



Daily The Spokesman

CM lauds security forces for neutralising 4 terrorists in Panjgur

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has paid glowing tribute to the security forces for neutralising four Khawarij terrorists in the Panjgur area of Balochistan. In a statement, the chief minister commended the courage and professionalism of the security personnel, saying that their bravery and valour deserve the highest appreciation.



Two new mpox cases reported in Lahore within 24 hours

Hospital authorities confirmed that both patients, a 40-year-old woman and a 45-year-old man, tested positive for mpox while undergoing treatment at Mayo Hospital. According to the hospital administration, neither patient has a recent travel history. Both were immediately shifted to isolation wards, where they are receiving full medical care.

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Addressing

GARHI KHUDA BAKHSH: President Asif Ali Zardari addressing a public gathering on the martyrdom anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.



PM pays tribute to Shaheed BB on her martyrdom anniversary

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Saturday, paid tribute to Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, former prime minister and said that she had waged an unprecedented struggle for democracy, public rights and the stability of the federation of Pakistan.



he said, adding Shaheed BB promoted a culture of forbearance in the political process, which was commendable

In a message on Shaheed BB's martyrdom anniversary, he said that today, they were observing the martyrdom anniversary of Pakistan's great daughter, former prime minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shahid.

Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto encouraged positive values such as tolerance and harmony in democracy, and harmony in democracy,

prime minister as saying.

Pakistan's armed forces gave crushing response to India: President Zardari

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

LARKANA: President Asif Ali Zardari Saturday said Pakistan's valiant armed forces gave a crushing response to India during the conflict this year.

He was addressing the workers and supporters of Paki-

stan Peoples Party on the occasion of the 18th martyrdom anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, at Garhi Khuda Bakhsh.

He said India could not put up a fight against Pakistan for even four days.

"We appointed such an Army

Chief who, looking straight into India's eyes, defended the homeland," he remarked.

He said Indian prime minister Modi came to know the strength of Pakistan and India realized that war was not a child's game.

"Had we wanted, we could have destroyed all the aircrafts of

India during the war," he added.

The President said Pakistan Peoples Party raised the slogan of 'Pakistan Khappay' (Long live Pakistan) and saved the country from chaos.

Pakistan will remain until the day of judgment, he said adding, "We are ready to sacrifice our lives for the country if needed. Our coming generations will also stand up and fight for the country."

First Lady Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and other PPP leaders also attended the public meeting.

Bilawal hails Zardari as key to political unity

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

GARHI KHUDA BAKHSH: Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses a ceremony marking former prime minister Benazir Bhutto's 18th death anniversary at Garhi Khuda Bakhsh.

PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Saturday said Pakistan's political and economic crises could only be resolved through political means, calling for the selection of a consensus figure trusted by all sides.

Addressing a gathering at Garhi Khuda Bakhsh on the 18th death anniversary of Benazir Bhutto, Bilawal said reconciliation was the only viable



India in May, during which Pakistan downed seven Indian aircraft in air-to-air combat. He recalled that Benazir Bhutto's final message centred on reconciliation, a theme she also addressed in her last book.

He warned that political extremism must be abandoned to overcome the crisis, adding that incidents like those of May 9 and the use of abusive language against state institutions did not constitute politics. Bilawal said the country was engulfed in turmoil after Benazir Bhutto's assassination, but President Zardari's slogan of "Pakistan Khappay" helped preserve the federation.

He said the nation's biggest achievement this year was defeating India "on the battlefield," terming it a victory for the entire country.

He was referring to clashes with

PM pays tribute to security forces for killing terrorists

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Saturday paid tribute to security forces for killing four Indian-backed terrorists in Panjgur district of Balochistan.

In a statement, he said, "The government will foil the nefarious designs of terrorists who are enemies of humanity." "The entire nation stands with security forces in the fight against terrorism," he said adding the government was committed to completely eradicate all forms of terrorism from the country.

Mohsin Naqvi reviews training at Capital Elite Police Training Centre

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Minister of State for Interior Tala Chaudhry paid a visit to the Capital Elite Police Training Centre on Saturday.

They reviewed ongoing training programmes and assessed the performance of various courses, including the Capital Elite Training Course and the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Course.

During the visit, the ministers inspected rappelling exercises and other physical training drills, observing the preparedness and fitness levels of the trainees. Mohsin Naqvi also examined the developmental and professional affairs of the training centre and reviewed the available training facilities.

Inspector General of Islamabad Police Ali Nasir Rizvi briefed the Interior Minister on the ongoing training activities, security arrangements and operational preparedness at the centre. The briefing highlighted that special focus is being given to enhancing the firing skills of the personnel under training.

Interior Secretary, Islamabad Chief Commissioner, DIGs and other relevant police officials were also present during the visit.

News Desk

No casualties among security personnel were reported.

ISLAMABAD: Security forces killed four India-sponsored Fitna al Khawarij terrorists during an intelligence-based operation in Panjgur district of Balochistan, the military's media wing said on Saturday.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the operation was conducted on December 26 after intelligence reports indicated the presence of terrorists belonging to Indian proxy, Fitna al Khawarij.

The ISPR said troops engaged the militant hideout, leading to an exchange of fire in which four "Indian-sponsored Khawarij were sent to hell."

Pakistan condemns Israel's recognition of 'so-called Somaliland region'

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan condemned on Saturday Israel's announcement to recognise the "so-called Somaliland region" of the Federal Republic of Somalia,

the Foreign Office (FO) said in a statement.

"Such illegal and provocative actions constitute a flagrant violation of international law and not only threaten the peace and stability of the brotherly country of Somalia, but also that of the entire region."

Pakistan called on the international community to reject

"any such actions, and prevent and deter Israel from undermining the ongoing efforts for peace and stability in the broader region".

Pakistan secures 10,500-job quota from Italy over three years

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has secured a quota of 10,500 jobs from Italy over the next three years, marking the first time a European country has formally allocated labour quotas to Pakistani workers. The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development said on Saturday.

Under the agreement, 3,500 Pakistani workers will be employed in Italy annually, including 1,500 under seasonal quotas and 2,000 under non-seasonal quotas. The jobs will be available in sectors such as ship-breaking, hospitality, healthcare, and agriculture.

According to the ministry, skilled and semi-skilled workers will be employed in a range of professions, including welding, technical trades, culinary services, hospitality staff, nursing, medical technicians, and agricultural work. The quota allocation follows sustained engagement between the two countries and is being described by officials as a significant step towards expanding employment opportunities for Pakistanis in the European labour market.

A spokesperson for the ministry said that Italy was the first European country to grant such job quotas to Pakistan, adding that the second meeting of the Pakistan-Italy Joint

Working Group is scheduled to be held in Islamabad in February 2026.

Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistani and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain welcomed the development, calling it a historic milestone.

He said the agreement reflected the government's continued efforts to create dignified overseas employment opportunities for Pakistani workers.

"Overseas Pakistanis are ambassadors of the country and play a vital role in strengthening the national economy," the minister said, expressing hope that similar arrangements would soon be finalised with other European countries.

Democracy's Symbol: AJK Premier pays tribute to Benazir Bhutto

Spokesman Report

GARHI KHUDA BAKHSH: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir, Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, attended the main ceremony marking the 18th martyrdom anniversary of former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, held here today.

Addressing the media on the occasion, the Prime Minister paid rich tribute to Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, describing her as a symbol of democracy.

"BB Shaheed dedicated her entire life to public service and the promotion of democratic values", he said adding that her life long struggle and sacrifices constitute a glorious chapter in Pakistan's political history.

He also paid homage to her political services, unwavering struggle for democracy, supremacy of constitution and rule of law and reaffirmed his commitment to carrying forward her mission.

The Prime Minister stated that under the visionary leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari, Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Mohtarma Faryal Talpur,



the government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir would continue to serve its people in line with the ideology of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. On the occasion, Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore visited the mausoleums of Quaid-e-Azam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto

Awesome weather

ISLAMABAD: Motorists are on their way at Faisal Avenue during foggy weather in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Brigadier (R) Muhammad Khan and Saqib Majid Raja Officially Join PML-N

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Muslim Conference chief organizer Saqib Majid Raja and distinguished intellectual and analyst Brigadier (R) Muhammad Khan have joined PML-N (N) Azad Kashmir.

Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Gilgit Baltistan and Safran and President PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engineer Amir Maqam were both present at the function held in Islamabad on Saturday. The authority to join the League(n).

He expressed these views on the occasion of joining PML-N of Muslim Conference central chief organizer Saqib Majid Raja and Brigadier (R) Muhammad Khan here in Islamabad on Saturday.

They said that Raja Farooq Haider Khan was always watching at the border for pistols during the crime. I was relieved. He said that Brigadier



(R) Dr Muhammad Khan congratulated Raja Saqib Majid on his joining the League on behalf of himself and the leadership.

He said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and Nawaz Sharif have a vision of university schools in Azad Kashmir who want

to see Kashmiri children educated. In Azad Kashmir, PM Shahbaz Sharif ensured equal distribution of laptops like Pakistan. The work is completed soon and we have seen 100 percent results, we will work together to give more relief to Kashmiris. Even less.

