



# Jhelum Valley delegation raises key issues with Prime Minister Rathore

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: A delegation from Jhelum Valley, led by Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Azad Kashmir Senior Vice President Sahibzada Muhammad Ashfaq Zafar, called on Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore on Monday. During the meeting, the delegation briefed the Prime Minister on various problems being faced by the people of the area.

The issue of allotting land for a university campus in Jhelum Valley also came under discussion. Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore said that the present government is utilizing all available resources to address public issues and remove the deprivations of the past.

He said the PPP government is working tirelessly to eliminate mistrust and restore the confidence of the people.



The Prime Minister added that his government has succeeded in stabilizing the political environment across the state by engaging with citizens at

the grassroots level. "The atmosphere of chaos and uncertainty has ended in the state," he remarked.

The delegation also invited the Prime

Minister to visit Jhelum Valley, which he gladly accepted. Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore is scheduled to visit Jhelum Valley on January 21.

## Free Foods

RAWALPINDI: Volunteers distributing free food among deserving people along Murree Road during rainy weather, in the city.



Photo: Online

## Subrahmanyam Jaishankar-Ayaz Sadiq handshake: Expert sees diplomatic reset potential

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The unexpected yet deliberate handshake and exchange of smiles between Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and Speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq marks a significant diplomatic moment that could signal a potential reset in Pakistan-India relations, said Ambassador Masood Khan, former Pakistan Ambassador to the United States and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, while analysing recent developments in a televised discussion.

Ambassador Masood Khan empha-



prepared diplomatic signalling or the culmination of back-channel efforts encouraging engagement between the two countries. "For a sitting foreign minister who previously refused even a handshake to step forward, initiate contact, and exchange pleasantries with Pakistan's Speaker is not routine protocol — it is politically meaningful," he noted.

He praised Speaker Ayaz Sadiq as a consensus-builder and dignified statesman, observing that his personal reputation for courtesy and bridge-building may have encouraged Jaishankar to initiate the gesture. "Ayaz Sadiq has always sought reconciliation and modera-

tion in politics. India likely chose a personality who embodies political balance and respect," Ambassador Khan remarked.

Commenting on regional dynamics, Ambassador Masood Khan observed that India today finds itself increasingly isolated in its neighbourhood. Relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Maldives have all experienced significant strain, while domestic polarisation and hard-line narratives have reduced space for diplomacy. He said that in such an environment, New Delhi may be reassessing the costs of hostility with Pakistan and the benefits of restoring at least a workable relationship.

## Sindh's Legal Eagles Declare 2025 Year of Lawyers' Struggle Amidst 28th Amendment Push

Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Conscious circles of Sindh have declared 2025 as the year of lawyers' struggle, stating that preparations are being made for the 28th Amendment. They asserted that Sindh will not be allowed to be divided and emphasized the need for a united and strong movement.

The Sindh Sufi Forum organized a cordial interaction and discussion with lawyers who are at the forefront of resistance. Addressing the gathering as the chief guest, Advocate K. B. Laghari, a prominent leader of the Water Movement, said that 2025 was the year of the establishment,



during which the judiciary, parliament, media, and all other institutions remained under the control of the establishment. He said that he was a strong opponent of Aamir Warraich, but after witnessing the steadfastness of a young man's son at the Babarou

sit-in against the canals, he stood by him. He added that he is a witness to the immense pressure that was exerted, and according to a BBC report, eight million people gathered at Babarou. He expressed sorrow over nationalist leaders criticizing

one another and urged them to fight against the Pakistan Peoples Party and the establishment instead of tearing down each other's flags.

Guest of honor Advocate Mir Mangrio said that lawyers played a leadership role in the Water Movement. In the past, student unions existed and students led movements, but later the state, feeling threatened, imposed a ban on student unions. In the 1990s, journalism played a leadership role, which was also later suppressed.

Advocate Israr, Sindh Sufi Forum Leader Badar Channa, Qamar Zaman Rajpar, Ramesh Gupta, Samar Jatoi Sufi Forum leader Dr.

