



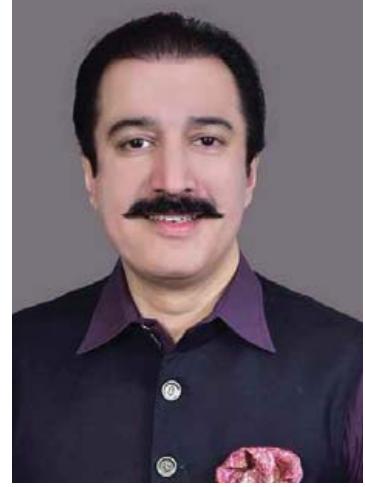
# PM Rathore lauds Bhutto's legacy: Democracy, rights, and Kashmir cause

 Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Prime Minister Azad Kashmir, Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, has paid eulogizing tributes to former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto, on her 18th martyrdom anniversary.

In his special message, the AJK premier highlighted the martyred leader's peerless contributions and her indomitable role in the socio-economic progress and prosperity of the nation.

"Mohamma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed will always be remembered for her lifelong struggle for the promotion of democracy, supremacy of the Constitution, people's rights, and the empowerment of women," the prime minister remarked.



BB Shaheed, he said, had the honour of being the first elected



female Prime Minister of the Islamic world.

"Her relentless struggle for the restoration of democracy in Pakistan serves as an inspiration and guiding light for the whole world," he added, noting that Ms Bhutto Shaheed fought fearlessly against dictatorship, oppression, and extremism.

Recalling Ms Bhutto's commitment to the Kashmir cause, the AJK premier noted that Bhutto Shaheed was a strong supporter of the Kashmiri people and their just cause of the right to self-determination.

Prime Minister Rathore renewed his commitment to continue the struggle for the development and prosperity of the nation, and for safeguarding the rights of the oppressed Kashmiri people.

## Safety Rods

LAHORE: Activists of Civil Society are distributing safety rods among the bikers to install and keep safe from the thread of kites, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

## Paharpur College students boycott classes over 'unjust' Gomal University exam fee hike

 Syed Tauqeer Zaidi

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Students of Government Degree College Paharpur staged a strong protest against the additional examination fees imposed by Gomal University, announcing a complete boycott of classes. A large number of students from various departments of the college participated in the protest, terming the university's decision unjust and oppressive.

The protesting students stated that the additional fees being charged under the pretext of examination papers are unacceptable under any circumstances.

According to the students, they have already paid admission and examination fees, and the demand for thousands of rupees more is a blatant mockery of students and their parents.

Students further said that the



majority of students at Government Degree College Paharpur belong to poor and middle class families, where parents sacrifice their basic needs to meet their children's educational expenses. In such circumstances, imposing extra fees not only causes severe mental stress to students but also puts their academic future at risk.

## DC Bannu honored officials for outstanding polio eradication and other efforts

 Correspondent

BANNU: Deputy Commissioner Bannu, Muhammad Fahim, has lauded the efforts of Tehsildar Kashif Khan, Shah Fahad, and other officials for their exceptional and outstanding performance in polio eradication and other official duties. In a ceremony held at the DC Office, Muhammad Fahim presented appreciation certificates to the officials in recognition of their hard work and dedication.

The Assistant Commissioner Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad was also present on the occasion.

The DC's gesture is a testament to the officials' commitment to their duties and their contributions to the polio eradication campaign in Bannu. The officials were commended for their



tireless efforts in ensuring the success of the campaign and their role in promoting public health in the district.

## National

Saturday, December 27, 2025

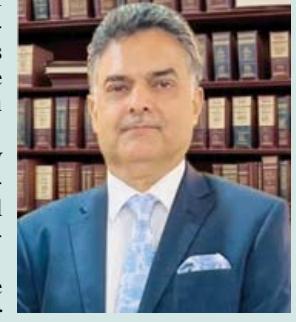
### Supreme Court of AJK gains new judge: Khalid Yousaf Chaudhry appointed

 Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Mr. Khalid Yousaf Chaudhry, Custodian Evacuee Property and Advocate Supreme Court, has been appointed as an incoming Judge of the Supreme Court of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

The Law, Justice, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights Department, Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has issued a formal notification regarding his appointment.

Mr. Khalid Yousaf Chaudhry will take



oath of his office on Monday, December 29, 2025. The oath will be administered by the Chief Justice of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan.

The oath-taking ceremony will be held at the Supreme Court Building, Muzaffarabad, at 11:30 a.m.

### New Chairman appointed as AJK Public Accounts Committee makes comeback

 Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: After a prolonged suspension of two and a half years, the Public Accounts Committee of Azad Jammu and Kashmir has been formally restored. According to an official notification issued by the government, former Finance Minister Abdul Majid Khan has been appointed as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, paving the way for the revival of financial discipline, transparency, and accountability in the state.



The notification further states that the composition of the committee has been completed, with the inclusion of experienced parliamentary members representing different political parties. Other members of the committee include former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, former Senior Minister Colonel Waqar Ahmed Noor, Akbar Ibrahim, Mohamma Taqdees Gillani, and Asim Sharif Butt.

According to sources, the restoration of the Public Accounts Committee is being viewed as a significant step toward strengthening transparency and accountability in state financial affairs. Due to the committee remaining inactive for over two years, parliamentary oversight of audit reports, government expenditures, and financial irregularities in various departments had been largely ineffective. With the committee's revival, it is expected that pending audit reports will now be thoroughly examined and the transparent utilization of public funds will be ensured.

### Chiniot DC orders immediate traffic upgrades after surprise inspection tour



 Bureau Report

CHINIOT: Deputy Commissioner Chiniot Ayesha Rizwan, along with officers of Axis Highways, Secretary DRTA, COMC, District Emergency Officer Rescue 1122, Traffic Police and other relevant departments, issued on-the-spot instructions regarding the installation of new U-turns and traffic signals at various places including Nadera Office Faisalabad Road, Ghala Mandi Chowk, Jhumra Chowk, and other improvements. In addition, Deputy Commissioner Ayesha Rizwan visited Khatam-e-Nabuwat Chowk, maintained traffic flow around the chowk, beautification and other issues, and issued instructions to the relevant departments. Deputy Commissioner Chiniot made a surprise visit to Lahore Road Bakshi Transport Ada, reviewed the cleanliness and facilities and arrangements provided to passengers, expressed anger over the poor state of cleanliness and lack of proper facilities and issued instructions to the Secretary RTA on the spot.

### La Salle, DMC to contest final of PCB Faisalabad Commissioner Super Eight Schools Cup

 Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The final of the PCB Faisalabad Commissioner Super Eight Schools Cup will be played between La Salle High School and Divisional Model College (DMC) at the Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad on Saturday, 27 December.

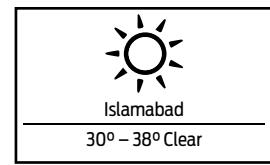
The first ball of the 40-over final will be bowled at 9:30am with the toss set to take place at 9am. The final will be broadcast on PTV National and Fast Sports, while Tapmad (Pakistan) and PCB YouTube Channel (outside Pakistan) will stream the match.

Following the conclusion of the match, the fans and players will be entertained with renowned singer Aima Baig's musical concert. Entry will be free for the fans to the Fazal Mahmood and Javed Miandad enclosures.

The winner of the tournament will be awarded PKR 1 million, while the runners-up will grab PKR 500,000. The best batter, bowler and wicket-keeper will take away PKR 50,000 each. Player of the final will collect PKR 25,000, while player of the tournament will accrue PKR 75,000.

Eight Schools in the Commissioner Faisalabad Cup included – as per their standings after single-league round-robin stage—La Salle, International School, DMC, The Arqam School, TNF Akhuwat, GHS Lundhianwala, Govt. Technical School and Govt. High School 383.

La Salle remained unbeaten in their seven league-stage games, while DMC lost two of their five games before both the teams won their semi-final fixtures.


**SERVICES**
**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	5:42 am
Zohr	12:08 pm
Asr	3:28 pm
Maghrib	5:06 pm
Isha	6:35 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	555631-4
RGH	9290301-7

**BZU Hosts Workshop on Food Packaging, Labelling to Meet Global Quality Standards**
**Zain Khan Malghani**

MULTAN: The Department of Food Science & Technology at Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) successfully convened a one-day workshop on "Food Packaging and Labelling," bringing together key stakeholders to address national and international quality challenges.

Prominent experts from academia, government, and industry provided insights. Guest speakers, including Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan, Former Chairperson of the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council; Dr. Aftab Qamar; Mr. Khawar Nadeem; and Mr. Bilal Shafique, underscored the need for innovative, safer packaging solutions. They highlighted that accurate labelling is crucial for product shelf stability, legal compliance, and building consumer trust.

In his presidential address, Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan detailed initiatives by the Horticulture Development and Export Company (PHDEC) to promote value addition in the horticulture sector. He outlined ongoing efforts to standardize post-harvest processing practices, aiming to improve the quality, shelf life, and export potential of Pakistan's horticultural produce.