Federal Minister of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Engineer Amir Maqam attended the ceremony.

PML-N President and Opposition Leader Shah Ghulam Qadir, former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan, Senior Vice President Raja Mushtaq Munam, former Chief Minister of State Dr. Abiy Ahmed were also present in the programme. was present at the inclusive event.

Parliamentary party, central organizational officials and important political personalities from District Bagh and Muzaffarabad participated in the meeting.

PPP Tribute: Benazir Bhutto's Sacrifice Forged Pakistan's Democracy

Malik Saleem Shahid

VEHARI: Vice President of Pakistan Peoples Party Women Wing Division Multan, Ms Taslima Habib Rao paid tribute to the leader of democracy, the first elected female Prime Minister of the Islamic world, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, in a detailed statement on the occasion of her death anniversary. She said that Benazir Bhutto Shaheed

sacrificed her life for the survival of democracy in the country and the right of the people to live with their heads held high, which history will never forget. Baji Taslima Habib Rao said that Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto challenged the dictatorship at a time when the country was immersed in darkness. She endured the hardships of exile, endured the hardships of imprisonment and imprisonment but did not compromise on her

principles. If today the country has a parliament and democracy, it is a charity of Bibi Shaheed's blood. Vice President Women Wing Division Multan Baji Taslima Habib Rao, while shedding light on the role of women, said that Ms. Benazir Bhutto encouraged Pakistani women to step out of the four walls of the house and play their role in changing the destiny of the country. Baji Taslima Habib Rao said that

a series of Quran recitation and prayer ceremonies are being organized by the Women Wing in Multan Division where the workers are praying for the elevation of the ranks of their beloved leader. She urged the workers to unite and make the party more active so that the coming era will once again prove to be the era of "people's rule". Mian Rizwan Qureshi, Dr. Ismail Nafees were present on the occasion.

Quaid-e-Azam Day celebrated at International Human Rights Movement Office Toba Tek Singh

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Under the auspices of the International Human Rights Movement, Quaid-e-Azam Day was commemorated at the organization's office in Toba Tek Singh, where a cake-cutting ceremony was held to mark the anniversary of the birth of the Founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. According to details, the ceremony was attended by District Chairman International Human Rights Movement Ch. Abdul Sattar Wanis, President Muhammad Talib, Vice President along with all office-bearers and members of the organization. The participants paid rich tribute to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah for his invaluable services and leadership in the struggle for Pakistan.



Speaking on the occasion, District Chairman Chaudhry Abdul Sattar Wanis said that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah always upheld the principles of honesty, truthfulness, and high moral values. He emphasized that Quaid-e-Azam's life serves as a guiding light for the nation and that there is a need to follow his golden principles in our daily lives to ensure a prosperous and just society.

The participants reaffirmed their commitment to promoting human rights, unity and discipline in accordance with the teachings and vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Bannu Commander visits hospitals to check on injured Post-Takhti Khel Operation

Syed Tauqeer Zaidi

BANNU: Brigade Commander Bannu, Brigadier Umair Niazi, along with the DIG Bannu Region, visited DHQ Hospital Bannu and KGN Hospital to inquire after police personnel and civilians injured during the Takhti Khel operation.



During the visit, Brigadier Umair Niazi met the injured under treatment, checked on their well-being, and held discussions with hospital administration and doctors. He directed that the injured be provided with the best possible medical care.

The Brigade Commander praised the sacrifices of the police and security forces and expressed best wishes for the speedy recovery of the injured personnel.

It is pertinent to mention that a joint operation against terrorists was carried out by police, CTD, and local volunteers in the Takhti Khel area, within the jurisdiction of Police Station Naurang in Lakki Marwat District. As a result of the operation, six terrorists were killed and several others were injured. During the operation, terrorist firing and drone attacks left several police officials and civilians injured.

Delay Tactics in Masooma-e-Sindh Shrine Construction Spark Province-Wide Protest Movement

News Desk

KARACHI: Participants at the annual International Interfaith Masooma-e-Sindh Conference, held at the Sindh Scouts Club Karachi and jointly organized by the Zaireen Khidmat Committee Agham Kot, Sindh, and the Karachi Editors Club, strongly condemned the continued delay tactics allegedly employed by the Sindh Auqaf Department in the construction of the sacred shrine of Masooma-e-Sindh.



Addressing the gathering, Zawar Abdul Sattar Dars of the Zaireen Khidmat Committee announced the launch of a phased protest movement beginning in the last week of January 2026, citing prolonged suspension and deliberate hindrances affecting the construction work.

According to the announced plan, the protest movement will begin with a press conference at the Karachi Press Club, followed by a one-day symbolic hunger strike outside the Press Club. After a brief interval, a continuous protest hunger strike will be staged, with participation expected from mourning organizations and Matami Anjumans from various parts of Sindh.

The organizers stated that the protest movement would continue until all related issues are resolved and construction work on the shrine is fully restored.

ICCI, Connected Pakistan Host Growth Summit-25

Commerce Desk

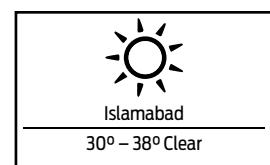
ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), in collaboration with Connected Pakistan, successfully hosted Growth Summit-25, bringing together leading entrepreneurs, technology experts, digital innovators, and aspiring startups to discuss pathways for sustainable economic growth through innovation and entrepreneurship.

President ICCI Sardar Tahir Mehmood, who graced the occasion as Chief Guest, while addressing the summit said that Pakistan's future economic strength lies in technology-driven enterprises, skilled youth, and globally competitive startups. He emphasized that platforms like Growth Summit-25 play a vital role in connecting young entrepreneurs with knowledge, mentorship, and market opportunities.

He stated that Pakistan is blessed with a large youth population, which must be transformed into a productive force through skill development, innovation, and digital enablement. "If we provide the right ecosystem, our youth can build global brands, create employment, and significantly contribute to national exports," he added.

The ICCI President highlighted that the Chamber is fully committed to promoting IT, startups, SMEs, and digital entrepreneurship, and is actively working to strengthen linkages between industry, academia, and government. He said ICCI's collaboration with Connected Pakistan reflects a shared vision to foster a digitally connected and innovation-led economy.




SERVICES
Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:42 am
Zohr	12:09 pm
Asr	3:29 pm
Maghrib	5:07 pm
Isha	6:36 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 & 4451122
& Rescue Services	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

Women Police
Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4

Inauguration of Pordh Miana Road Tehsil H. Abdal MNA Sh Aftab
Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Under the leadership of Pakistan Muslim League (N) leader Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif are striving to put Pakistan on the path of development at the federal and provincial levels. Meanwhile, under the command of Field Marshal General Asim Munir, the armed forces of Pakistan are safeguarding the country's borders with a spirit of jihad and dedication.

These views were expressed by Member of the National Assembly and Member of the Supreme Judicial Commission, Sheikh Aftab Ahmed, while addressing a large public gathering at the inauguration of the special repair project of the Pordh Miana Road in Union Council Pordh Miana, Tehsil Hasan Abdal. The project was completed under the supervision of the Punjab Communication and Works Department (Highway Division Attock) at a cost of Rs. 250 million.

General Secretary PML-N PP-2 Malik Abid Shehzad, President PML-N Union Council Pordh Miana Babu Farrukh Hayat Awan, and others also addressed the ceremony.

On the occasion, former Punjab Assembly candidate Sheikh Suleiman Sarwar, PML-N leader Sheikh Ajmal Mahmood, Senior Vice President PP-2 Yasir Janoon, PML-N leader Muhammad Sadiq Bhatti, Waheed Khan, Saif-ur-Rehman, Malik Nazar, former councillor Chaudhry Iqbal, Chaudhry Saqib, Malik Ijaz from Abbottabad, Sheikh Hamid Qudoos, Sheikh Awad Safdar, and a large number of local dignitaries were present.

Madrasas facing existential threat from global policies, warns Maulana Fazlur Rehman

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: The chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F), Maulana Fazlur Rehman, sounded an alarm on the survival of religious seminaries on Saturday, alleging that the "global establishment" is pursuing a persistent policy to target Madrasas in Pakistan.

Addressing a large gathering of scholars at the Fazila Convention held at Madrasa Qasim-ul-Uloom in Gulgash, the JUI-F leader emphasized that while the religious leadership is committed to peace, the state must reciprocate by ending its antagonistic behavior toward religious institutions.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman categorically rejected the narrative that seminaries are breeding grounds for radicalization. "We are labeled as extremists, but the Madrasa is not the cause of extremism. It is the state's behavior that creates intensity," he remarked.

He reiterated his party's stance against taking up arms against the state but sent a blunt message to the authorities: "We are not in favor of taking up weapons against

the state, but the government must also behave reasonably."

Prominent scholar Mufti-e-Azam Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani also addressed the convention, urging the state to reconsider its policies. He noted that Madrasas are not a burden on the national exchequer and provide education to millions while the state fails to address the falling literacy rate.

Maulana Asad Mahmood added that JUI-F is fighting a political battle to prevent the Islamic constitution from being shifted toward a secular framework.