Bekharam, Advocate Sattar Sarki, Sindh United Party Vice Chairman Ameer Azad Panhwar, Roshan Sundar Chandio, Advocate Aslam Laghari and Sardar Shah, were holding a sit-in at Babarou against anti-Sindh decisions.

The event was attended by Canada-based Dr. Khemchand, Advocate Suleman Dahi, Engineer Anwar Narai, journalist Naimat Khuhro, Advocate Dhani Bux Solangi, Punhal Sario, Noor Baladi, Advocate Asma Shah, and others. At the conclusion of the event, a musical gathering was held in which renowned artist Sajjan Sindhi enthralled the audience with his melodies.

## Prime Minister pushes for accelerated health card launch in Muzaffarabad



Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: An extraordinary meeting regarding the launch of Health Card services was held today under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore. During the meeting, the Prime Minister was given a detailed briefing on the progress made so far towards the launch of the Health Card facility. Officials also informed him about the administrative and technical preparations underway. Addressing the meeting, Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore stressed the need for early launch of Health Card services to ensure the provision of free, quality, and timely medical treatment to the public. He emphasized that the Health Card is a major public welfare initiative that will directly benefit the poor and middle-class segments of society. The Prime Minister instructed the concerned departments to expedite the completion of all remaining administrative and technical requirements without any further delay. The meeting was attended by Health Minister Syed Bazil Ali Naqvi, Forest Minister Sardar Javed Ayub, Finance Minister Chaudhry Qasim Majeed, Principal Secretary Zafar Mahmood Khan, Secretary Public Health, and other senior officials.

## AC Sohawa honors retiring driver with her own chair in touching tribute

Spokesman Report

JHELUM: On the special directive of Deputy Commissioner Jhelum, Mir Raza Ozgen, Assistant Commissioner Sohawa, Ghazala Asghar, set a commendable and historic example by paying a dignified tribute to the long, sincere, and selfless public service of retiring driver Muhammad Zulfiqar.

On this occasion, Assistant Commissioner Ghazala Asghar honored Muhammad Zulfiqar by offering him her own chair, conveying a powerful message that the true strength of institutions lies in hard-working and loyal employees who perform their duties quietly and with dedication.

Throughout his service, Muhammad Zulfiqar set a high standard of duty, integrity, and responsibility, for which he received heartfelt appreciation from officers and fellow staff members. During the ceremony, officers and employees extended their best wishes to him and reaffirmed their commitment to always remember and value his services.

This thoughtful gesture not only boosted the morale of government employees but also established a positive tradition, reinforcing the principle that every position deserves respect and that hard work and sincerity are never forgotten.

## DIG Multan Sadiq Ali Dogar Meeting With Senior Journalist and Anchor Person



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: City Police Office Multan DIG Sadiq Ali Dogar interacted with journalists and news anchors of Multan at the end of 2025.

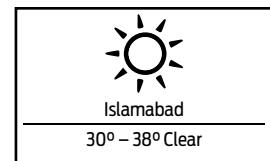
On this occasion, he appreciated the services of the journalist community and praised the positive role of the media. CPO Multan called the mutual cooperation between law enforcement agencies and the media indispensable for public awareness and law and order.

He expressed his best wishes to journalists and news anchors on the occasion of the New Year. CPO Multan said that Multan Police is entering the new year with the resolve to protect citizens and provide better services. Journalists and news anchors also appreciated the initiatives of Multan Police and expressed their resolve to continue their cooperation. SSP Operations Haider Ali and Chief Traffic Officer Kashif Aslam also present in Ocean