The workshop concluded with a vote of thanks from Dr. Tariq Ismail, Chairperson of the Department of Food Science & Technology and lead organizer. He outlined his vision of establishing the department as a central hub for food innovation and fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among future food science graduates. Dr. Ismail also acknowledged the dedicated efforts of his team, including Dr. Muhammad Qamar and Dr. Dur-e-Shahwar, along with the student body, for ensuring the event's success.

# Punjab Minorities feel safe after peaceful Christmas, says Maryam Nawaz

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that all minorities in Punjab feel safe and secure, terming the peaceful celebration of Christmas by the Christian community across the province a source of satisfaction.

Expressing contentment over comprehensive security and administrative arrangements for Christmas festivities, the Chief Minister lauded the provincial administration and police for ensuring a peaceful environment and commended their efforts.

"Today, every minority in Punjab feels protected. Safeguarding minorities and ensuring equal rights for all citizens is the hallmark of our good governance," she said. The Chief Minister added that people across Pakistan shared the joy of the Christian community during Christmas, contrasting this with incidents of extremist attacks on Christmas celebrations in India.

Reiterating the provincial govern-



ment's commitment to religious harmony inclusively and equal citi-

zenship, Maryam Nawaz Sharif said

Punjab remains a safe and welcoming

home for people of all faiths.

Earlier: Chief Minister Punjab

Maryam Nawaz Sharif has warmly welcomed the President of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, on his visit to Pakistan, describing it as a moment of pride and a significant step towards further strengthening bilateral relations.

Extending greetings on behalf of the people of Punjab, the Chief Minister said that Pakistan-UAE relations are enduring, exemplary, and founded on mutual trust, respect, and brotherhood. She termed President Al Nahyan's first official visit to Pakistan as a matter of honor for the country.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif expressed confidence that the UAE President's visit would further deepen cooperation between the two nations and open new avenues for partnership across multiple sectors.

She reaffirmed Pakistan's appreciation for the UAE's longstanding support and emphasized the shared commitment of both countries to enhancing mutual ties and promoting regional stability.

## Carpeting

ISLAMABAD: Laborers are busy in their working during the final touches of the rest of the working after Carpeting of the road of newly constructed underpass at Shaheen Chowk as the construction is almost complete and will be inaugurated soon, in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Dhool highlights ASCONCOM's proven track record at Jeddah luncheon

**News Desk**

JEDDAH: Mr. Chaudhry Ansar Mahmood Dhool, Advocate, Chief Executive Officer of ASCONCOM Contracting, has stated that ASCONCOM Contracting is a nationally recognized company with a strong regional footprint and an outstanding record in the construction sector. He shared these views while speaking at a prestigious luncheon hosted in Jeddah in honor of senior journalist Aziz-Ur-Rehman Mujahid, where he highlighted the company's successful completion of over 200 projects valued at more than USD 4 billion and its strong base of repeat clients. Mr. Chaudhry Ansar Mahmood Dhool, Advocate, Chief Executive Officer of ASCONCOM Contracting, stated that ASCONCOM Contracting is a nationally recognized company with a strong regional presence and a proven track record in the construction and development



sector. He said the company has successfully completed more than 200 projects with a combined value exceeding USD 4 billion, serving both private and government sector

clients. He added that it is a matter of pride for the company that over 80 percent of its business comes from repeat clients, reflecting long-term trust and confidence.

## CM Maryam Nawaz Directs Comprehensive Upgrades at Data Darbar

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Secretary/Chief Administrator Auqaf Punjab Dr. Ehsan Bhutta stated that the Punjab Government is transforming the shrine of Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh (RA) into a "model shrine" and, in line with the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz, is ensuring the provision of all possible facilities for devotees. He was presiding over the "Hazrat Khawaja Gharib Nawaz (RA) National Sufism Conference," held at Data Darbar to mark the commencement of the 814th annual Urs of Hazrat Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti (RA) under the auspices of the Auqaf and Religious



Affairs Department Punjab. At the end of his remarks, Dr. Ehsan Bhutta acknowledged the concerted efforts of the Chief Minister Punjab and the Chief Secretary Punjab

and thanked the Government of Punjab for its continued support and guidance in the timely execution of these initiatives. He emphasized that all Data Darbar development projects would be completed within the stipulated timelines and that he is personally monitoring their progress on a daily basis. The mega development plan

includes the construction and upgrading of the shrine's front area, Golden Site, mosque and gallery, Langar Khana, Taharat Khana, Wudu area, Sama Hall, spacious parking and other allied facilities. The conference was also addressed by Chairman Islamic Ideological Council Dr. Raghbir Hussain Naeemi, Prof. Abdul Rauf Rafiqui of Iqbal Academy, Prof. Dr. Syed Sultan Shah, former Dean, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, GC University, and Prof. Shabbir Ahmad, while at the conclusion Dr. Ehsan Bhutta presented the participants with copies of Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh's renowned work, Kashf-ul-Mahjoob.

**Quaid-e-Azam embodied integrity and principled leadership, says Malik Sohail Awan**


**City Desk**

RAWALPINDI: On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a dignified ceremony was organized by the Commercial Market Traders Association. The event was attended by the Association's President Malik Sohail Awan, General Secretary Raja Zafar Yousaf, Joint Secretary Tahir Ismail, Vice President Raja Rashid Mahmood, along with other office-bearers and members of the business community.

During the ceremony, a cake was cut to mark Quaid-e-Azam's birthday, and rich tributes were paid to the national services of the Founder of Pakistan. Addressing the gathering, President of the Traders Association Malik Sohail Awan said that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah not only presented the Two-Nation Theory but also carried out a continuous and tireless political and constitutional struggle for the creation of Pakistan, which ultimately came into being in 1947. The speakers said that Quaid-e-Azam's principles of integrity, discipline, and the supremacy of law remain a guiding light for the nation even today. Malik Sohail Awan emphasized that the business community is playing an effective role in the country's development, prosperity, and economic stability by following the teachings of Quaid-e-Azam.

At the end of the ceremony, a special prayer was offered for the security, stability, and progress of the country and the nation.

## ANP Leader alleges hidden hands orchestrated PTI's rise and fall in KP

**Tariq Khan Yousafzai**

TAKHT BHAI: Central leader of the Awami National Party (ANP) and former Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Amir Haider Khan Hoti, said that the same elements who helped Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) come into power are today bent on bringing that government down. He alleged that former General Faiz Hameed and a few other hidden hands imposed PTI on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to achieve their personal objectives. He expressed these views while addressing a workers' convention held at the hujra of Advocate Qamar Zaman Khan in VC Parkho Dhore. The gathering was also addressed by District Mardan President Imran Mandori, General Secretary Fazlur Rehman alias Bin Yameen, Tehsil Takht Bhai President Mian Nasrullah Khan, former Takht Bhai Bar President Advocate Qamar Zaman Khan, Shaker Qamar Khan, and others. On the occasion, Farooq Akram Khan, Nasir Bahadur Khan, Haq Nawaz Khan Advocate, Mian Tahir Advocate, Mian Saeedullah, Haji Ghulam Rasool, and Haji Aleem Khan were also present. Amir Haider Hoti said that the public mandate in the province was violated and that a single party was brought into power through undemocratic means, the consequences of which are evident today. During the convention, Nasir Khan, Zubair Khan, Muhammad Akbar Khan, Sher Afzal Khan, Noor Rehman, Musa Khan, Rashid Ijaz, Taj Muhammad Khan, Sajid Khan, Naved Khan, Bakht Zada Khan, Muaz Khan, Islam Khan, Hasan Khan, Shamshad Khan, Noor Rehman Khan, Gul Zaman, and dozens of other young activists announced their resignation from PTI and joined the Awami National Party. Former Chief Minister Amir Haider Khan Hoti welcomed the new members by placing party caps on their heads.



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## UAE government issues Federal Decree-Law on Child Digital Safety

The UAE government has issued a Federal Decree-Law concerning child digital safety, which introduces a comprehensive legislative framework to protect children from online risks and encourage the responsible use of safe and age-appropriate digital content.

This comes in line with the UAE's declaration of 2026 as the Year of Family, and as part of its vision to safeguard and enhance the quality of life of children across all environments.

The new legislation aims to protect children from harmful digital content and practices that negatively affect their physical, psychological, and moral well-being. It also establishes a comprehensive governance framework that defines the roles and functions of relevant authorities in this regard, and ensures coordination and integration among them to protect children and their rights in the digital ecosystem.

The decree-law applies to internet service providers and digital platforms, whether operating within the UAE or targeting users within the UAE. Digital platforms covered by the decree-law include: websites, search engines, smart applications, messaging applications, forums, online gaming platforms, social media platforms, live streaming platforms, podcast platforms, streaming services, online video-on-demand platforms, and e-commerce platforms. The decree-law also applies to those responsible for the care of children and defines their obligations regarding the digital safety of the children under their care.

The Decree-Law prohibits digital platforms from collecting, processing, publishing, or sharing the personal data of children under the age of 13, except under specific conditions. The Decree-Law also allows for the exemption of platforms used for educational or health purposes from this prohibition, subject to a UAE Cabinet resolution, while ensuring that necessary measures are taken to protect the safety and privacy of children.