The event concluded with Maulana Fazlur Rehman awarding honorary shields to JUI-F leaders—including Hafiz Muhammad Umar Sheikh, Rana Muhammad Saeed, and Qari Yasin—for their humanitarian efforts during the recent floods.

Other speakers, including Qari Hanif Jalandhari and Maulana Allah Wasaya, reaffirmed their commitment to the independence of the Ulema, vowing that the movement to protect the seminaries, which has stood for 150 years, will continue unabated.



Enjoyed

ISLAMABAD: Children are enjoying swings at UAE Park along with their parents as winters vacation of students and weekend of parents, crowded the parks and tourists destination in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

PTI Should Apologize to Army Chief and Pakistan Army, Says Chaudhry Inaam Zafar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Political and social leader Chaudhry Inaam Zafar strongly condemned the alleged death threats against Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir on PTI's social media accounts and protests against the Pakistan Armed Forces.

He said PTI must immediately apologize to the army and the nation and issue a clear condemnation of such actions.

He termed protests outside the Pakistani Consulate in Bradford and threats against the Army Chief as an attack on Pakistan's sovereignty,

adding that PTI appears to have learned no lesson from the May 9 events.

Chaudhry Inaam Zafar stated

that the nation is indebted to the Pakistan Armed Forces for defending the country and fighting terrorism, praising General Asim Munir's leadership.

He said the Awaam Pakistan Party's leadership and workers strongly condemn PTI's actions.

He added that at a time when Pakistan faces terrorism, economic weakness, inflation, and unemployment, such actions raise serious questions about PTI's political judgment. He concluded that the entire nation stands shoulder to shoulder with the Pakistan Army.



Literary Session held in honor of poet Faiqa Gul Sahibzada from Manchester, UK

News Desk

LAHORE: A prestigious literary session was held at the Punjab Officers' Mess, Lahore, in honor of renowned poet, writer, and translator Faiqa Gul Sahibzada, who is visiting from Manchester, United Kingdom. The event was organized by Qurat-ul-Ain Haider and was attended by prominent figures from the fields of literature, poetry, and journalism.

Faiqa Gul Sahibzada is the CEO of SS Entertainment Digital Channel (UK) and the founder of the Saiban Literary Forum. She has been actively contrib-

uting to the promotion of Pakistani literature, art, and culture in the United Kingdom. She was accompanied by her husband, Humayun Sahibzada, a well-known social and journalistic figure in the UK, who has also rendered significant services in promoting literary and cultural activities among overseas Pakistanis.

The session was attended by noted poets, writers, and columnists, including Shoaib Bin Aziz, Aftab Akbar (Atbab Akbar), Dr. Mujahid Mirza, Hammad Ghaznavi, Sughray Sadaf, Neelam Ahmed Bashir, Advocate Adeel Haider Jafri, and Syed Hamid Ali

Zaidi. Engaging literary discussions and poetry recitations created an intellectually rich and pleasant atmosphere throughout the gathering.

Following lunch, informal interactions and an exchange of views continued on the lush lawns of the Officers' Mess. On this occasion, Neelam Ahmed Bashir also presented her book to Humayun Sahibzada.

At the conclusion of the event, participants described the literary session as memorable and enriching. Faiqa Gul Sahibzada expressed her gratitude to the hosts and attendees and conveyed her best wishes and prayers.



District Administration crack down on quack doctors and substandard medicines in Toba Tek Singh

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Following the directives of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Toba Tek Singh district administration is actively working to safeguard public health. In this regard, a crucial meeting of the District Quality Control Board was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Umar Abbas Mela, reviewing ongoing actions against substandard medicines, unregistered clinics and quack doctors.

During the meeting, a total of 23 cases were discussed. Of these, warnings were issued in 11 cases, prosecution was approved in 7 cases, 2 cases were scheduled for revisit, and 3 cases were deferred. Deputy Commissioner Umar Abbas Mela stated that a zero-tolerance policy will continue against those jeopardizing public health. He emphasized that strict legal action will be taken against quack doctors and sellers of counterfeit medicines. He further said that, in line with the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, ensuring safe and quality healthcare for the public remains the government's top priority. The Deputy Commissioner directed district administration and health department officials to maintain daily inspections across the district.

Green Crescent Trust to Host Back-to-Back Galas for 888 Orphaned Students

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: The non-profit Green Crescent Trust (GCT) is set to host remaining two vibrant, back-to-back recreational galas this month in Hyderabad and Sukkur, bringing joy and memorable experiences to more than 888 orphaned students enrolled in its 67 charitable schools across the most deprived and remote areas of interior Sindh in 19 districts.

These day-long, fun-filled events will not only offer a rare opportunity for celebration and recreation to the children, but will also mark the formal launch of GCT's ambitious 2026 Ramazan fundraising drive. Through this campaign, the non-profit aims to raise Rs 900 million to accelerate its mission of enrolling thousands of out-of-school children and strengthening access to quality education in underserved communities.

In Hyderabad, more than 777 orphaned students will take part in a festive gathering. Sindh Senior Minister for Information and Transport Sharjeel Inam Memon expected to grace the occasion as chief guest. The 2nd remaining event, scheduled in Sukkur, will entertain over 111 orphaned students and is likely to be attended by the city's Mayor, Arsalan Islam Sheikh, as chief guest.

Anti-Corruption arrests two officials caught taking bribe

PESHAWAR: Anti-Corruption Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Saturday arrested two officials in a successful raid after they were caught red-handed accepting bribe money.

In a press statement, the operation has been conducted on complaints regarding bribery. The arrested identified as Stenographer Badshah Gul and Junior Clerk Rehmat Said who were working in office of Assistant Director Local Government at District Mohmand. The team recovered bribe money of Rs 100,000 from their possession on the spot.

The statement said that the investigation was underway.

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Occupation's Temporary Rule Broken: Kashmir Faces Punitive Land Attachments

The principle that an occupying power does not become the sovereign owner of the territory it controls is well-established in international law. An occupier's role is temporary administration, not ownership, domination, or the rewriting of the political identity of a people. Yet in Kashmir today, we witness a troubling departure from this foundational rule — one increasingly expressed through punitive property seizures, land attachments, and coercive legal actions aimed at silencing dissent and intimidating voices at home and abroad.

Mahatma Gandhi once reminded India that true sovereignty resides with the people, not with rulers. Speaking in Delhi on July 29, 1947, he declared, "The real sovereign of the State are the people. The ruler is a servant of the people. If he is not so, then he is not the ruler... In Kashmir too, the power belongs to the public. Let them do as they want." Gandhi's words were a moral indictment of colonial rule — but they also carry meaning for the present. If political authority today claims sovereignty over Kashmir while denying its people agency, dignity, and participation, then it contradicts both the ethical spirit and democratic foundations that Gandhi articulated.

International law reinforces this moral truth. Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits collective punishment and makes clear that no civilian may be penalized for an offense they did not personally commit. The Convention applies to all situations of occupation, recognized or not, and it safeguards both civilians and their property. UN Special Rapporteurs, human-rights bodies, and international courts have repeatedly affirmed that punitive evictions, demolition of homes, revocation of residency rights, and seizure of land as retaliation for political opinion or peaceful activism violate international legal obligations and may amount to serious human-rights abuses. Forced eviction, as the UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing has emphasized, constitutes a gross violation of human rights.

Over recent years, there has been a marked increase in property attachments and asset seizures — many of them justified under broad security narratives and enforced through domestic criminal laws such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). These measures are not only punitive in character; they reshape a political dispute into a regime of control. Dr. Syed Nazir Gilani, President of the Jammu and Kashmir Council for Human Rights (JKCHR), has argued that New Delhi lacks the legal authority to seize assets in a territory recognized internationally as disputed, and that what was historically framed as a protective mandate has now hardened into a punitive and coercive order.

This trend has not spared the Kashmiri diaspora. Increasingly, ancestral properties belonging to overseas Kashmiris engaged in peaceful political advocacy are being attached or threatened with seizure. A recent case cited by JKCHR involves the attachment of land belonging to U. S.-based Kashmiri leader Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai in Budgam — one of several incidents that have triggered public debate across Kashmir. Similar actions have reportedly affected the properties of Dr. Syed Nazir Geelani, Ershad Ahmed Malik, and Raja Muzaffar Khan — individuals known not for violence, but for advocating a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions.

Trump's War Paradox

Donald Trump has long styled himself as a man of peace, a leader determined to end America's "forever wars." Yet the reality of his second term tells a very different story. From Africa to the Middle East to the Caribbean, U. S. military power is being projected more aggressively than at any time in recent years, often outside clear multilateral mandates and sometimes against the wishes of the nations affected. The paradox is striking: a president who boasts of stopping wars now presides over an expanding web of military strikes, naval seizures, economic blockades, and strategic pressure campaigns that are reshaping how the world sees the United States.

Somalia tells a similar story. Throughout 2025, U. S. drone and air operations there continued against alleged ISIS-Somalia and other militant groups. These strikes are often coordinated with Somali authorities, yet they form part of a much longer, largely undeclared military engagement that has persisted across multiple administrations. Trump campaigned on ending such interventions. Instead, the map of U. S. kinetic action has only widened, blurring the line between targeted counter-terrorism and perpetual low-grade war.

