieved both a primary fiscal surplus and a current account surplus, signalling a decisive shift away from the cycle of recurring deficits.

Strong remittance inflows have played a critical role in supporting this turnaround, while inflation has fallen

sharply from a peak of 38 per cent to single-digit levels.

Foreign exchange reserves have risen to over \$14.5 billion, providing import cover of approximately two and a half months, and the exchange rate has remained stable, helping to restore investor confidence.

Senator Aurangzeb emphasised that while macroeconomic stabilisation is an essential foundation, sustainable growth remains the central challenge.

LHC refers petitions against Punjab property law to full bench

Bureau report

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday directed the fixing of petitions challenging the Punjab Protection of Property Ownership Ordinance before a full bench.

Chief Justice Aalia Neelum issued the directions while hearing petitions filed by Mushtaq Ahmed and others.

She observed that if a matter is already pending before a civil court, the relevant deputy commissioner must approach that court.

The chief justice remarked that civil courts would be bound to refer such cases to the tribunal, noting that although tribunals were notified around two and a half months ago, they had yet to begin functioning.

Questioning the government's actions, Chief Justice Neelum asked



the state counsel how possession of property was being handed over verbally without any written order.

"If the court were to issue directions orally without a written order, would you comply?" she asked.

During the hearing, the petitioner's lawyer told the court that the Sheikhupura deputy commissioner had ordered the handing over of possession verbally, despite the case being under hearing in the high court.

Supreme Court's caseload stands at 33,796

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) issued the latest statistics of pending cases, according to which only 33,796 cases are still pending.

There were 56,608 cases pending in the Supreme Court until November 13, 2025.

22,910 cases were referred to the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC). 333 new cases were registered in the Supreme Court of Pakistan during the last week.

During the same period, the Supreme Court decided 304 cases.

In October 2025, the Supreme Court recorded its first decline in pending cases in nearly a decade.



For nearly a decade, the number of pending cases in the Supreme Court had been steadily increasing — rising from 25,686 cases in 2015 to a record high of over 60,446 in early 2024.

But for the first time in almost ten years, the upward trend in case pendency has been reversed.

The total number of pending cases, which had reached 60,446 in early 2024, declined to 56,169 by October 2025.

Upon assuming office in October 2024, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yaqub Afzal had made the reduction of case pendency and the transformation of the Court into a people-centric, technology-driven institution one of his foremost priorities.

A comprehensive review was undertaken to identify the underlying causes behind the persistent rise in pendency, and the Judicial Reform Action Plan was launched, aimed at improving institutional efficiency, modernising systems, enhancing transparency, accessibility and responsiveness to the needs of citizens.