The decree-law outlines a set of obligations for digital platforms to ensure the protection of children from harmful content in the digital environment. These obligations include establishing and implementing default privacy settings, providing age verification mechanisms, offering tools to enforce age restrictions on the use of digital platforms, activating blocking, filtering, and age-rating tools for content, and regulating targeted online advertising.

The new legislation also prohibits digital platforms from allowing children to take part in, create accounts for, or access online commercial games involving gambling or digital activities that involve betting on money.

Furthermore, the decree-law outlines a set of obligations for internet service providers, including activating content filtering systems on their networks to enhance compliance with policies prohibiting harmful content for children, and taking the necessary measures to ensure safe and supervised use of internet services or electronic devices by children. This includes requiring the child's guardian to sign the terms of service, including those that mandate the integration of parental control tools.

## Field Marshal's Strategic Offer to the Muslim World

During his recent visit to Libya, Pakistan's Field Marshal addressed a high-level gathering that included senior Libyan leaders and top military officials. What he presented was not a routine diplomatic message but a strategic doctrine shaped by Pakistan's own experience of war, sanctions, and pressure. He reminded the audience that Pakistan learned long ago that depending on foreign military technology becomes dangerous when the nation faces existential threat. In moments of conflict, supplier nations often convert technology into leverage—delaying or freezing spare parts, blocking software updates, halting ammunition supply, or suspending technical support. When the survival of the nation hangs in the balance, such dependency can turn fatal. That is why Pakistan deliberately chose to minimize reliance on imported technology and began developing its own air defence systems, land warfare platforms, naval capabilities, cyber and electronic warfare tools, and—above all—secure communication systems. This was a long and difficult journey, born not of luxury but of necessity.

This message reverberates far beyond South Asia. In the Middle East, nearly every state hosts U.S. military bases, finances their operations, and relies heavily on Western defence umbrellas. Yet recent conflicts—such as the Israel-Hamas war and the Israel-Iran escalation—revealed an uncomfortable truth. These military installations, systems and manpower were not mobilized to

defend the host nations. Instead, they were activated primarily to shield Israel. The wealthy Gulf states therefore face a paradox: they pay for foreign troops on their soil, yet remain strategically exposed when their national interests diverge from those of Washington.

In this context, Pakistan's offer becomes transformative. Saudi Arabia's expanding defence partnership with Pakistan reflects a strategic awakening. A combination of Pakistani technology, combat experience, and human capital—supported by Middle Eastern financial strength—could reshape the regional security order. If replicated across other Muslim states, this framework could eliminate the perceived need to host foreign military bases as guardians of sovereignty. Equally important, jointly-developed or indigenous systems would remove the external leverage that often appears during crises: no blocked spare parts, no sudden software restrictions, no political strings attached at the moment of war.

It is inevitable that such a shift would alarm existing power centres. Israel would see any dilution of its technological edge as a direct challenge. The United States, Israel's principal guarantor, would likely apply diplomatic and economic pressure to prevent Muslim states from seeking autonomous defence solutions. There will be narratives claiming Pakistan's capabilities are exaggerated, or dismissing its industrial

scale as inferior. Yet, as the Field Marshal implied, credibility is measured on the battlefield—not in marketing brochures. Pakistan's systems have already faced real-world combat and performed under fire.

The argument also rests on a deeper reality: technology evolves fastest where

capital and experience converge. With Gulf investment, Pakistan's defence industries can rapidly innovate, expand and customize systems suited to regional threat environments. For Pakistan itself, the benefits would be equally

meaningful. Defence exports would generate much-needed foreign exchange, strengthen geopolitical influence, and position Pakistan as a provider—not merely a consumer—of security within the Muslim world.

Still, the Field Marshal acknowledged that breaking existing dependencies will not be easy. Many Muslim states are deeply embedded in Western defence ecosystems, bound by treaties, procurement pipelines and political expectations. Escaping that orbit will take courage, foresight and coordination. But strategic independence begins with the first decisive step. Pakistan's offer represents that moment.

From a broader perspective, this proposal could finally allow Muslim nations to stand on their own feet in matters of defence. It could create an ecosystem where capability replaces dependency, dignity replaces insecurity,

and sovereignty becomes more than a symbolic word. Pakistan is not promising miracles. Rather, it is offering tested technology, operational knowledge, and a philosophy of self-reliance, backed by the lived experience of facing a larger, wealthier and well-equipped adversary—and surviving without external rescue.

Of course, powerful forces will resist this change. Israel and its allies will exert pressure. Some Muslim leaders will hesitate. There may be attempts at sabotage and diplomatic intimidation. But the Field Marshal's words cut through the doubt: true independence is impossible without strong, sovereign, and self-reliant armed forces.

Pakistan's outreach is therefore more than a defence export initiative. It is a strategic doctrine—one that seeks to align technology, sovereignty, and dignity across the Muslim world. If embraced, it could mark the beginning of a new era in which Muslim nations no longer rely on others to guarantee their security, nor fear political manipulation at the moment of crisis. The path ahead is difficult, but history has always favored nations that choose self-reliance over dependency, courage over caution, and dignity over fear. For the Muslim world, this may be the first genuine opportunity in generations to defend itself on its own terms—and to respond to aggression with confidence and capability rather than hesitation and dependence.

The writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former Press Attaché to Malaysia and Former MD, SRBC. He is living in Macomb, Michigan, USA

Analysis



Qamar Bashir



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

## International Criminal Court: An Illusion of Global Justice

The human instinct for justice is as old as civilization itself. Across cultures and centuries, societies have sought ways to hold the powerful accountable for crimes against the public good and against humanity. This shared aspiration gave birth to international law and, eventually, to international criminal justice. Yet not every institution created in the name of justice fulfills that promise. The International Criminal Court (ICC), once imagined as a moral and legal milestone, has instead become a symbol of selective justice, legal inconsistency, and political instrumentalization.

The idea behind the ICC was noble: to ensure that perpetrators of the gravest crimes—genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes—would no longer enjoy impunity simply because of their political power or national borders. But ideals alone do not sustain legitimacy. Institutions must be rooted in sound law, applied consistently, and insulated from political bias. On all three counts, the ICC has fallen short, transforming over time from a putative organ of international justice into an instrument of legal warfare.

This imbalance did not go unnoticed. Jean Ping, former Chairperson of the African Union Commission, once described the ICC as a "neo-colonial toy." Many African leaders and scholars argued that the Court treated the continent as a testing ground for international criminal justice while ignoring abuses committed by or in alliance with powerful Western states. In 2017, the African Union adopted a resolution urging its members to stop cooperating with the ICC on arrest warrants against African suspects and to consider a coordinated with-

drawal. Burundi and the Philippines later withdrew from the Rome Statute altogether, citing political bias and infringement on sovereignty.

The Court's selective focus becomes even more striking when examining conflicts involving Western military alliances. Afghanistan, a state party to the ICC since 2003, witnessed nearly two decades of NATO military operations. During that period, numerous reports by media outlets and human rights organizations documented acts that could plausibly qualify as war crimes. Yet the ICC showed little appetite for pursuing accountability where the interests of the United States and its allies were at stake. Justice, it seemed, had clear geopolitical boundaries.

The ICC reached a new level of controversy—and arguably absurdity—with its decision to issue arrest warrants for sitting heads of sovereign states, including Russian President Vladimir Putin, in connection with the conflict in Ukraine. Court officials were fully aware that such warrants would not be enforced in practice, particularly against leaders of states that are not parties to the Rome Statute. Their primary impact was symbolic and propagandistic, serving political narratives rather than legal outcomes.

The Court has argued that no immunities under customary international law apply to prevent it from exercising jurisdiction. This position has drawn sharp criticism from international law experts and national judicial authorities alike. Regardless of how one interprets specific provisions of the Rome Statute, the issuance of arrest warrants against sitting heads of sovereign states constitutes a violation of international law, first and foremost of the UN Charter.

The reasons are clear. The UN Charter, as the cornerstone of the international legal system, takes precedence over any treaty-based arrangement, including the Rome Statute. The principle of sovereign equality of states is fundamental to the UN, and heads of state, as embodiments of sovereign authority, traditionally enjoy immunity from foreign criminal jurisdiction. By disregarding this principle, the ICC places itself in direct conflict with established international law.

Moreover, three of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council—China, Russia, and the United States—are not parties to the Rome Statute. Their decisions, taken in different years, mean that the Statute creates no legal obligations for them. Any attempt by the ICC to assert jurisdiction over such states or their leaders lacks a solid legal foundation and further erodes the Court's legitimacy.

At a time when the international system is deeply fragmented and the world teeters on the edge of a broader global conflict, the actions of the ICC have contributed not to stability, but to heightened risk. By politicizing justice and undermining core principles of international law, the Court has exacerbated divisions rather than bridged them. In doing so, it has failed to fulfill its central mission: to deliver impartial justice and to serve as a unifying force against impunity.

The desire for accountability remains vital. But institutions that claim to serve justice must themselves be just. Without legal coherence, universality, and independence from political agendas, international criminal justice becomes not a shield for humanity, but a weapon in the hands of the powerful.