The Western Hemisphere — historically considered America's strategic backyard — has not been spared this assertiveness. In December, the United States intensified its maritime campaign against Venezuela, intercepting and seizing tankers accused of violating sanctions. For Washington, these are enforcement actions. For Caracas, they are economic warfare — moves designed to choke off the country's primary source of foreign revenue and weaken the government.

The optics of U. S. ships stopping sovereign vessels in international waters evoke images of a superpower imposing its will far beyond its shores. To many observers, this resembles coercive regime-pressure more than a narrowly targeted law-enforcement effort.

Overlaying all this is Trump's revived fixation on Greenland. He has again stressed its strategic importance to U. S. security, hinting at deeper American control or acquisition. To the people of Greenland and Denmark, such language is unsettling. It suggests a view of sovereignty as negotiable when strategic interests are at stake, reinforcing fears that U. S. policy is moving away from partnership and toward an overtly transactional and hegemonic posture.

This growing pattern of unilateral action sits uneasily with America's post-war legacy. The United States was not only central to the creation of the United Nations; it championed the concept that the use of force should be governed by collective legitimacy. Even when Washington bent those principles in the past, it generally paid lip service to them. Today, the tone has shifted. The U. S. frequently vetoes UN resolutions on conflicts such as Gaza, isolating allies from accountability while asserting its own right to strike elsewhere without global consent. To critics, this makes Washington appear less like the guardian of a rules-based order and more like an exception-claiming power that enforces rules on others while exempting itself.

For much of the world, this has accelerated the erosion of U. S. soft power. Soft power rests not on aircraft carriers

or sanctions, but on trust, perceived fairness, and moral authority. It once enabled Washington to lead coalitions, shape norms, and attract global goodwill. But each unilateral strike, each tanker seizure, each veto against widely supported humanitarian resolutions chips away at that intangible asset. Allies increasingly hedge their bets. Neutral nations edge closer to alternative power centers. And countries hit by U. S. pressure look elsewhere for protection or partnership.

China in particular benefits from this shift. Beijing projects itself — rightly or wrongly — as a power that avoids military entanglement and prefers development-based engagement. When Washington acts as global enforcer, and when those actions are seen as destabilizing or self-serving, it pushes many states into China's orbit almost by default. The message becomes simple: if partnership with the United States carries risk, unpredictability, or coercion, perhaps alternative relationships offer greater stability, even if they come with their own compromises.

The tragedy of this trajectory is that it is not inevitable. U. S. leadership historically derived its strength from a mix of capability and consent. It was powerful, but also persuasive. It spoke the language of international law, legitimacy, and collective decision-making, even imperfectly. Today that balance is tipping. The more the United States acts alone, the more alone it may ultimately find itself.

There is also a domestic contradiction at play. Trump continues to present himself as a peace-first president, the man who avoids wars others might start.

Yet the record of strikes, seizures, and escalating pressure tells a different story. The actions may be justified individually as tactical necessities. But collectively they signal a strategy of global projection, not global restraint. The rhetoric of peace is being used to mask a footprint of expanding conflict.

If this trajectory continues, America's reputation risks hardening into something damaging and enduring: not the indispensable nation, but the unpredictable enforcer. That perception would not only undermine its moral authority but weaken its alliances, constrain its influence, and embolden rivals. Nations do not abandon superpowers overnight — but over time, they recalibrate.

The alternative path is still open. It lies in rediscovering the principle that force abroad should carry a legitimacy beyond national assertion alone, and that the institutions America helped build should not be dismissed when inconvenient. When diplomacy is prioritized over coercion, when multilateral consent tempers unilateral action, and when sovereignty is respected even in the face of threat, U. S. leadership strengthens rather than diminishes.

Donald Trump's presidency will ultimately be judged not by how forcefully America acted, but by how wisely. Ending the paradox between the rhetoric of peace and the practice of war is the first step toward restoring global trust. Only then can the United States reclaim the soft power and moral authority that once made it a leader in both name and spirit.

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 Rasmie. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

How Pakistan's Military Diplomacy Reshaped South Asian Influence in 2025

The year 2025 will be remembered not for a single treaty or crisis, but for a quiet transformation: the rise of military diplomacy as a primary instrument of geopolitical influence. In South Asia, this shift played out most visibly through Pakistan's recalibrated defense outreach—an effort that expanded Islamabad's strategic relevance while exposing vulnerabilities in the international image of India.

Pakistan's Military Diplomacy: From Isolation to Institutional Presence

By 2025, Pakistan's military leadership had internalized a central lesson of contemporary geopolitics: credibility travels through institutions, not headlines. The strategy unfolded across the entire year in three reinforcing phases.

Phase One: Normalization (January–April 2025)

Pakistan emphasized routine, professional engagement—staff talks, training exchanges, counterterrorism coordination, and maritime security dialogues. These interactions lacked drama but restored predictability, reassuring partners that Pakistan's security posture was steady and pragmatic.

Phase Two: Expansion (May–August 2025)

As trust deepened, Islamabad broadened outreach beyond traditional partners. Engagements across the Gulf, Central Asia, and select European defense establishments reframed Pakistan as a connector state—one able to speak to rival blocs without ideological rigidity.

Phase Three: Consolidation (September–December 2025)

By year's end, Pakistan's military diplomacy matured into agenda-setting participation: contributions to peacekeeping reform debates, crisis-management mechanisms, and regional

de-escalation forums. Pakistan was no longer merely responding—it was shaping discussion.

The cumulative effect was reputational: Pakistan became visible not as a problem to be managed, but as a partner to be consulted.

India's Image Challenge: Power Meets Scrutiny

India entered 2025 with formidable advantages—economic growth, technological clout, and strong ties across the Indo-Pacific. Yet

image, unlike power, is fragile.

Allegations and Optics Abroad

Ongoing investigations and allegations surrounding political violence overseas—particularly in Canada—kept India under sustained media and parliamentary scrutiny.

While legal processes remain unresolved, the reputational cost was immediate. Western

discourse, once reflexively supportive, grew more cautious.

Bangladesh and the Neighborhood Question

Relations with Bangladesh reflected broader regional unease. Political transitions, border sensitivities, and migration narratives complicated India's claim to benevolent regional leadership, reinforcing perceptions of asymmetry rather than partnership.

Perhaps most striking was the narrative contrast. As Pakistan quietly expanded diplomatic reach, India's long-standing portrayal of Islamabad as isolated lost persuasive power.

The gap between rhetoric and reality widened—especially in the Global South.

India was not weakened strategically—but it was forced onto the defensive narratively, a costly position in an era where perception shapes policy.

Pakistan's success in 2025 stemmed less from ambition than from discipline:

• Consistency over spectacle: no grand-

standing, no sudden pivots.

• Security-first pragmatism: shared threats over ideological alignment.

• Civil-military signaling: presenting coherence, even amid domestic challenges.

Military diplomacy proved effective because it bypassed political volatility and engaged states where trust already existed—within professional defense communities.

Global Alignment: Adjusted Angles, Not New Axes

Did 2025 mark a reordering of world power? No. But it re-angled influence:

• Western capitals adopted a more transactional, less moralistic approach to Pakistan.

• Middle powers saw Islamabad as a viable intermediary.

• India retained centrality—but no longer monopoly—over South Asian narratives.

In geopolitics, such marginal shifts often prece

ded larger realignments.

Pakistan's experience demonstrated that rehabilitation in world politics is possible without grand bargains—through patience, professionalism, and institutional trust. India's experience illustrated the inverse: that even rising powers must manage conduct as carefully as capability.

The year underscored a new rule of global influence:

Hard power earns attention; disciplined behavior earns credibility.

As the world moves deeper into an era of fragmented power, South Asia's influence will hinge less on confrontation and more on credibility.

Pakistan used 2025 to reintroduce itself to the world—quietly, deliberately, and effectively.

India used 2025 to confront an uncomfortable truth: leadership today demands not just strength, but restraint under scrutiny.

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124th Midshipmen and 32nd Short Service Commission Course Commissioning Parade held at Pakistan Naval Academy, Karachi

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Commissioning Parade of 124th Midshipmen and 32nd Short Service Commission Course (SSC) was held at Pakistan Naval Academy, Karachi, marking the passing out of 90 Midshipmen and 34 SSC cadets. Commander Royal Bahrain Naval Force, Rear Admiral Ahmed Mohammed Ebrahim Al Bin Ali, graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Upon arrival, the Chief Guest was received by Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf.

The Chief Guest, himself an alumnus of Pakistan Naval Academy, expressed pride in reviewing the Commissioning Parade at his alma mater and lauded professional competence of Pakistan Navy as a key regional force. He highlighted Pakistan Navy's longstanding tradition of imparting high quality training to cadets from friendly countries, with cadets from Bahrain, Iraq, the Republic of Djibouti, Sri Lanka and Türkiye in the parade. The Chief Guest also reaffirmed the enduring bonds, shared values and commitment to mutual progress between Pakistan



and Bahrain.