## Capacity building of teachers and SMCs under safe return to learning project

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: A four-day Master Trainers Training Program for Teachers and Head Teachers organized by the National Rural Support Program (NRSP) was held from December 29, 2025 to January 1, 2026 at a local hotel. The program was organized in collaboration with the School Education Department South Punjab, PECTA, RSPN and UK Development. Inaugurating the initial session of the training workshop, Sultan Mahmood, Hina Salman, Shakirullah and Madam Shazia said that the objective of the training was to empower teachers and School Management Councils in schools in flood-affected areas of Multan and Khanewal districts to ensure the safe return of children to educational activities. At the closing ceremony, CEO Education Dr. Safdar Wahga and Noman Naseer, Provincial Manager NRSP, were also present. They appreciated the usefulness of this training that it will play a fundamental role in making schools resilient and providing protection to children. On this occasion, Coordinator NRSP Multan Iqbal Bukhari, District Coordinator Khanewal NRSP Naveed Iqbal conducted various types of drills to deal with disasters so that children can be protected from timely response in the event of disasters. Deputy Secretary of Education Department South Punjab Khawaja Mazharul Haq distributed certificates among the participants and directed the teachers to play an active role in the process of restoration, protection and safe education.


**SERVICES**
**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	5:44 am
Zohr	12:11 pm
Asr	3:32 pm
Magrib	5:10 pm
Isha	6:39 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 &
& Rescue Services	451122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

**Women Police**
**Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA	921234-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

**COMPLAINTS**

Water Tanker Service	
E-5, F-10 & F-11	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8	92266316
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

**Attock Hosts Educational Fair to Boost Family Planning and Maternal Health Awareness**
**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: The Health and Population Welfare Department, Government of Punjab, Attock, organized a one-day Educational Family Planning Fair at Jinnah Park, Attock. The objective of the fair was to promote awareness among the general public—particularly women and youth—regarding health, family planning, and the welfare of mothers and children.

On this occasion, Additional Deputy Commissioner General Attock Anil Saeed, District Social Welfare Officer Zafar Iqbal Rehmani, Manager Sanat Zar Arif Mehmood Siddiqui, and people from different walks of life were also present. A poetry session (Mushaira) was also held during the fair, in which renowned poets of the city presented their work and received great appreciation from the audience.

The support of Dr. Kashif Hussain (DHO) and Deputy DHO Dr. Muhammad Sharif, Health and Population Department Attock, was highly commendable for the success of the program. Addressing the closing ceremony, Dr. Aniqa Malik, Deputy District Officer Attock, Khubaib Nawaz, Tehsil Officer Fateh Jang, and Arifa Nawaz, Psychologist, Adolescent Health Center Attock, thanked all the guests for their participation and distributed prizes among the children and other participants.

Participants termed the Educational Family Planning Fair a beneficial and positive initiative and expressed hope that such activities would continue in the future to further promote health awareness and social welfare in an effective manner.

# Maryam Nawaz inaugurates expanded Wagah Border arena

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Thursday inaugurated the newly expanded arena at the Wagah Border, marking a major upgrade to one of the country's most prominent national landmarks.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Senior Minister Mariam Aurangzeb and the Lahore Corps Commander, among other officials.

The expansion has increased the arena's seating capacity to 25,000 spectators, significantly enhancing arrangements for visitors attending the daily flag-lowering ceremony.

Officials said the project also includes extensive new construction at the Joint Check Post Wagah.

The additions feature model structures inspired by a railway station, displays of military equipment and a theme park aimed at improving the overall visitor experience.

A Pakistan Museum has also been established within the arena, showcasing the country's journey from the independence movement to the present day.

The complex further includes additional offices, barracks for Rangers personnel, food courts and expanded car parking facilities.

As part of the redevelopment, a new ceremonial gateway at Bab-e-Azadi has been installed in the architectural style of the Alamgiri Gate of Lahore's Shahi Qila.

Authorities also raised the height of the national flag at the Wagah Border. The flag, previously installed at a height of 115 metres, now flies at 139 metres, making it the tallest flag in South Asia and the seventh tallest in Asia, according to officials.

The Punjab government said the upgrades aim to improve facilities, promote national heritage and strengthen the symbolic significance of the Wagah Border for visitors from across the country and abroad.



## Final Stages

ISLAMABAD: On the directives of Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, the under-construction Danish School at Kuri Road has entered the final stages of completion.



## Islamabad under-construction Danish School enters final phase

**City Desk**


The Danish School on Kuri Road, Islamabad, is a significant addition to this initiative and is being completed at an accelerated pace, even ahead of the stipulated timeline. Once completed, the school is expected to open a new chapter of educational development in

the area.