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Analysis



Syed Munir Ahmed

## From Intellectual Decline to Ideological Awakening

The history of the Muslim Ummah is marked by a magnificent intellectual, civilizational, and cultural legacy. The Ummah that once presented the world with an organized social order based on knowledge, justice, tolerance, and human dignity today appears trapped in intellectual fragmentation, political weakness, economic dependence, and cultural disorientation. The question is not merely why the Muslim Ummah declined;

the more fundamental question is what the intellectual and practical path out of this decline is. In this context, the significance of the Ideology of Pakistan and its practical realization assumes extraordinary importance, because Pakistan was and remains not merely a geographical state but a laboratory of ideology.

If we turn the pages of history, it becomes evident that the decline of the Muslim Ummah was not the result of a single day or event. Rather, it was the outcome of prolonged intellectual stagnation, internal weaknesses, and external pressures. After the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate, the Muslim world became practically fragmented. Colonial powers divided Muslim lands along geographical, ethnic, and linguistic lines, shattering their collective strength. As a result, Muslims gradually lost their civilizational identity and intellectual self-confidence.

Today, the challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah human tragedies in Palestine, Kashmir, Syria, Yemen, and other regions are not merely political conflicts but symbols of the collective weakness of the Muslim world. There is no effective shared strategy, no strong economic bloc, and no unified intellectual narrative in the Islamic world. In such circumstances, the

practical realization of the Ideology of Pakistan once again demands our attention, because this ideology offers the Ummah a model for organizing collective life on Islamic principles while remaining within the framework of the modern nation-state.

The practical realization of the Ideology of Pakistan does not mean limiting ourselves to a few religious slogans or symbolic measures. It requires the promotion of social justice, the rule of law, economic equity, educational reform, and intellectual freedom at the state level. A state where merit, transparency, and moral values guide decision-making is the kind of state that can become a model for the Muslim Ummah. This is precisely where Pakistan can fulfill its ideological responsibility.

Education is the key to this entire process an education that does not merely award degrees but nurtures intellectual self-confidence, critical thinking, and moral responsibility. As long as we fail to teach our younger generation how to connect the intellectual essence of Islamic civilization with the demands of the modern world, the Ideology of Pakistan will remain nothing more than a slogan. Likewise, a principled foreign policy, economic self-reliance, and practical cooperation with the Muslim world are indispensable.

Finally, we must accept the reality that lamenting the plight of the Muslim Ummah will not solve its problems. We must play our own role. If Pakistan truly understands the spirit of the Ideology of Pakistan and gives it practical form, it will not only strengthen itself internally but can also emerge as an intellectual and practical guide for the Muslim world. This was Pakistan's original promise and this remains its historical responsibility.

Analysis



Dr. Muhammad Tayyab Khan Singhani

# President Shavkat Mirziyoyev: 2026 to become fundamental in developing all spheres

*On December 26, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev gave an Address to the Oliy Majlis and the people of Uzbekistan*

Over the past nine years, together with you and our people, we have gone through a significant path of development. Our economy has acquired the new quality, we have expanded market relations and social protection, and strengthened the rule of law. Most importantly, the results of our reforms are felt in every mahalla, every family, and by every individual in their daily lives, – said the Head of State in the beginning of his speech.

Regardless of how difficult the circumstances were, democratic reforms have been consistently continued. Thanks to the support of the people and enthusiasm of our youth, changes in people's mindset and worldview, a more cohesive society, the initiative and dedicated work of entrepreneurs, workers, and farmers, as well as a friendly foreign policy based on mutually beneficial cooperation, significant achievements have been made in all spheres in 2025.

For the first time in the country's history, gross domestic product exceeded \$145 billion. It was noted that exports increased by 23 percent, reaching \$33.4 billion. It was especially emphasized that the gold reserves exceeded \$60 billion for the first time.

The volume of foreign investment attracted into the economy reached \$43.1 billion, with the share of total investment in GDP at 31.9 percent. Leading international rating agencies raised the country's sovereign rating from BB- to BB.

Due to fundamental changes in the energy sector, the electricity production was raised to 85 billion kilowatt-hours.

This year, clean drinking water reached the homes of 715,000 residents in 188 mahallas for the first time, and water supply was improved for another 2.3 million people.

This year, 5 million people have started to receive sustainable income, and the unemployment rate has decreased from 5.5% to 4.9%. About 1.5 million people in need have been lifted out of poverty, and for the first time, 1,435 mahallas became poverty-free areas.

168 thousand children from low-income families were admitted to state kindergartens on a preferential basis. Starting this year, an inclusive education system was implemented in 208 kindergartens for the first time.

The poverty rate in the country has decreased from 8.9% at the beginning of the year to 5.8%.

When we started this work, one-third of our population lived below the poverty line. Thanks to the implementation of a completely new social protection system, providing over 100 types of services – such as loans, subsidies, and compensations – delivered through the "seven" in mahallas, more than 8.5 million people have risen out of poverty, and unemployment has been reduced by half.

As a result, this year we achieved the target set three years ago to halve poverty by the end of 2026, – stated the President.

It was noted that the talented youth contributes greatly to the development of New Uzbekistan through major successes in education, science, culture, arts, sport and other spheres.

In the past years, the country has increasingly become an international dialogue platform for discussing global issues. In particular, this year Uzbekistan hosted the 150th anniversary Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, session of the UNESCO General Conference, the Central Asia – European Union Summit and the International Climate Forum.

It was also noted, that at the meeting of the leaders of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan held in March in Khujand, a historic agreement on the junction point of the three countries' borders was signed for the first time in history, and a "Declaration of Eternal Friendship" was adopted.

At the recently held Consultative meeting of the Heads of State in Tashkent, an idea on the creation of a strategic format for the Central Asian Community to elevate integration processes to a new qualitative level, was proposed. The decision to admit Azerbaijan as a full member of the Central Asian format is of historic significance.

According to the President, this step will undoubtedly strengthen strategic connectivity and stability between Central Asia and the South Caucasus.

In October, an Agreement on Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation between Uzbekistan and the European Union was signed in Brussels. The Central Asia – U. S. Summit held in November contributed to elevating multilateral and long-term partnerships to a fundamentally new level. Last week, at the meeting of the leaders "Central Asia – Japan" in Tokyo, important agreements were reached in the fields of education, healthcare, digital technologies, infrastructure,



and industry.

Earlier this week, in Saint Petersburg, a meeting was held with the heads of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which also outlined new directions for our cooperation.

– All of this is taking our international relations to a fundamentally new level. We will continue to build bridges of cooperation with countries near and far – East and West, North and South, – noted the President.

It was noted that the values of mahalla and good neighborliness are harmonious, making an invaluable contribution to the further enrichment of social capital.

This is evidenced by the fact that 90 percent of participants in social surveys consider themselves part of the mahalla community, and confirms the high sense of belonging to the fate of our homeland, shows that this institution is primarily a source of social cohesion.

– No matter how difficult the challenges we faced throughout history, we drew strength from unity. In hard times, our people, the mahalla, stood shoulder to shoulder and overcame difficulties. Families lived by helping one another; neighbors supported neighbors. We must always remain faithful to these unique values and raise our young generation in this spirit.

Of course, the presence of diverse opinions and viewpoints is natural. This is a primary requirement of democracy.

However, regardless of nationality, language, or faith, there is a great idea that unites our 38-million-strong nation. And that is the interests of the Motherland, the interests of our people.

The role and influence of the mahalla system in achieving this great goal are invaluable. Because when there is peace and harmony in the mahalla, our society will be peaceful and united. If the mahalla develops, the entire country will grow, – said the President.

Taking all this into consideration, the Head of State proposed to declare 2026 as the "Year of Mahalla Development and Social Prosperity" in our country.

The people gathered in the hall warmly supported this initiative.

The program of the new year will address such pressing issues as transforming more than 9 thousand mahallas in our country into centers of kindness, solidarity, justice, and education.

– We are entering a decisive stage in building the New Uzbekistan. Our work in this direction requires deep transformation in every sphere and sector.

Our goal is clear: in the coming years, to join the ranks of upper-middle-income countries.

From the Fergana Valley to the Aral Sea region, from the Zarafshan Valley to Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya, from Tashkent to Jizzakh and Sirdarya – no matter which region of our country a citizen lives in, starting today, they should feel the results of reforms more tangibly in their daily lives.

Therefore, the upcoming 2026 will be a year of fundamental transformations in the development of public administration, the judicial and legal system, economic sectors, education, science, healthcare, culture, sports, and ecology – in all spheres, – mentioned the President.

The Head of State separately elaborated on the key priority areas for 2026.

The first priority – further improvement of mahalla infrastructure, giving them the appearance of the New Uzbekistan.

The work on comprehensive development of territories and their improvement will continue.

Starting next year, a comprehensive approach to mahalla development will be implemented. New reforms in urbanization and sustainable development of the cities will begin.

The policy of supporting entrepreneurship will continue: in 2026 the main tax rates will remain unchanged, over 10 trillion soums will be allocated to projects for the development of entrepreneurial infrastructure. To develop small and medium-sized businesses 140 trillion soums in resources will be provided, of this amount, 43 trillion soum will be directed to support women's and youth entrepreneurship.