Later, the Chief Guest gave away prizes to the winners. Midshipman Muhammad Uzair Abbas was declared winner of the coveted Sword of Honour for overall best performance whereas

Midshipman Shahab Ahmed won the Academy's Dirk. Officer Cadet Umar Mukhtar from Pakistan and Officer Cadet Aldhahabi Fahad Husam Fareed from Iraq won Chief of the Naval Staff Gold Medals and Officer Cadet Syed

Saad Shahid from SSC Course clinched the Commandant Gold Medal. Proficiency Banner was claimed by Quarterdeck Squadron. The ceremony was attended by military officers, dignitaries and parents of cadets.



Condolence ceremony held by Pakistan Peoples Party on the death anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto

News Desk

JEDDAH: On the death anniversary of former Prime Minister and Daughter of the East Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) organized a special condolence ceremony in Saudi Arabia. The event was attended by a large number of office-bearers of the Pakistan Peoples Party, along with representatives of various political parties, social and welfare organizations, and community forums.

The ceremony was presided over by President Pakistan Peoples Party Saudi Arabia, Chaudhry Tasawar Hussain, while the proceedings were conducted by Sardar Waqar Inayatullah Khan, Convener of the Pakistan National Soli-

darity Forum. The event began with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by tributes to the political struggle, sacrifices for democracy, and national services of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.

Addressing the gathering, Chaudhry Tasawar Hussain said that Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was a shining symbol of democracy, supremacy of the Constitution, and the struggle for the rights of the people. He stated that she rendered unparalleled sacrifices against dictatorship and laid down her life to revive democracy in Pakistan. He added that the Pakistan Peoples Party remains steadfast on the mission of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and continues its journey of public service with full dedication.

Prominent attendees included Chaudhry Akram Gujar, Chairman PML-N Saudi Arabia; Engineer Arif Mughal, Chairman Jammu & Kashmir Overseas Community; Mehr Abdul Khalil Lak, General Secretary Pakistan Investors Forum; Ali Khurshid Malik, President Kababish Arts Council; Sardar Muhammad Ashfaq, President Muslim Conference; Chaudhry Khalid Rasheed; and Syed Zaman, Senior Vice President of the Awami National Party, along with other political and social leaders.

In a joint statement, representatives of various political parties and social forums described Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto as a great stateswoman, courageous and visionary leader who played a historic role in the promotion



of democratic values, women's rights, and public awareness. They emphasized that her sacrifices will always be

remembered and that her mission will remain a guiding light for future generations.

Other notable participants included Raja Muhammad Riaz, President Rabita Committee; Sharif-ul-Zaman, President Pakistan Welfare Forum; Chaudhry Khurshid Ahmed Mutyal; Asghar Khan; Ajmal Khan; Chaudhry Ehsan Elahi Gujar; and Khalil Abdul Aziz, General Secretary PPP Jeddah Region.

The ceremony concluded with a collective prayer for the elevation of the ranks of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, as well as for the peace, stability, and prosperity of Pakistan. Later, Malik Javed, Senior Vice President of Pakistan Peoples Party Saudi Arabia, expressed gratitude to all distinguished guests, participants, and party office-bearers for their presence and cooperation.

Riyadh Hosts Vibrant Poetry Symposium Uniting Overseas Pakistanis

News Desk

RIYADH: A poetry symposium (Mushaira) was held in Riyadh under the auspices of the Youth Forum, which was attended by a large number of overseas Pakistanis. The Mushaira was presided over by Rana Abdul Rauf, President of Majlis Pakistan. The distinguished guests included Syed Saqil Zubair, Patron-in-Chief of the Youth Forum; Muhammad Ibrahim Jatt, President of the Youth Forum; Waqar Naseem Wamiq, President of Halqa-e-Fikr-o-Fun; and Malik Bilal Ahmed, Country Manager of Pakistan International Airlines.

The proceedings were conducted by renowned Al-Ghani Siddiqui and



Tauseef Ahmed, General Secretary of the Youth Forum, while the duties of Stage Secretary were performed by Suleman Bakhsh, Deputy General Secretary of the Youth Forum.

The participating poets included Waqar Naseem Wamiq, Shuja-uz-Zaman Shad, Syed Tayyab Raza Kazmi, Kamran Hassani, Zawaq Ali Zaki, Aneeb Arshad, Professor Sajid Mahmood, Syed Waqas, Azmatullah Bhutta, Muzammil Bande, Kamran Ashraf, and several others, who showcased literary excellence through their poetry. Their verses delighted the audience, and the enthusiastic participation of overseas Pakistanis further enhanced the colors of Pakistani literature.

The objective of the Mushaira was

to bring overseas Pakistanis together and provide them with a platform to express their literary sentiments. Syed Saqib Zubair stated that this Mushaira was an important opportunity for overseas Pakistanis to express their literary emotions and to pray for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan.

In his presidential address, Rana Abdul Rauf said that this Mushaira organized by the Youth Forum would play a significant role in promoting literary activities in Riyadh. He paid tribute to the poets for serving literature through their poetry.

Youth Forum President Ibrahim Jatt, in his address, said that overseas Pakistanis are an important part of Pakistani literature, and their participation

added great charm to the Mushaira. He thanked all the participants.

The speakers appreciated the efforts of the Youth Forum and stated that this Mushaira would play an important role in promoting literary activities in Riyadh.

At the conclusion of the Mushaira, shields and commemorative gifts were presented to Youth Forum members who demonstrated outstanding performance. The poets, through their verses, encouraged the audience to cherish and remember the memories of the Mushaira.

This initiative by the Youth Forum will play a vital role in the promotion of literary activities in Riyadh and will continue to bring overseas Pakistanis together on a single platform.

18th Martyrdom Anniversary Of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto

The Last 100 Hours of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's Life

Asim Tanveer

Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto reached Rahim Yar Khan from Sukkur along with her best friend and Political Secretary, Miss Naheed Khan, amidst the piercing cold of December 23, 2007.

At night, she held a comprehensive meeting with the office-bearers of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) District Rahim Yar Khan. She issued instructions to the district officials regarding the preparations for the next day's public rally and the arrival of the crowds to ensure the event's success.

On December 24, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, accompanied by her Political Secretary Miss Naheed Khan, arrived at the Rahim Yar Khan Sports Stadium amidst a massive procession.

Upon reaching the rally site, she first inquired about the live media coverage. Miss Naheed Khan informed her that, in addition to the national electronic and print media, Asim Tanveer representing the international news agency Reuters, Mian Khalid Tanveer from the Associated Press of America, Arif Ali from Agence

France-Presse (AFP), and a BBC team were present in the stadium to cover her public gathering.

Upon hearing this, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto invited the foreign media representatives onto the stage and exchanged views with them.

Seeing the enthusiasm and passion of the people in Rahim Yar Khan, Mohtarma Benazir paid a tremendous tribute to her Political Secretary, Miss Naheed Khan.

Intelligence agencies reported the public attendance in Rahim Yar Khan to be over one hundred thousand, while independent sources estimated that more than two hundred thousand PPP workers participated in the rally.

On the same day, December 24, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto reached Bahawalpur via a chartered plane from Rahim Yar Khan. In the evening, despite the extreme cold, she addressed a massive and historic public gathering at the Bahawalpur Stadium.

She stayed at the residence of PPP leader and former Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board, Zaka Ashraf, at his sugar mill and attended a dinner there.

On December 25, at 12:00 PM, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto arrived in Lodhran to address a public rally and spoke to the largest gathering in the history of Lodhran.

Immediately after addressing the historic rally in Lodhran, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto reached Muzaffargarh to address another gathering. At 4:00 PM, she addressed a very large public meeting at the Muzaffargarh College Ground.

After addressing the public rally in Muzaffargarh, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and her Political Secretary, Miss Naheed Khan went directly to Multan Airport, where she gave an interview to Shakeel Anjum, Bureau Chief of Express TV Multan (and current President of the Press Club).

At 8:00 PM on the night of December 25, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto reached Islamabad directly from Multan. Late into the night, she met with party leaders at her residence in F-8/2. Her Political Secretary, Miss Naheed Khan and Senator Saifdar Abbasi were also present with her.

After meeting the key party officials late at night, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto discussed the

future political situation with Political Secretary Miss Naheed Khan and gave her instructions regarding the party's future.

On December 26, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto departed to address public rallies in Attock and Peshawar, where she spoke at the Arbab Niaz Stadium.

Terrorists were shadowing Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, seeking to marty her. After the Karsaz bomb blast, terrorists once again attempted to attack Mohtarma Benazir in Peshawar, but security agencies foiled the act of terrorism and recovered weapons from the suspects.

After addressing the Peshawar rally, Mohtarma Benazir and Miss Naheed Khan returned to Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's residence in Islamabad.

On December 26, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto reached Islamabad from Peshawar. Miss Naheed Khan took leave and departed from Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's residence at 2:30 AM. At 3:00 AM, DG ISI Lieutenant General Nadeem Taj arrived at Mohtarma Benazir's residence and met her In-charge, Brigadier (Retired) Aman. He told him,

"Arrange an emergency meeting for me with Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto immediately. I have an important message to deliver to her."

At that time, Mohtarma Benazir was giving a private interview to Reuters correspondent Asim Tanveer. During this, Brigadier Aman delivered the message for the urgent meeting with DG ISI Lieutenant General Nadeem Taj.