Education experts note that Danish Schools not only offer modern curricula and state-of-the-art facilities but also provide equal opportunities for children from disadvantaged backgrounds to progress and excel. Public and educational circles have termed the Danish School initiative a milestone for Pakistan's education system, expressing hope that such projects will play a vital role in promoting education and contributing to national development in the future.

## Provision of Enhanced Facilities at Shrines Top Priority: Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman

**News Desk**


ment's expansion and remodeling project, with the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) acting as the executing agency. On the occasion, the Chief

Secretary was given a detailed briefing by Director General LDA Tahir Farooq and Chief Engineer TEPA Iqbal Hussain regarding the scope of work,

milestones achieved, and upcoming targets. Expressing satisfaction over the pace and quality of the development works, he emphasized that the project must be completed within the stipulated timeframe by March, while ensuring uninterrupted facilitation for the thousands of devotees (Zaireen) who visit the shrine daily. The Chief Secretary directed Auqaf, LDA, TEPA, and other concerned teams to maintain momentum with a strong focus on quality, coordination, and timely completion, so that the historic shrine is developed in a manner that preserves its spiritual sanctity while meeting modern civic and urban requirements.

## GET Placement Program Commences with Deployment of 600 Young Engineers

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) has commenced its flagship Graduate Engineer Trainee (GET) Placement Program, under which 600 young engineers have been placed in 40 national departments across the country. The engineers formally joined their respective organizations on Thursday, January 1, 2026. The fully PEC-funded, six-month program is structured as a "house job" style initiative aimed at bridging the gap between academic education and practical industry requirements, comprising five months of field exposure and one month of focused skill development, with a monthly stipend of PKR 50,000 provided to each trainee.

Engr. Waseem Nazir, Chairman PEC congratulated the young engineers upon joining the training and termed the commencement of the program a great day for engineers and the overall engineering community.

## Social Media Journalists Forum Meets RPO Faisalabad to Discuss Crime Control and Drug Crackdown

**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: A delegation of Social Media Journalists Forum, chaired by President Mian Munawar Iqbal, held a special meeting with RPO Faisalabad DIG Sohail Akhtar Sukhera in his office. On this occasion, RPO Sohail Akhtar Sukhera informed about the steps and plans to control crime and eliminate drug trafficking in the city. President Mian Munawar Iqbal, while introducing the aims and objectives of the establishment of the Social Media Journalists Forum and the members of the Social Media Journalists Forum, supported the vision of Sohail Ahmed Sukhera and assured the Journalists Forum of playing a positive role for the betterment and reform of the society, while Secretary Aurangzeb Malik, while talking about the steps taken to suppress drug dealers and discipline in the police, expressed hope for further steps and improvements by the RPO. Senior Vice President Bilal Dogar highlighted the need and importance of social media and the interaction between journalists and institutions in today's modern era and explained how fake news was corrupting the society before the establishment of the Social Media Journalists Forum. Vice President Hanan Bukhari not only appreciated the police's actions in honey trap cases and the registration of FIRs against such women but also emphasized the police's cooperation in exposing such elements by journalists. Legal Advisor Jamal Tariq, while introducing himself, called the RPO the work of the members of the Social Media Journalists Forum and the vlogs and overall work done for the betterment of the society as a voice of truth. Former Secretary Press Club Senior Journalist Mian Kashif Farid suggested mobilizing the police to play a more active role in eliminating the trend of drug trafficking in educational institutions. Senior journalists Khadim Hussain Gul and Qamar Mirza provided suggestions to the RPO for steps to curb police patronage of criminal elements. On this occasion, Information Secretary Faizan Khalid, Finance Secretary Shoaib Altaf, Executive Members Moazzam Jatt, Amnan Rajput, Abrar Barkat and members Zohaib Hashmi, Afzal Tatia and other members were also present.