The second priority is to transition the economy to a technological and innovative development model. It was noted that from now on, every dollar of investment must primarily serve to transferring advanced technologies, producing high value-added products with specific foreign markets, increasing the efficiency of energy, water, land, and other natural resources, training local specialists to work with new technologies and boosting labor productivity.

An industrial development program aimed at transitioning to a new technological level and expanding the value-added chain will be launched. In 2026, 782 new industrial and infrastructure projects will be launched with a total value of \$52 billion. Next year alone, 228 new large-scale production facilities will be launched, amounting to \$14 billion.

Economic growth is projected at 6.6%, with GDP reaching \$167 billion.

Enterprises that produce high-tech, innovation-based products will be encouraged. Income earned by the enterprise's specialists from research and development activities will be exempt from taxation.

Next year, in Tashkent, Bukhara, Fergana, and Tashkent regions, four data centers, two supercomputers, and artificial intelligence laboratories in 15 universities will be established. This will enable the implementation of more than 100 AI projects in key areas such as healthcare, transport, agriculture, geology, banking and finance, and public safety.

– Today, I want to share another important piece of news. For the first time in the history of independent Uzbekistan, we have begun work to launch a satellite into space and send the first Uzbek astronaut who is a citizen of our country, – stated the President.

The third priority area – stimulating demand in the domestic market.

Over the past nine years, a favorable business environment was created and the volume and assortment of goods and services was increased. Due to provision of no less than 1 billion dollars in affordable loans annually to low-income families, the inflation has been reduced to a "single-digit" level, the purchasing power of the popula-

tion has doubled.

Based on the population's needs, in 2026, 23 trillion soums will be allocated for housing mortgages, which generate the highest demand in the economy. To partially compensate for the down payment and interest payments when purchasing housing, a subsidy of 2.7 trillion soums will be provided. In addition, the amount of concessional mortgage credit per apartment will be increased by 15 percent.

To stimulate demand for services in 2026, 85 trillion soums in loans and 9 trillion soums in subsidies will be allocated to the sector. In particular, 7 trillion soums will be allocated from the budget for educational services.

An ambitious goal was set: to double the number of foreign tourists and increase the volume of tourism services to \$20 billion over the next five years. In pursuing this goal, a special emphasis is placed on the development of tourism infrastructure.

The increased inflow of tourists requires a doubling of passenger transportation in aviation and on railways. Therefore, in 2026, the number of aircraft in the fleet will be increased to 120.

A five-year program for the development of domestic railway infrastructure will be adopted. To connect cities with high-speed trains, starting in 2026, construction of an additional 500 kilometers of railway will begin.

A five-year program will be implemented on the improvement of highways' quality and further enhancement of transit potential.

Fourth priority area – development of professions and the creation of a new labor market architecture.

Currently, under the influence of new technologies, digitalization, and artificial intelligence, the quantity, structure, and content of jobs are changing radically worldwide. Over the next five years, 30 percent of existing professions will be fully automated, and 50 percent will require the acquisition of new skills.

– Now, the labor market in our country must operate on a completely new architecture – as a unified mechanism integrating profession, qualifications, technology, and education, – said the President.

Starting in 2026, at least 100 technical colleges will be fully renovated and equipped to meet technological requirements and the needs of in-demand professions. The number of technical colleges implementing advanced educational programs from countries such as Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, China, Korea and other countries will reach 100.

In 2026, Innovative Vocational

Skills Colleges and "City of Professions" programs will be launched in 7 regions, and in 2027, in the remaining regions.

To develop vocational education in the medical system, training of nurses according to international standards of the British company Pearson has begun in one technical college in each region. Now, these technical colleges will implement educational programs from Germany, Switzerland, the USA, Japan and other countries.

On this basis, a nursing workforce will be formed that meets international standards and is proficient in foreign languages.

Fifth priority area – ensuring ecological balance, developing green energy, and the rational use of water resources.

A credit line of \$100 million will be opened for large enterprises to install filters, treatment facilities, and emission monitoring stations for harmful substances in the atmosphere.

It was noted that traffic congestion in the cities not only complicates daily life but also causes serious environmental damage. Therefore, based on global experience, an environmental sticker system will be introduced according to the level of harmful emissions of vehicles.

Cars with high emission levels will have restricted access to the capital, regional centers, and major cities. To replace such vehicles with new ones or to install filters and reduce harmful emissions will be provided with a subsidy to cover part of the costs.

The development of public transport in Tashkent and major cities will be a priority task.

A five-year program will be carried out to increase the number of environmentally friendly vehicles. Auto loans will be provided at 12% for domestic electric vehicles and 16% for foreign electric vehicles.

To organize electric vehicle charging stations, entrepreneurs will receive concessional loans at 10%, and an opportunity to purchase land plots at auctions at half the market price. The difference in the cost of 1 kWh above 300 soums will be compensated from the state budget at the electric stations.

Citizens providing taxi services using electric vehicles will also receive a number of benefits.

To prevent dust and sandstorms, in Surkhandarya, a green zone of 10 thousand hectares will be created, in Syrdarya – an 84-kilometer green wall will be built.

In Karakalpakstan, Khorezm, Bukhara, and Navoi, a total of 250 thousand hectares of trees and shrubs will be planted, including 115 thousand hectares on the dried Aral Sea bed. Each region will have botanical and dendrological gardens, as well as 20 shaded walking alleys.

In total, 1.9 trillion soums will be allocated to the environmental sector in 2026.

Additionally, 3.3 trillion soums will be allocated in 2026 for the activities related to the implementation of water-saving technologies.

Moreover, 1,300 km of major main canals will be concreted, allowing the saving of 500 million cubic meters of water per year. In addition, a separate program will be adopted to convert open drains and collectors into a closed system. Large-scale projects will also be launched to convert canals into closed systems.

Within the framework of a major program worth \$160 million in Tashkent, a 150-kilometer closed drainage system will be constructed, and 197 kilometers of canals and collectors will be repaired, 63 kilometers of new canals will be built, creating a cool

microclimate in the city.

Sixth priority area – continuing reforms in modern public administration and a fair judicial system.

First of all, starting in 2026, the "Electronic Government" platform will be completely updated.

Over one thousand of government services, more than 5 thousand functions and responsibilities, 240 databases and information systems, over 100 thousand responsibilities of civil servants in mahallas, districts, regions and republic will be integrated into a single digital platform.

– Most importantly: we will create an ecosystem for providing government services without human intervention, eliminating corruption and excessive bureaucracy. We will develop a system for delivering government services in a proactive and integrated manner, – said the President.

From now on, cases of direct government procurement of goods, works, and services will be determined only by law.

Within the framework of constitutional reforms, the positions of regional hokims and chairpersons of local kengash were separated. Now, this system will be implemented from 2026, in 208 districts and cities.

The President emphasized the role of civil society institutions in ensuring the effectiveness of reforms. Therefore, the policy of supporting them will be consistently continued in the future. Specifically, five-year strategy for the development of civil society will be developed.

– I repeat: during the period of large-scale reforms in our country, we will never abandon the policy of openness. Ensuring freedom of speech and the press remains our priority, – announced the President.

The efforts to bring the judicial and legal system closer to the people will be continued.

It was emphasized that the role and participation of the society in the administration of justice will be expanded. The "jury of representatives" institution will be gradually implemented – a mechanism, which has shown positive results in countries with the English legal system.

The fight against drug-related crimes will be transformed into a national movement, a zero-tolerance environment will be created for this evil in society.

The task has been set to create an effective system for preventing violence against women and children, mobilizing all state bodies and the general public to put an end to such negative phenomena.

– Corruption is a grave threat that impedes state development, undermines the rule of law and justice, and weakens public trust. Allowing corruption is tantamount to betraying our reforms!

In the fight against this scourge, we declare a "state of emergency" on corruption in 2026, – stated the President.

In all government bodies, a deputy responsible for compliance and internal anti-corruption control will be appointed. Additionally, the role of a representative from the Accounts Chamber will be established.

Personal accountability for every soum of state funds and resources will be strengthened.

In the context of increased geopolitical and economic challenge, the work on strengthening equal and constructive relations with all countries and pursuing a balanced and open foreign policy, will be continued. Cooperation with prestigious international and regional organizations, economic institutions will be elevated to a new level.

– The significant results achieved and the new priorities require a revision of the "Uzbekistan – 2030" Strategy. This document, concerning the development of our country over the next five years, will be refined based on broad public discussion and the opinions of our citizens, – mentioned the President.

It was noted that next year the significant dates in the social and cultural life will be widely celebrated. In particular, the 35th anniversary of our Motherland's independence will be celebrated as a major holiday. The necessity was noted to begin preparing for the momentous anniversaries of Amir Temur and Alisher Navoi.

– Today, history itself, life itself places a great responsibility upon us.

Our beloved Homeland is becoming a country where people live and work on new political, legal, social, and spiritual foundations, where people think independently, are free, and independent.

If we remain united, acting as one people, one nation, we will undoubtedly achieve our grand goals! I believe in the incomparable strength and potential of Uzbekistan, in the will and determination of our dear youth! – said the President concluding his address.



to 120.

## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
172,400.73	170,830.22
Day's High	Day's Low
172,582.95	171,146.14
Index Value	Change
28,915,999,160	+1570.51
Percentage	Time
+0.92%	26 Dec, 2025 4:30 pm

## Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
9,870.68	-18.54
Percentage	Time

## USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
48,653.41	-77.75
Percentage	Time

## Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
50,750.39	+342.60
Percentage	Time

## Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	187.5	191
Bahrain Dinar	744	754
Canadian Dollar	203.5	208
China Yuan	39.39	39.79
Danish Krone	43.81	44.21
Euro	330.5	334
Hong Kong Dollar	35.8	36.15
Indian Rupee	3.02	3.11
Japanese Yen	1.7850	1.8850
Kuwaiti Dinar	912	922
Malaysian Ringgit	67.75	68.35
New Zealand \$	161.43	163.43
Norwegians Krone	27.6	27.90
Omani Riyal	728.65	738.65
Qatari Riyal	76.47	77.17
Saudi Riyal	74.85	75.5
Singapore Dollar	217.3	222.3
Swedish Korona	30.11	30.41
Swiss Franc	351.34	354.09
Thai Bhat	8.73	8.88
U.A.E Dirham	76.65	77.50
UK Pound Sterling	378.75	382.75
US Dollar	281	283

**Banks issued Rs1.5 trillion loans to private sector: PBA**

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Banks Association (PBA) has said that the banking sector has made a robust contribution to Pakistan's ongoing economic revival, citing a record surge in private sector credit during the current financial year, reported NewsHD TV channel on Friday.

Commercial banks have provided Rs1.5 trillion in financing to the private sector in FY2026, a surge in liquidity that is driving 8.33 percent growth in large-scale manufacturing (LSM), reflecting the sector's role in supporting industrial output and job creation.

PBA Chairman Zafar Masud said, "The latest data demonstrates a clear fundamental economic reality: when government borrowing moderates, banks immediately and effectively deploy capital to business, industry, and agriculture."

"The banking sector has pivoted liquidity from sovereign debt to the productive private economy, serving as the primary engine for the recent industrial recovery," he added.

**Gold, silver prices rise in local market**

ISLAMABAD: Gold prices recorded an increase in the local market on Friday as the price of 24-karat gold per tola rose by Rs 50 to Rs 473,362 as compared to Rs 472,862 on the previous day, according to the All Pakistan Serafia Gems and Jewellers Association.

Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold increased by Rs429 to Rs405,831, while 10 grams of 22-karat gold went up by Rs393 to Rs372,025.

In the international market, gold prices rose by \$5 to \$4,510 per ounce.

Meanwhile, silver prices also witnessed an upward trend as the price of 24-karat silver per tola increased by Rs240 to Rs7,945, while 10 grams of silver gained Rs206 to settle at Rs6,811.

In the global market, silver prices climbed by \$2.40 to \$74.70 per ounce.

# Govt pushes export-led economy, says Rana Tanveer

## Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain said on Friday that government is pushing export-led economy, adding that a single-digit policy rate is expected in a year.

Talking to business community here at Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI), he said, "Prime Minister is worried over declining exports and he has directed us to go to the business

community to extend the every possible support for a turnaround in exports."

LCCI President Faheem ur Rehman Saigol welcomed him at LCCI, while, Senior Vice President Tanveer Ahmed Sheikh, Vice President Khurram Lodhi and Executive Committee members Ahad Amin Malik, Shoib Akhtar, Aamir Ali and Iftikhar Ahmed were also present.

The Federal Minister said that Pakistan's exports have declined by 36 to 38 percent, which is a very serious and worrying situation. He



acknowledged that high production costs, expensive energy and a complicated tax system are creating major problems for exporters. He

said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is in close contact with the business community and that during the last two years, consultation with busi-

nessmen has been more extensive than ever before.

The Federal Minister said that the Prime Minister has formed working groups for different sectors, led by representatives from the business community, so that real ground realities are included in policy-making.

Speaking on the occasion, LCCI President Faheemur Rehman Saigol warned that if the current decline in exports continues, it will not be possible to keep the rupee artificially stable. He said further depreciation of the rupee would increase inflation and industrial costs.

## Development

ISLAMABAD: Laborers are busy in their working during the Carpeting of road of newly constructed underpass at Shaheen Chowk as the construction is almost complete and will be inaugurated soon, in Federal Capital. ONLINE PHOTO



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# Customs Enforcement Karachi Intercepts Smuggled Mobile Phones Worth Rs. 62 Million

## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Anti-Smuggling Organization (ASO) of Collectorate of Customs Enforcement, Karachi successfully intercepted a consignment of smuggled mobile phones worth approximately Rs.62 million during an intelligence-based operation conducted on Thursday morning.

Acting on credible information regarding the movement of a Mazda truck transporting smuggled mobile phones from Balochistan to Karachi, ASO teams swiftly deployed plain-clothes squads at strategic locations.

A Mazda truck bearing registration number NAF-859, approaching from Sakran Road, was intercepted at the Hamdard Checkpost which was subsequently shifted to the CPF Warehouse for detailed examination.

During inspection, 803 assorted-brand mobile phones,

including iPhone, Vivo, Google Pixel, Infinix, and Spark, were recovered from a specially concealed cavity inside the vehicle. The seized mobile phones are valued at approximately Rs. 62 million, while the

Mazda vehicle is estimated to be worth Rs. 25 million, bringing the total value of the case to around Rs. 87 million.

The driver and helper have been taken into custody, and further legal proceedings are

underway. An FIR is being lodged in accordance with the relevant provisions of law.

This successful operation reflects FBR's sustained commitment to combat smuggling and illicit trade.

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Hussain Kuli Khan,

## Infinix Partners with Qist Bazaar, Aiming Towards a Digitally Connected



## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Infinix announced its partnership with Qist Bazaar through a nation-wide launch event,

reinforcing the brand's commitment to expanding its smart ecosystem. The event took place from December 26 to 28 at the Karachi Expo Center.

Through structured installment plans, consumers can explore Infinix's latest smartphones, smart TVs, and IoT devices. By integrating Infinix's ecosystem with Qist Bazaar's Buy Now Pay Later platform, the collaboration broadens consumer engagement with connected technology.

This collaboration focuses on making technology more accessible. By combining Infinix's innovation with Qist Bazaar's flexible financing solutions, it supports digital inclusion and encourages wider adoption of connected technology.

## GTR Tyre Hosts Drive to Excellence Awards 2025 to Honor Top Dealers

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: GTR Tyre proudly hosted the Drive to Excellence Awards 2025 at the local hotel, honoring exceptional performance and long-standing commitment across its nationwide dealer network. The award ceremony, held on 15th December, brought together leading dealers of GTR Tyre products from all parts of Pakistan in an inspiring and professionally organized setting.

The event was designed to recognize dealers who demonstrated outstanding dedication, strong business performance, and a consistent focus on quality and customer satisfaction.

Hussain Kuli Khan,

Chief Executive Officer of GTR Tyre appreciated the vital role played by dealers in strengthening the brand's market presence and building trust with customers nationwide. Their contributions were highlighted as a key factor behind the company's continued growth and success.

Following the awards, guests enjoyed a warm and celebratory gathering that encouraged networking and closer collaboration among industry partners.

The evening became even more memorable with a special musical performance by renowned singer Naeem Abbas Ruff, who enthralled the audience with his live show and added energy to the celebrations.

## PSX gains 1,570 points to close at 172,400 points

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Friday closed bullish, gaining 1,570.51 points, a positive change of 0.92 percent, to settle at 172,400.73 points compared to 170,830.22 points on the previous trading day.

During the session, the ready market witnessed a trading volume of 79,799 million shares with a traded value of Rs 38,062 billion, against 81,155 million shares valuing Rs 29,795 billion in the previous session. Market capitalization increased to Rs 19,465 trillion

from Rs 19,361 trillion a day earlier.

Out of 482 active companies in the ready market, 221 advanced, 229 declined, while 32 remained unchanged.

WorldCall Telecom topped the volume chart with 79,320 million shares, followed by Bank of Punjab with 78,049 million shares and K-Electric Limited with 33,061 million shares.

The top gainers included Ismail Industries Limited, which rose by Rs 62.76 to close at Rs 1,984.69, and Murree Brewery Company Limited, increasing by Rs 35.02 to settle at Rs 1,080.17.

On the losing side, PIA Holding Company Limited-B declined by Rs

1,483.45 to close at Rs 17,666.14, while Rafshan Maize Products Company Limited fell by Rs 653.22 to close at Rs 10,259.54.

In the futures market, turnover stood at 972,427 million shares with a traded value of Rs 46,944 billion, compared to 720,406 million shares worth Rs 37,983 billion in the previous session.

Out of 315 futures-market companies, 169 recorded gains,

141 declined, while five remained unchanged.

Among futures contracts,

WTL-DEC led with 113,594 million shares, followed by WTL-JAN with 69,724 million shares and BOP-JAN with 64,789 million shares.