After finishing the interview, Mohtarma Benazir met General Nadeem Taj. During this meeting, the DG ISI warned Mohtarma Benazir of a terrorist threat for the following day, December 27, and advised her against addressing the public rally at Liaquat Bagh, Rawalpindi. He informed her of the specific threat and continued to urge her not to go to Liaquat Bagh.

On December 27, after having breakfast, Mohtarma Benazir studied national and international newspapers while conversing with her Political Secretary, Miss

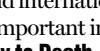
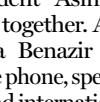
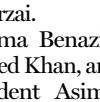
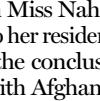
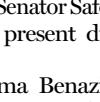
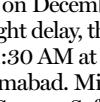
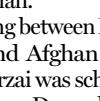
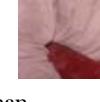
Naheed Khan.

A meeting between Mohtarma Benazir and Afghan President Hamid Karzai was scheduled for 10:30 AM on December 27, but due to a flight delay, the meeting began at 11:30 AM at the Serena Hotel, Islamabad. Miss Naheed Khan and Senator Saifdar Abbasi were also present during this meeting.

Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, along with Miss Naheed Khan, returned to her residence at 1:00 PM after the conclusion of the meeting with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Miss Naheed Khan, and Reuters correspondent Asim Tanveer had lunch together. Afterward, Mohtarma Benazir remained busy on the phone, speaking with national and international politicians and important individuals.

The Journey to Death
Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto returned from her residence at 7:00 PM. After the speech at Liaquat Bagh, the crowd was moving alongside Mohtarma Benazir's vehicle. During this, Mohtarma Benazir suddenly asked her driver, Javed, to open the sunroof. Within a few seconds, while Mohtarma Benazir was waving her hand from the sunroof to respond to the slogans of thousands of PPP workers, terrorists suddenly opened fire. Ten seconds later, a bomb blast occurred, in which the "Pinky" of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and former Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir was martyred.



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	
-0.19%	24 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
48,653.41	-77.75	
Percentage	Time	
-0.16%	26 Dec, 12:25 pm GMT-5	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
50,750.39	+342.60	
Percentage	Time	
+0.68%	26 Dec, 3:45 pm GMT+9	
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

IBA Karachi attains full membership of UNICON

Commerce Desk

DECEMBER 2025: IBA has attained Full Membership of University Consortium for Executive Education (UNICON), joining a highly selective global network of 125+ leading universities and business schools worldwide. Notably, IBA is the first public-sector institution in Pakistan to achieve full UNICON membership—underscoring its regional credibility, global competitiveness, and leadership in executive education, while strengthening Pakistan's connection to world-class learning and global best practices.

As a Full Member of UNICON, IBA-CEE will continue to expand high-impact learning platforms, connect Pakistani leadership with global expertise, and contribute to positioning Pakistan as an active and credible participant in the international executive education ecosystem. As IBA continues to expand its impact and reach new milestones in the years ahead, this achievement stands yet another defining highlight of 2025 in the institution's journey of Leadership, Excellence, and Impact.

Gold price jumps Rs 2,300 per tola in local market

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24-karat gold increased by Rs 2,300 per tola and was sold at Rs 475,662 on Saturday as compared to Rs 473,362 on the previous trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association reported.

The price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold rose by Rs 1,972 to Rs 407,803 from Rs 405,831, while 10 grams of 22-karat gold went up by Rs 1,808 to Rs 373,833 from Rs 372,025.

Meanwhile, the price of silver also witnessed a sharp increase as 24-karat silver per tola surged by Rs 462 to Rs 8,407, whereas the price of 10 grams of silver climbed by Rs 396 to Rs 7,207. In the international market, the price of gold increased by \$23 to \$4,533, while silver prices rose by \$4.62 to \$79.32, the Association added.

KARACHI: Malik Muhammad Bostan, Chairman of the Exchange Companies Association of Pakistan (ECAP), the representative organization of money changers in Pakistan, termed the visit of the President of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to Pakistan as highly successful. He said that this visit will strengthen mutual and trade relations between the two countries, and that cooperation in the fields of economic collaboration, investment, energy, infrastructure development, IT, technology, and people-to-people contacts will lead to growth in these sectors.

Malik Muhammad Bostan stated that agreement between the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mian Shehbaz Sharif, and the President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu

Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, on the need to increase bilateral trade will result in mutual development. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to continue working together to achieve shared goals of peace, stability, and sustainable development. He added that Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's visit to Pakistan will also lead to mutual understanding on regional and international issues.

Malik Muhammad Bostan

further said that Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's salute in response to the salute of the Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, won the hearts of the Pakistani nation. He added that this visit will further strengthen the long-standing friendship and brotherly relations between Pakistan and the UAE.

He also mentioned that a few days earlier, the UAE Consul General in Karachi, Bakheet Ateeq Al Remeithi, had shared

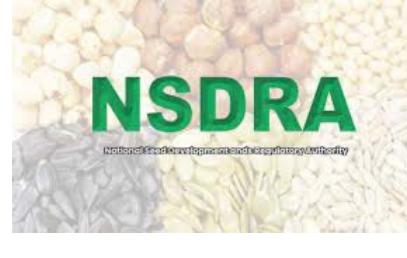
good news at an event, stating that major investment from the United Arab Emirates in Pakistan is expected in the coming months. He said that Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's visit is expected to accelerate the investment process. However, he emphasized that the process of issuing UAE visas for Pakistani citizens should be made easier so that workers can go to the UAE and foreign exchange can flow into Pakistan.

Seed sector reforms gain momentum as regulatory framework modernized

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of National Food Security and Research provides an overview of ongoing institutional reforms and modernization initiatives being undertaken to strengthen Pakistan's seed sector and ensure the availability of quality, certified seed for farmers nationwide.

In response to long-standing structural challenges—such as fragmented seed policies, limited regulatory effectiveness, constrained access to improved and climate-resilient varieties, and outdated certification systems—the



Government enacted the Seed (Amendment) Act, 2024. The Act established the National Seed Development and Regulatory Authority (NSDRA) as a streamlined and specialized

institution mandated to enhance regulatory oversight, support varietal development, and ensure the provision of genetically true-to-type seed.

As part of this institutional transition, the Federal Seed Certification & Registration Department (FSC&RD) was integrated into NSDRA. The restructuring process included strategic rightsizing, with a focus on optimizing human resources and strengthening technical capacity. This approach has enabled NSDRA to operate as an efficient, performance-oriented authority across the seed value chain.

Digital transformation constitutes a central component of the Authority's operational framework. A comprehensive MIS-based digital system has been implemented to enable end-to-end traceability of seed sector activities. These include registration and renewal of seed companies, variety approval processes, registration of nurseries and seed processing plants, fruit plant certification, internationally accredited seed testing, and market monitoring. The Truth in Labelling Scheme has also been notified and implemented, introducing performance-based regulatory mechanisms to enhance transparency and accountability.

Construction work

LAHORE: Laborers are busy with heavy machinery during the construction of parking plaza near historical Mochi Darwaza in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Customs Enforcement Quetta, continues its sustained drive against smuggling in multiple operations

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Collectorate of Customs Enforcement Quetta, continuing its sustained drive against smuggling, has conducted multiple successful anti-smuggling operations, resulting in the seizure of contraband goods worth Rs. 317 million.

In an intelligence-based operation (IBO), carried out in coordination with Quetta Police, Customs Enforcement seized 508 cartons (25,400 sticks) of assorted branded smuggled cigarettes. The assessed value of the seized cigarettes is Rs. 200 million. The contraband was recovered following meticulous surveillance and examination in strict compliance with prescribed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

In separate operations, Customs Enforcement Quetta also seized a large quantity of smuggled mobile phones and 13 Non-Custom-Paid (NCP) vehicles, with a combined assessed value of



Rs. 117 million.

All seized items have been taken into official custody, and further legal proceedings are being initiated under the relevant provisions of the Customs Act, 1969.

The FBR reaffirms its unwavering commitment to curb smuggling and illicit trade to safeguard the national economy.

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's visit will strengthen trade ties, Malik Muhammad Bostan

Commerce Desk

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TECNO Brings Easy Smartphone Installments to Qist Bazaar 2025



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: TECNO a leading smartphone brand making innovative technology accessible, is part of Qist Bazaar 2025 at Expo Center Karachi, Hall No. 5. From 26-28 December 2025, visitors can experience the latest TECNO smartphones and purchase them on convenient installment plans.

The SPARK 40 Series is attracting strong interest from young users with AI Studio, 45W fast charging, a 5200mAh long-lasting battery, and a 1.5K 3D curved AMOLED display with 144Hz refresh rate. SPARK 40 Pro+ also offers 30W magnetic wireless charging and is available on 3, 6, 9 and 12-month installments.

Visit Qist Bazaar 2025 at Expo Center Karachi, Hall number 5 today to buy your favorite TECNO smartphone.

Bank of Azad Jammu & Kashmir Decides to Take Strict Legal Action Against Defaulters

Commerce Desk

MUZAFFARABAD: The Bank of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (BAJK) has decided to initiate strict legal action against loan defaulters who fail to regularize their outstanding liabilities. This was stated by the President and Chief Executive Officer of BAJK, Mr. Shahid Shahzad Mir.