## Expo center to be built on 50 acres in Faisalabad: Minister Shafay



FAISALABAD: Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain has said that a state-of-the-art expo center will be built on an area of 50 acres in district Faisalabad, while a world-class community center is also being built in FIEDMC for 450 Chinese.

He was chairing a meeting of the Board of Directors (BoDs) at the FIEDMC head office here on Thursday. Chairman FIEDMC Rana Azhar Waqar and others were also present. Secretary Industries Umar Masood, Deputy Commissioner Cap (Retd) Nadeem Nasir and some members attended the meeting through video link.

The minister said that all matters of FIEDMC should be carried forward as per the rules and providing the best possible facilities to the industrialists is the first priority of the government.

The minister rejected the proposal to increase the price of plots in industrial estates organized by FIEDMC and said that FIEDMC is the largest industrial estate in Pakistan, unfortunately there is no bank branch here. He said that the branches of various banks will be brought to the FIEDMC.

Earlier, the meeting considered a 16-point agenda. The board approved the recommendations of the human resources committee for the appointment of the Secretary Board.

The board approved a development plan of Rs 6.7 billion for Allama Iqbal Industrial City, funds of Rs 791 million for improving the security issues of foreign investors in industrial estates managed by the FIEDMC.

The board also granted approval to start the process of appointing a legal advisor to expedite the legal matters of FIEDMC, industrial and commercial building regulations, audit report of FIEDMC for the last 3 years and policy of bringing bank branches to the industrial estates.

Chief Executive Officer FIEDMC Qurat-ul-Ain briefed the board in detail.

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## HH The Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani Hospital for Rehabilitation and Prosthetics in Gaza Resumes Operations

**H** The Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani Hospital for Rehabilitation and Prosthetics in Gaza, funded by Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), has resumed providing services to persons with disabilities and war-injured patients at its main headquarters in northern Gaza, following a forced suspension amid the Israeli occupation military operations in September 2025.

Chairman of the Hospital's Board of Directors and Director General of QFFD, Fahad Hamad Al Sulaiti, stated, "The resumption of the hospital's operations comes despite the severe challenges faced by the sector as a result of the war. However, the hospital's humanitarian mission and ethical responsibility proved stronger than all circumstances. These efforts aim to alleviate the suffering of the population in the Gaza Strip by mobilizing all available resources to ensure patients' access to quality healthcare services that contribute to improving their quality of life."

Operations have commenced with the activation of the CT scanner, the only one available in the northern governorates of the Gaza Strip, highlighting its critical importance to the local health sector. This will be followed by the activation of the hospital's three main departments: the Prosthetics Department, the Audiology and Balance Department, and the Physical Rehabilitation Department, in addition to specialized outpatient clinics and inpatient rehabilitation services dedicated to war-injured patients and those suffering from neurological and muscular conditions, strokes, and fractures.

The resumption of services at the hospital coincides with the opening of a new branch in southern Gaza, in response to the growing needs of the population amid the severe deterioration of the healthcare system, which requires sustained support to recover under the ongoing blockade and current challenges.

Since its inauguration in April 2019 until October 2025, the hospital has provided services to approximately 52,000 beneficiaries with various disabilities. Around 100 patients have benefited from prosthetic limb services since March 2025, in addition to nearly 9,000 patients who received rehabilitation and audiology services.

The continued operation of the hospital and the expansion of its services reflect the State of Qatar's steadfast commitment to supporting the Palestinian people, particularly in light of the exceptional and difficult conditions facing the Gaza Strip, reinforcing the resilience of the healthcare sector and ensuring the continuity of essential services.

## Field Marshal Munir's Military Diplomacy garners global tribute

**N**ations are not judged solely by their military strength or economic size; they are assessed by coherence—by how effectively political authority, military professionalism, and diplomacy reinforce one another. Pakistan, long perceived through the lens of instability, is witnessing a perceptible shift in global perception. The growing international recognition of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir is emblematic of this transformation, signaling not just individual leadership but a broader restoration of Pakistan's national dignity.