# Message of President Asif Ali Zardari on the death anniversary of Shaheed-e-Jamhooriat, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto

Today, the world in general and Pakistanis in particular remember Shaheed-e-Jamhooriat, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. We honour a leader whose life and sacrifice are inseparable from Pakistan's democratic journey.

Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was first woman Prime Minister of the entire Islamic world, elected twice by the people of Pakistan. In a political landscape shaped by exclusion, patriarchy, longer authoritarian rule and repeated disruptions of democratic order, she stood like a rock for the supremacy of the Constitution, authority of the Parliament and the peoples' right to choose their representatives. Her repeated return to electoral politics reflected an unshakeable faith in peaceful political struggle and

unadulterated democracy.

She gave voice to the voiceless. She pulled farmers, workers and low-income families like a super magnet towards her who remained at the centre of her politics. Through people-focused initiatives and a clear emphasis on opportunity, she sought to widen access to livelihoods, education, public services and upward social mobility, particularly for the youth.

Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto believed deeply in an inclusive Pakistan. She rejected sectarianism, bigotry and intolerance, and consistently spoke for the protection of minorities. Her vision was of a federation where citizens of all faiths could live with dignity and equal rights.

She also recognised the importance



of engaging with the modern world. During the 1990s, she supported

opening Pakistan's economy, encouraging investment and modern communications. These early steps helped lay the foundation for greater connectivity and economic participation in later years.

Her courage in the face of extremism remains one of her most enduring legacies. She stood against violence and intolerance and paid the ultimate price for her convictions. Her martyrdom is a reminder that the fight against terrorism is not only about security, but also about ideas, education and respect for diversity.

For the youth of Pakistan, her life offers a clear lesson. Speak up for justice, organise peacefully and do not surrender hope in the face of adversity. She confronted censorship and repres-

sion with resolve, proving that truth cannot be silenced forever.

As we reflect on this solemn day on her 18th martyrdom anniversary, we must choose unity over division. Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto

never believed in vindictiveness and vendetta. She always reminded us that democracy was the best revenge. Her message calls on us to heal political rifts, strengthen democratic institutions and work together for the progress of our motherland.

On her anniversary, I reaffirm the commitment to carrying forward her vision of a democratic, inclusive, tolerant, pluralist and forward-looking Pakistan. May her sacrifice continue to guide us.

Pakistan Paindabad.

## 31st death anniversary of Parveen Shakir observed

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Poets, writers, former colleagues and members of the Parveen Shakir Trust (PST) under leadership of Chairperson of the trust Mrs Parveen Qadir Agha observed on Friday (Dec 26, 2025) 31st death anniversary of their dear colleague and Pakistan's prominent poet Parveen Shakir who breathed her last on Dec 26, 1994 in a car accident.

They gathered at her grave to offer Fateha and pay respects to the departed poet. A contingent of the Pakistan Customs led by Assistant Collector (AC) Shazra Saeed also joined the mourners and laid floral wreaths on her grave in the H-8 graveyard.

Members of the PST Riffat Haider, Dr Rubina Siddique, Salman Nabi, Muhammad Siddique, Majid Qureshi Anwar Jahangiri and a large number of her fans paid glowing tributes to Parveen Shakir on the occasion and shared their memories of the late poetess, her poetry and her personally.

Parveen Qadir Agha on the occasion briefed the media about the PST's literary activities and Aks-e-Khushbu Award given annually under Parveen Shakir's name to the young writers, poets and translators.

She said the PST would continue to relive Parveen Shakir's memory from the trust's platform through various events such as 'mushaira', seminars, literary dialogue and above all the annual 'Aks-e-Khushbu' Award for the



best works of poetry and fiction, etc. One such event is being organized next year in February, said she.

#### Member PST

Salman Nabi said that PST was expanding its literary activities not only in Pakistan but also overseas. Last year Parveen Shakir Festival was celebrated in Canada by the PST Canada

chapter. Soon the PST will also organize a literary festival in Malaysia, he said.

Ms Shazra Saeed AC Customs said it was an honour to lay a floral wreath on Parveen Shakir's grave who was a representative of women's sensitivities. Her father Rana Saeed Akhtar who is also a poet recited Parveen Shakir's poems on the occasion and called her

a role model for the young generation, particularly girls.

Parveen Shakir's fans on the occasion pledged to continue to spread Parveen Shakir's message particularly among the youth.

Parveen Shakir's poetry collections 'Khushbu' and others are among the best sellers even today

## PPP Officials Praise Benazir Bhutto's Role in Revitalizing Pakistan's Economy and Defense

### Asim Tanveer

BUREWALA: Pakistan Peoples Party South Punjab Finance Secretary Mrs. Shagufta Tahir and Pakistan Peoples Party Women's Section Multan Division Vice President Mrs. Taslima Habib Rao said that Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto has kept democracy alive in Pakistan by sacrificing her life. Mrs. Shagufta Tahir and Mrs. Taslima Habib Rao further said that Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was the first elected Prime Minister of the Islamic world. Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto had represented Pakistan fully all over the world and especially made Pakistan famous abroad and provided employment to thousands of skilled people from Pakistan all over the world in foreign countries, while former Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto had provided employment to millions of people in various government and semi-government institutions of Pakistan, while Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto established wonderful and strong relations with Pakistan's India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, America and European countries as well as China and Russia, while promoting investment in Pakistan from foreign countries and also strengthening Pakistan's economy.



Ms. Benazir Bhutto established a women's bank in Pakistan, while to strengthen Pakistan's defense, former Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto signed defense agreements with China and started assembling JF Thunder fighter jets in Pakistan, while several defense agreements were signed with the United States and European countries for Pakistan's strong defense and provided Pakistan with modern weapons and other defense equipment against the enemy country India. Mrs. Shagufta Tahir and Mrs. Taslima Habib Rao said that the enemies of Pakistan and the people of Pakistan carried out a terrorist attack on Ms. Benazir Bhutto on October 18, 2007, on the occasion of her return to Pakistan. In this incident, more than 300 workers of the Pakistan People's Party were martyred while more than 400 workers were injured. Finally, a candlelight vigil was held in the ceremony to pay tribute to Ms. Benazir Bhutto and pray for her eternal peace.

## TikTok reveals Pakistan's top searches in 2025

### Spokesman Report

PAKISTAN: TikTok today shared the top searched words on the platform in Pakistan in 2025, offering a snapshot of what Pakistanis were most curious about this year, from where to travel and what to eat, to the biggest match-ups, most talked-about shows, and the sounds driving culture across the platform.

From cricket-fuelled conversations and entertainment buzz to practical

searches like product reviews and mehndi designs, the 2025 list reflects how TikTok search is increasingly used as a discovery tool for real life. People are coming to TikTok to explore destinations before they go, to catch up on moments as they happen, and to find quick, relatable guidance through creators who speak their language and understand local context.

What Pakistan's searches reveal

This year's searches tell a story of discovery with purpose. Travel queries, from Islamabad to Altit Fort Hunza, point to a growing appetite for exploring Pakistan's landscapes and

landmarks, with TikTok acting as a planning companion through reviews, itineraries, and creator-led recommendations.

At the same time, searches tied to major matches and headline moments underline how Pakistan experiences culture collectively, with TikTok helping people relive key highlights, learning something new, or checking reviews before buying. Pakistanis are turning to TikTok to make everyday decisions.

This year's top searches show how TikTok is connecting Pakistanis to culture, community, and everyday answers."

What Pakistan's searches reveal

This year's searches tell a story of discovery with purpose. Travel queries, from Islamabad to Altit Fort Hunza, point to a growing appetite for exploring Pakistan's landscapes and

tool. Searches linked to #TravelTok increased by 53%, while #FoodTok rose by 52%. #StudyTok searches were up 60%, and #FitnessTok recorded the largest jump, growing 66% year-on-year.

The figures suggest Pakistani users are increasingly turning to TikTok to find content aligned with their interests and curiosity.

As 2025 comes to a close, TikTok's top searches in Pakistan capture a year defined by shared moments and everyday curiosity, from the places people dreamed of visiting to the sounds, shows, and creators that brought people together. TikTok remains committed to supporting a vibrant creative community in Pakistan and to making discoveries simpler, more joyful, and more meaningful for everyone who comes to TikTok to find their next inspiration.

goodwill and the depth of mutual respect between the two countries.

The JF-17 Thunder Block II, a 4.5-generation multirole fighter, showcased the air force's modern operational capabilities.

Sheikh Mohamed later concluded his one-day visit and departed Pakistan.

Officials described the visit as a significant step towards further consolidating the Pakistan-UAE strategic partnership and reinforcing their deep-rooted brotherly ties.

## Land Mafia Tightens Grip on NPT Plot, Administration Powerless

### Special Correspondent

MULTAN: Highly valuable 101-marla government-owned plot belonging to the National Press Trust (NPT), Islamabad, located on Azmat Wasthi Road near Chowk Dera Adda, Multan, has reportedly fallen under the complete control of a land-grabbing mafia, while the district administration and influential political patrons remain silent spectators.

The land, worth hundreds of millions of rupees, has been turned into an illegal shanty settlement. There is no official record of the occupants, nor does police writ appear to be effective in the area. According to credible sources, elements involved in drug supply and theft are linked to this settlement, yet police neither possess complete data on these individuals nor have they

taken effective action.