According to a spokesperson of the Bank, the President & CEO said that BAJK has been providing financing facilities to promote social and economic development in the state, with the objective of strengthening business activities and creating new employment opportunities. However, failure to ensure timely repayment of loans is unfair to new and deserving individuals who seek financial support for business growth and job creation.

He categorically stated that all borrowers who have not yet regularized their accounts must ensure recovery/payment of their outstanding dues by December 31, 2025. In case of failure to comply within the stipulated time-frame, FIRs will be registered against the defaulters under Section 489-F of the Pakistan Penal Code (Cheque

Bounce). Under this section, offenders may face up to three years imprisonment, fine, or both. In addition, properties of defaulters may be auctioned, along with other stringent legal measures as provided under the law.

The President & CEO Shahid Shahzad Mir added that BAJK is fully committed to safeguarding public interest, institutional discipline, and financial transparency. Therefore, defaulters are being given a final opportunity to fulfill their obligations within the given deadline and avoid legal consequences.

The spokesperson added that the Bank has adopted a zero-tolerance policy against defaulters and has made it clear that no concessions or extensions will be granted after the due date. Strict action will be taken in accordance with the law against those who fail to comply he reaffirmed.

According to the vision of Chairman Cricket Board Mohsin Naqvi, sports activities are springing up in the division

By Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Divisional Model College (DMC) beat La Salle High School by 27 runs at the Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad on Saturday afternoon to win the PCB Faisalabad Commissioner Super Eight Schools Cup. The 31-match tournament concluded with La Salle's eight-match winning streak coming to an end as they were bowled out for 202 in 34 overs. For La Salle Abdul Raheem Ashraf and Hamid Raza struck half-centuries after their team slipped to 72-3 in 12.4 overs.

Minister of State for Interior and Senator Talal Badar Chaudhry and Commissioner Faisalabad Raja Jahangir Anwar attended as special guests. Chief Operating Officer Pakistan Cricket Board Sameer Ahmed Syed, Director Domestic Cricket Abdullatif Khurram Niazi, Cricketer Saeed Ajmal, President Regional Cricket Rana Anis, Javad Afzal and Ammad Afzal of Jawaad Sports and Cultural Club, Former President Haseebullah Shahid, Tariq Bajwa, Aleem Ehsan, Finance Secretary of District Cricket Association Zaheer Hassan, Noor, Wajahat Saleem Bandsha, Waheed Gul, Azmat Maulvi Anis, Khawaja Abdul Mateen, Nadir Ali, Dr Abdul Majeed Omar Daraz, Kashif Fareed, Sabir Hussain, Shah



Farid, Shah Hussain and others were also present. Divisional Administration It is said that sports competitions will continue to be held.

Abdul Raheem (61, 60b, 2x4s, 4x6s) and Hamid (56, 52b, 3x4s, 4x6s) also

stitched a 83-run stand but in vain as DMC's bowlers led by Ali Hassan (4-39) eked out seven wickets for 45 runs in eight overs. Apart from Ali, Shahwaiz Mudassar picked up two wickets, while Muhammad Arman

and Abdul Mooed dismissed one batter each. Earlier, DMC posted 229-8 in the allotted 35 overs on the back of a second-wicket 114-run partnership between opening batter Muhammad Burhan and Muhammad Sheraz.



Opening batter Shahwaiz departed for 20 off 25 balls with the help of three fours with 39 runs on the board in 6.4 overs before Burhan and Sheraz joined forces in the middle. Sheraz top-scored with a handy 88 off 70 balls hitting three fours and six sixes during his outing before Hussain Raza castled him in the 28th over. Burhan's stay in the middle lasted for 61 balls scoring 47 runs comprising three fours. La Salle bowlers struck at regular intervals after breaking the second-wicket stand at the score of 153 in the 24th over as DMC lost eight wickets for 76 runs in 11.4 overs. For DMC, Hussain and skipper

Muhammad Ali Sabir picked up two wickets each.

Scores in brief: Final - Divisional Model College beat La Salle High School by 27 runs at the Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad

DMC 229-8, 35 overs (Muhammad Sheraz 88, Muhammad Burhan 47, Shahwaiz Mudassar 20; Muhammad Hussain Raza 2-49, Muhammad Ali Sabir 2-58)

La Salle High School 202 all out, 34 overs (Abdul Raheem Ashraf 61, Hamid Raza 56, Muhammad Ali Sabir 33; Ali Hassan 4-39, Shahwaiz Mudassar 2-30) Player of the match -

Director General Sports inaugurates National Junior Badminton Championship

By Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry has inaugurated the National Junior Badminton Championship at the Nishtar Park Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall here on Friday.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry, President Pakistan Badminton Federation (PBF) Wajid Ali and Idris Haider Khawaja played ceremonial badminton match to inaugurate the National Junior Badminton Championship in the presence of large number of young badminton players.

Director Sports Rana Nadeem Anjum, Director Admin Abid Shaikat, Punjab Olympic Association CEO Idris Haider Khawaja, President PBF Wajid Ali, Waqar Ali and other officials were also present on this occasion.

Talking to media on this occa-



sion, Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry said that the participation of more than 300 male and female players from 10 teams such as Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad, Gilgit Baltistan,

AJK, SNGPL, Army and Wapda is a welcome sign. He expressed his hope that several potential badminton players will emerge from this championship.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry said that Punjab athletes have exhib-

ited wonderful performance in the 35th National Games and finished ahead of several top departments on the medals tables. "Punjab Sports Department is working together with Punjab Olympic Association and all sports associations for the development of sports culture".

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry said that the Junior National Badminton Championship is a suitable platform for young players to polish their game. "This championship will play a key role in the development of badminton game among the younger generation".

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry said that Punjab Sports Department is extending every kind of support for the successful organization of National Junior Badminton Championship. "We always extended all possible facilities for the holding of top sports competitions".

Touseef Siddiqui appointed as Acting Secretary RCA Karachi

By Sports Desk

KARACHI: Executive Committee of the Regional Cricket Association Karachi during their meeting held recently under the Chairmanship of its President Nadeem Omar unanimously decided to nominate Muhammad Touseef Siddiqui Joint Secretary RCA Karachi due to their valuable services rendered as RCAK joint secretary as Acting Secretary of RCA Karachi in accordance with Article 30 sub- Clause (j) of the Model Constitution of Regional Cricket Associations after the removal of Mr. Javed Ahmed Khan as Secretary of RCA Karachi through Vote of no confidence.

Executive Committee advised M. Touseef Siddiqui to work as Acting Secretary under the Model Constitution of Regional Cricket Associations until the Election of Secretary RCA Karachi.

Dhaka Capitals assistant coach dies after suffering heart attack before the BPL match

By Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dhaka Capitals assistant coach Mahbub Ali Zaki died after he collapsed to the ground shortly before the beginning of his side's BPL (Bangladesh Premier League) 2025-26 campaign. According to reports, Mahbub Ali was conducting a training session for the players at the ground ahead of an upcoming match when he suddenly collapsed after experiencing a heart attack.

Media sources said that immediate medical assistance was provided at the venue, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) was administered on the ground in an effort to revive him.

However, he did not respond to the emergency treatment. Mahbub Ali was later transported by ambulance to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

The sudden demise of the coach has cast a pall of gloom over the Dhaka Capitals camp and the wider BPL community.

Further details regarding funeral arrangements and official tributes are expected to be announced by the team and league authorities.

Shoaib Akhtar dismisses rumors about his health

have been going viral for several days.

Responding to these claims, the former speedster took to X (formerly Twitter) to clarify his condition, dismissing all such reports as false and baseless.

In his post, Shoaib Akhtar stated that he is "completely healthy, Alhamdulillah," and emphasized that all news circulating on social media about his health is untrue and misleading.

Any news circulating on social media about my health is fake news. I am completely healthy Alhamdolillah.

Over the past few days, exaggerated reports suggesting deterioration in Shoaib Akhtar's health have gained traction across social media platforms.

Recently, Shoaib Akhtar arrived in Dhaka, where he joined the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) franchise Dhaka Capitals as a mentor for the upcoming season.

He received a warm welcome from the franchise's owners, HB Remark. The Dhaka Capitals are set to play their opening match against the Rajshahi Warriors.

Mane rescues AFCON draw for Senegal against DR Congo

By Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sadio Mane's equaliser earned 2022 champions Senegal a 1-1 draw with the Democratic Republic of Congo in their heavyweight Africa Cup of Nations clash on Saturday.

Cedric Bakambu had given the Leopards the lead just after the hour mark in Tangiers but Al Nasr forward Mane replied soon after and the result ensures Senegal stay on top of Group D with one round of matches still to play.

Both teams have four points but Senegal have a superior goal difference before their final group match against Benin on Tuesday.

an important statement following rumors circulating on social media regarding his health. Reports about the health of the "Rawalpindi Express"

Benin have three points after a 1-0 victory earlier Saturday in Rabat against Botswana, who are bottom without a point or a goal scored.

Sebastien Desabre's Congolese side were seeking revenge after a dramatic defeat in the last meeting of the nations, in World Cup qualifying in September.