International media coverage, defense journals, and policy analysts increasingly describe Pakistan's military leadership as disciplined, restrained, and institutionally grounded. Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir is being viewed as a commander who understands the evolving nature of national security—one that transcends conventional warfare and incorporates internal stability, ideological resilience, and constitutional order.

This recognition has not emerged in a vacuum. It is rooted in a phase of rare institutional alignment within Pakistan. For the first time in years, the civilian leadership, military command, and diplomatic apparatus appear to be moving in the same strategic direction. This harmony has played a decisive role in reshaping Pakistan's international narrative.

Central to this alignment is the political vision associated with Nawaz Sharif. With extensive experience in governance and global engagement, Sharif's enduring belief has been that national strength flows from political stability and economic credibility rather than perpetual confrontation. His emphasis

on constitutional continuity and institutional balance has once again become relevant in Pakistan's current trajectory.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has operationalized this vision through relentless governance. At a time when Pakistan faced severe economic stress and diplomatic skepticism, his administration prioritized stabilization over populism. Engagement with international financial institutions, reactivation of ties with traditional partners, and internal fiscal discipline collectively restored a measure of confidence in Pakistan's economic management. This political steadiness has provided a stable environment for national security institutions to function without political turbulence.

Within this framework, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir's leadership has gained international attention. Western analysts increasingly note that Pakistan's military posture has evolved from episodic counterterrorism operations to a comprehensive national security doctrine. This doctrine integrates operational readiness with ideological clarity and firm respect for constitutional boundaries.

His public messaging, internal military discourse, and official communications emphasize a consistent principle: the armed forces are guardians of the state, not arbiters of politics. Such clarity is significant in a country where civil-military relations have historically attracted global scrutiny. International observers interpret this approach as evidence of institutional maturity rather than mere rhetoric.

This disciplined posture has also strengthened Pakistan's capacity to counter hybrid warfare, disinformation campaigns, and externally sponsored destabilization efforts. The global perception is gradually shifting from viewing Pakistan as a perpetual crisis zone to recognizing it as a state developing long-term resilience.

Complementing this military professionalism is the role of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishraq Dar. At a time when Pakistan's credibility on diplomatic and economic fronts required careful rebuilding, Dar's approach emphasized pragmatism and reassurance. His engagement with global capitals, financial institutions, and regional partners has consistently presented Pakistan as a responsible and predictable actor.

Diplomatic circles now increasingly acknowledge that Pakistan's foreign policy is guided by balance rather than impulsiveness. The recalibration of relations with China, Gulf states, Europe, and multilateral organizations reflects a strategy aimed at partnerships based on mutual interest. This diplomatic environment has enhanced the international acceptability of Pakistan's military leadership and reinforced confidence in its strategic intentions.

It is therefore no coincidence that global media narratives increasingly portray Pakistan's political leadership, military command, and diplomatic posture as components of a coherent state model. This convergence—rare in Pakistan's modern history—forms the

foundation of the country's renewed national dignity.

Historically, Pakistan has possessed significant military capability. What distinguishes the present moment is the alignment between power and purpose. The armed forces project strength without overreach, the civilian leadership governs without chronic instability, and diplomacy operates without contradiction. This balance distinguishes Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir as a modern military leader rather than a traditional power figure.

National security in Pakistan is no longer defined solely by deterrence or force. It is increasingly understood as a product of institutional discipline, constitutional respect, and public confidence. International recognition of Pakistan's military leadership is, in effect, an acknowledgment of this broader transformation.

This moment also carries responsibility. Sustaining this convergence between political authority, military professionalism, and diplomatic coherence will determine whether Pakistan's renewed standing becomes durable or remains episodic. Continuity of governance, economic reform, and institutional restraint will be critical in consolidating current gains.

The global acknowledgment of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir thus represents more than personal acclaim. It reflects Pakistan's gradual transition from a state defined by crises to one characterized by strategic confidence and institutional coherence. In an international environment increasingly attentive to responsible leadership, Pakistan is beginning to be perceived not as a problem to be managed, but as a partner capable of constructive engagement.