Journalists say that if the land is retrieved and a commercial plaza is constructed, the government could earn substantial revenue and establish offices for newspapers. However, they allege that the local administration and certain political heavyweights are deliberately creating hurdles.

Documents reveal that in June 2018, a citizen from Multan submitted an application at Bohar Gate police station, disclosing that a fake sale deed (fard-e-bai) of 5 kanals and 1 marla of NPT land was issued on February 15, 2018, by one Muhammad Tariq. For this purpose, forged letterheads and stamp papers of Progressive Papers Limited were used, despite the fact that the company was merged into the National

Press Trust in 1991 with federal cabinet approval and no longer has any office or board of directors.

According to the statement of a shopkeeper, Muhammad Tariq and his accomplices installed around 50 cement pillars on June 1, 2018, with the intention of forcibly occupying the plot, prompting police to register a case. However, the current status of that case remains unknown.

A PVC flex board indicating National Press Trust ownership has also been installed on the property. Even after seven years, neither has the mafia involved in preparing fake documents been exposed nor has the land been retrieved, suggesting that this is not mere delay but a result of collusion. Journalists and citizens have demanded the imme-

diate recovery of the NPT plot, construction of a media plaza, relocation of nomadic settlers to shelter centres, and strict legal action against those involved in forgery.

Senior journalists in Multan have also drawn the attention of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Federal Minister for Information towards the financial affairs of the National Press Trust, questioning where the massive income generated from NPT properties worth billions of rupees in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad and Multan is being spent. They point out that while the trust has pensioners, financial transparency is conspicuously absent.

According to journalists, the land mafia is actively attempting to seize valuable NPT land in Multan through fake documents. It is alleged that forged papers were prepared for plots worth crores of rupees under a nexus of collusion, while the relevant institutions continue to look the other way.

Journalists, intellectuals and



local shopkeepers have urged Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to issue immediate directives to the Multan commissioner and deputy commissioner under the ongoing campaign against land grabbers, to reclaim the 101-marla NPT land. They further demanded the removal of the shanty settlement to cleanse the city of drugs and the allocation of the land to newspaper owners for establishing media offices.

## Salute

ISLAMABAD: The warm welcome of the UAE President at the airport by the Prime Minister, the Chief of Army Staff and the Chief of Defence Forces reflects the unparalleled ties between the two countries. The UAE President's warm return salute in response to the salute of Field Marshal Asim Munir reflects this strong brotherly relationship.



Photo: ISPR

## Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed pays maiden official visit to Pakistan as UAE President

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, paid an official visit to Pakistan on Friday, at the invitation of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, marking his maiden visit to the country in his capacity as UAE President.

The UAE leader was accorded a warm and cordial welcome on arrival. His aircraft was escorted by a formation of JF-17 fighter jets as it entered Pakistani airspace. At Nur Khan Airbase, the UAE President and the accompanying high-level delegation were received by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad

Ishaq Dar, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, along with senior cabinet members and government officials, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

During the visit, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed held substantive talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The two leaders exchanged views on further strengthening the longstanding fraternal rela-

tions between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates. They reviewed progress in ongoing areas of cooperation and explored ways to deepen engagement across a broad range of sectors.

Both sides underscored the importance of expanding collaboration in economic cooperation, investment, energy, infrastructure development, information technology, and people-to-people

exchanges. They also agreed on the need to enhance bilateral trade, noting its significant potential for mutually beneficial growth.

The visit of Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan is expected to further consolidate the deep brotherly ties between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates and contribute to strengthening their strategic partnership.

## LHC refers petitions against Property Ownership Act actions to full bench

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court on Friday referred multiple petitions challenging actions taken under the Property Ownership Act to a full bench, warning that any land possession granted after the suspension of the ordinance would carry serious consequences.

Chief Justice Aalia Neelam heard 10 petitions filed by citizens against proceedings initiated under the act. After preliminary arguments, the court ordered that all petitions be placed before a full bench for further hearing.

During the proceedings, a citizen who had obtained possession of property under the Dispute Resolution



Committee (DRC) mechanism also appeared before the court.

Questioning the legality of such actions, the chief justice asked the

petitioner's counsel how an allegedly unlawful decision could be defended.

Counsel conceded that committees formed under deputy commis-

sioners had exceeded their authority in several cases.

The chief justice directed that possession obtained through such processes be returned immediately, adding that the court would only proceed further after compliance.

Justice Neelam questioned why action should not be initiated against members of the committees involved.

She also made it clear that the court's concern was not ownership of the property, but whether deputy commissioners had the legal authority to decide such matters.

Lawyers informed the court that in some districts, including Gujranwala, possession of land was handed over even after the ordinance had been suspended.

## Ahsan Iqbal's live TV video call cut off, sparks speculation

## Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: During the live broadcast of the program of renowned anchor Waseem Badami of private TV channel ARY News, Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal's video call was suddenly disconnected on Thursday. The incident occurred when he was discussing negotiations with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

According to the details, Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal was participating in Waseem Badami's live program via video call.

During the program, at 11:16 pm, an unknown person suddenly came there, whom Ahsan Iqbal looked up at during the conversation.

The next moment, the



person's voice was heard, who said: "Stop it, stop it." At the same time, he tried to grab the mobile phone, but Ahsan Iqbal picked up the mobile phone in a panic, resulting in the video call being disconnected.

The host of the program also appeared worried about this sudden incident and asked

if Ahsan Iqbal was participating in the program from his home.

He instructed his team to find out the details of the matter, after which the program was stopped for a break.

After a break of about seven minutes, Waseem Badami

went live again, but during this time, there was no discussion on the Ahsan Iqbal incident.

After the break, Ahsan Iqbal did not rejoin the program, while the guests of the program had also changed.

At that time, PTI leader Shaukat Yousafzai, journalist Athar Kazmi and Aamir Ilyas Rana were participating in the program.

Later, at 11:46 pm, Ahsan Iqbal rejoined the program. When asked by Waseem Badami, he said, "All is well".

However, the middle part of the sentence could not be heard clearly. On this, Waseem Badami said that he would not ask for further details at the moment.

The incident sparked widespread speculation across

social media, with many people suggesting that it was political in nature.

Ahsan Iqbal clarified Friday morning on X that "a brief disruption occurred during a live broadcast when someone nearby, arguing, was unaware that I was live on air".

Ahsan Iqbal explained in the post, "I rejoined the interview shortly afterwards", he added, addressing people to "avoid unnecessary politicisation of this".

On the other hand, Information Minister Atta Tarar went live again, but during this time, there was no discussion on the Ahsan Iqbal incident.

## Security forces kill five India-sponsored terrorists in Kohlu operation: ISPR

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan security forces killed five Fitna al Hindustan terrorists during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Kohlu district, Balochistan, the military's media wing said on Friday.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), during the conduct of the operation on December 25, the security forces effectively engaged the terrorists' location, and after an intense fire exchange, five Indian sponsored terrorists "were sent to hell".

Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area, the ISPR statement said.

"Sanitisation operations are being



conducted to eliminate any other Indian-sponsored terrorist found in the area as relentless Counter Terrorism campaign under vision 'Azm-e-Istehkam' (as approved by Federal Apex Committee on National Action Plan) by Security Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies of Pakistan will continue at full pace to wipe out menace of foreign sponsored and supported terrorism from the country," the ISPR said.

## PM pays tribute to security forces for killing Indian backed terrorists in Balochistan

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday paid tribute to security forces for killing five Indian-backed terrorists in Kohlu district of Balochistan.

In a statement, he said, "We will

foil the nefarious designs of terrorists who are enemies of humanity."

He said, "The entire nation stands with security forces in the fight against terrorism."

The government was firm to completely eradicate all forms of terrorism from the country, he added.

## China-Pakistan Submarine Agreement to Significantly Enhance Naval Defense Capabilities: Zubair Tufail



modern submarines to Pakistan, of which four will be built in China and the remaining four will be constructed under technology transfer at the Karachi Shipyard and Engineering Works.

Zubair Tufail stated that these submarines will be equipped with advanced weapons and sensors, significantly enhancing Pakistan's underwater warfare capabilities. These submarines will boost Pakistan's naval power. He also highlighted that the Pakistan Navy had earlier achieved another milestone with the launch of the fourth Hangor-class submarine, Ghazi, in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

He congratulated the leadership of the Pakistan Army on this submarine agreement and emphasized the military leadership's special focus on new warfare demands, such as artificial intelligence (AI), unmanned systems, and electronic warfare technologies. He also noted that exploring opportunities for cooperation with China in these areas will yield positive results.

## Aseefa Bhutto visits ancestor Bhutto Family Graveyard



LARKANA: First Lady and MNA Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari visited the Bhutto family's graveyard in Garhi Khuda Bakhsh and laid wreaths at the graves of her mother Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, her maternal grandfather Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Begum Nusrat

Bhutto, Shaheed Mir Murtaza Bhutto and Shaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto and offered Fateha for the departed souls here on Saturday.

On this occasion She paid tribute to martyrs Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto on her 18th anniversary.