Senegal came from 2-0 down to win that encounter 3-2 in Kinshasa, a result which allowed them to go on and top their group to secure a place at next year's finals in North America.

DR Congo were therefore forced to settle for second place but can still make the World Cup if they win a one-off play-off against either New Caledonia or

Jamaica in Mexico in March.

Senegal, fresh from beating Botswana 3-0 and seen as perhaps the biggest threat to Morocco's chances of winning the title on home soil, had more of the possession and more chances on the day.

However, the Leopards took the lead in the 61st minute when

Theo Bongonda — scorer of the only goal in their opening win against Benin — had a shot at the end of a fine move parried by goalkeeper Edouard Mendy and Real Betis striker Bakambu pounced to convert the ball.

But Senegal were only behind for eight minutes, their equaliser coming after a superb run by teenage substitute Ibrahim

Mbaya.

The 17-year-old Paris Saint-Germain winger Mbaya, who was born in France and represented them up to Under-20 level, recently committed his international future to Senegal, for whom he qualifies through one of his parents.

He replaced Ismaila Sarr just after Bakambu's opener, and made the leveller from a penetrating run down the right.

Mbaya burst away from Arthur Masuaku, who appeared to injure himself going to tackle, and then saw his shot blocked by Lionel Mpasi, but Mane was on hand to score.

It was a 10th AFCON goal



for former Liverpool superstar Mane, who is appearing at his sixth tournament.

Fatiha

NAUDERO: President Asif Ali Zardari, First Lady Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and a PML-N delegation offering fateha at the death anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto at Naudero House.



Photo: PID

Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker meets President Asif Ali Zardari

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq met President Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in Garhi Khuda Baksh on Friday on the occasion of the death anniversary of former Prime Minister Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.

The delegation included Prime Minister's Adviser Rana Sanaullah, Federal Minister Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Member of the National Assembly Ijaz Hussain Jakhrani, MPA Provincial Assembly of Sindh Ms. Faryal Talpur along with other MNAs and MPAs. The delegation visited Garhi Khuda Baksh on the special directions of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to attend the

anniversary commemoration.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's struggle for democracy, supremacy of the Constitution, protection of public rights, empowerment of women, and the promotion of national reconciliation. The delegation paid rich tribute to her sacrifices and reaffirmed its resolve to carry forward her

mission and vision.

While Speaking on the occasion, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was a courageous, visionary, and people-centric leader in Pakistan's history who advanced the causes of tolerance, rule of law, and public welfare. He said her services would always remain a guiding light for the nation. President Asif Ali Zardari

and Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari thanked the parliamentary delegation for its participation and expression of solidarity, and emphasized that mutual cooperation and political harmony are essential for national stability, democratic consolidation, and addressing public issues.

Prayers were also offered for the elevation of the ranks of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.

Former Finance Minister, Ex-SBP Governor Dr Shamshad Akhtar passes away

Spokesman Report

KARACHI/ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) announces with deep sorrow the death of Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Chairperson of PSX and one of Pakistan's most distinguished economists and public servants. Dr. Akhtar served in multiple historic firsts for women in Pakistan's financial sector, including as the first female Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan and as a twotime caretaker Finance Minister, and she most recently made history as the first female Chairperson of PSX.

Condolences poured in from the country's top leadership.

President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir expressed deep grief over her passing and paid tribute to her services to the



nation.

According to a statement from the President House, President Zardari lauded Dr Akhtar's contributions to Pakistan's economic and financial sectors and prayed for the elevation of her ranks in the hereafter, while

extending condolences to the bereaved family.

PM Shehbaz described Dr Akhtar as a capable and upright professional who brought distinction to Pakistan at both national and international forums. He expressed solidarity with the family in

their hour of grief.

Field Marshal Asim Munir also

expressed sorrow over her death,

acknowledging her valuable contribu-

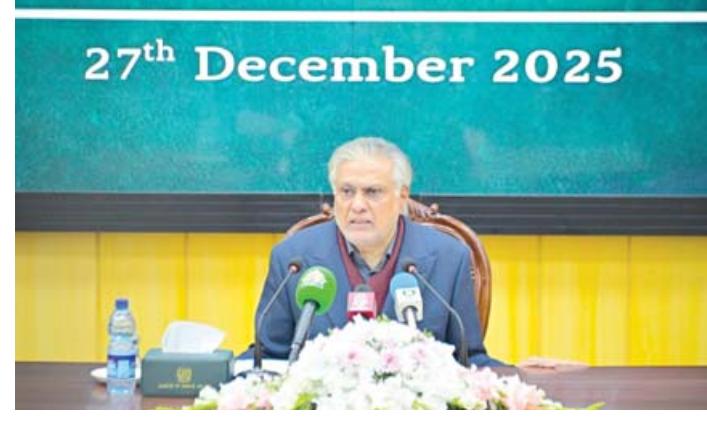
tions to Pakistan's economic devel-

opment, and prayed for patience and

strength for her family.

CEO PSX, Mr. Farrukh Sabzwari expressed his condolences on the passing of the Chairperson of the Board. He said, "It is with profound sorrow that we mourn the passing of Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Chairperson of the Pakistan Stock Exchange. Her visionary leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment to strengthening Pakistan's financial landscape have left an indelible mark on our institution and the country. This is a great loss not only for PSX but for Pakistan as a whole. We extend our deepest condolences to her family and loved ones, and we honor her legacy with gratitude and respect."

Pakistan emerges diplomatically, politically, economically stronger: DPM/FM Dar



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Saturday, reiterated that Pakistan which was once dubbed as 'diplomatically isolated' had emerged strong and prominent diplomatically, politically and economically among the comity of nations, owing to dynamic policies of the incumbent government.

The DPM/FM, while presenting annual achievements and role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a press conference, said that their proactive, principled and firm stance over key global issues won accolades and acknowledged at the global foras.

Dar said that Pakistan's international standing among the comity of nations had enhanced owing to its principled and proactive stance, and also thanked the national media for projecting country's image.

He said when the PDM government was formed, 'Pakistan was known as diplomatically isolated country. But now Pakistan's key role is acknowledged in the comity of nations.'

The DPM/FM said during the four-day armed conflict with India, the Indian so called hegemony and as a net security provider whom in the region was tested and shattered.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs remained proactive after Pulwama incident in which India falsely accused Pakistan, adding the defence of the country was now solid and firm.

PIA suspends two female flight attendants over altercation

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Two female flight attendants of the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) were suspended after they became involved in a physical altercation at Jeddah Airport, officials confirmed on Saturday.

The incident occurred in the international departures area of Jeddah Airport before a PIA flight bound for Multan. According to reports, the argument between the two cabin crew members escalated into a fight, prompting the intervention of a national airline officer who separated them.

A video of the altercation later

surfaced on social media, drawing public attention to the incident. A PIA spokesperson confirmed that the incident took place on December 23.

Following the incident, the PIA administration took immediate notice of the matter and suspended both flight attendants pending further inquiry. PIA spokesperson Saeed Ahmed said the airline has initiated an internal investigation and reiterated that strict disciplinary action is taken in cases of misconduct.

PIA officials stated that maintaining professional conduct and discipline among staff is a top priority, especially during international operations.

A. Aleem Khan offers condolences for MPA Irfan Shafiq Khokhar

Bureau Report

LAHORE: President Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party & Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan offered condolences with Members of the National Assembly Malik Saif-ul-Malook Khokhar, Muhammad Afzal Khokhar and Muhammad Shafiq Khokhar. He prayed for the departed soul of Member Punjab Assembly Irfan Shafiq Khokhar and expressed deep sorrow and grief over

his sudden demise. Abdul Aleem Khan reached Khokhar Palace where he offered "Fateha" for the late Irfan Shafiq Khokhar and prayed that may Almighty Allah grants the deceased a place in His eternal mercy and bestows patience and strength upon the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss with fortitude. Provincial Minister for Support Faizal Ayub Khokhar and Member of the Punjab Assembly Muhammad Shoaib Siddiqui were also present.

Punjab records higher sugar recovery as crushing season gains pace

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Punjab has recorded a noticeable improvement in sugar recovery as the ongoing crushing season gathers momentum, with falling temperatures helping enhance sucrose levels in sugarcane across major producing regions.

Sugar recovery in several areas has reached around 10 percent, providing relief to millers and boosting overall sugar output. The drop in night temperatures has played a key role in improving cane quality, particularly in southern districts of the province.

Talking to Wealth Pakistan, Dr Kashif Munir, Director of the Sugarcane Research Institute, Faisalabad, said the recent decline in temperatures is around 8-9 degrees Celsius

during nights has significantly improved sugar accumulation in the crop. "Lower temperatures slow down respiration in the cane plant, allowing more sucrose to accumulate, which ultimately increases recovery at mills," he explained.

He said sugar recovery in central Punjab has also improved gradually and is now close to 9 % in most districts. "As the crushing season progresses and temperatures continue to fall, further improvement in recovery levels is expected," he added.

According to official data from the Punjab Cane Commissioner's Office, the highest recovery rates have been recorded in Bahawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan divisions, while central Punjab is also showing steady improvement.