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

## Brain drain Economy in Pakistan: A Critical Challenge

**O**ne of the long-term problems facing Pakistan is brain drain or loss of highly skilled and educated people off their country of origin in search of better opportunities in other countries. The country has been experiencing a steady drain of its most elite professionals over the decades such as physicians, engineers, scientists, and experts in different fields, in search of better opportunities in the developed economies. Migration as such is not harmful, but the scale of the process in Pakistan is disturbing, as it has huge economic implications. Depending on the human-capital pool, sacrificed are the educated and skilled people and destroyed are the prospects of sustainable and long-term development of Pakistan.

The desire to pursue a better quality life devoid of violence and instability drives a good number of people to immigrate to other countries further undermining the intellectual capital of Pakistan. The solution to brain drain in Pakistan requires a complex solution that has solutions to its causes. To begin with, the country should focus on improving the economic situation. This involves the establishment of additional working places, especially in the sectors that are growing like the healthcare, technology and engineering. Pakistan can encourage its educated professionals to stay in the country by providing them with competitive remunerations, full benefits and sound career development opportunities to boost its economic growth.

At the same time, Pakistan needs to put funds into the education system in order to improve the level of teaching and research. This should include investment in curriculum reform, infrastructure development and forming strategic alliances with foreign institutions. This will help the country to retain its highly educated young people by making sure that graduates have the necessary skills to compete at the international level. Additionally, the encouragement of innovation and research in universities can help establish an atmosphere that will encourage the young professionals to remain and invest in the national development.

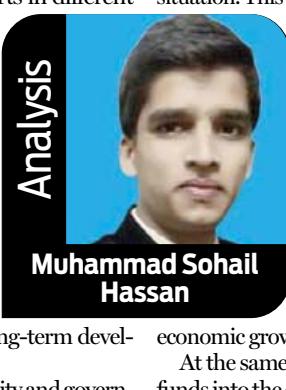
Avoidance of brain drain cannot be done without political stability and good governance. Pakistan needs to nurture an open, responsible governmental system that

ensures a consistent atmosphere of the qualified professionals. Good governance would be able to draw foreign investment, create job opportunities, and offer better career advancement. Also, any type of reform meant to alleviate corruption and enhance the performance of the public sector would make Pakistan a better place where educated professionals would work, which will give them confidence in pursuing a career in that country.

Lastly, better security and quality of life should be done to minimize the brain drain. Pakistan needs to go out of its way to optimize law and order, protect the population, and modernize its services, such as health services, transit services, and infrastructure. Through a higher living standard, the country can be made an attractive destination to persons in search of both livelihood and professional satisfaction.

**Conclusion:** Brain drain is the crucial issue in the economy and further development of Pakistan. Even though the migration of skilled people is often triggered by the search to get better opportunities, the implications it has on the country are significant. Outflow of human capital, lack of innovation and low level of productivity curtail the progress of Pakistan and impede its ability to compete in the world. To solve this problem, Pakistan should focus on improving its economic, education system, governance and security. With this kind of concerted efforts, the country will be able to keep its good professionals and create a much better and sustainable future.

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Muhammad Sohail Hassan

## The Potential Benefits and Risks of AI in Military Applications

**Amna Ahsan**

**A**rtificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming every field of life. From healthcare to education, and now even defense. Today, militaries around the world are using AI to improve decision-making, automate tasks, and strengthen national security.

However, just like any other technology, AI in the military has both advantages and serious risks. In this paper, I will discuss the main benefits and risks of using AI in military systems, and share my own understanding of why careful control and ethical use are necessary.

To understand its impact better, let's first look at the major benefits of using AI in military applications.

One of the biggest advantages of AI in the military is speed. AI systems can process large amounts of data from satellites, drones, and radars much faster than humans.

This helps commanders make better decisions in less time. In other words, AI allows militaries to respond in seconds rather than minutes, which can be the difference between success and failure in combat.

For example, the U. S. Department of Defense's Project Maven uses AI to analyze drone footage and identify objects such as vehicles or enemy movements automatically.

For example, an AI drone could misidentify a civilian vehicle as a target. A small technical error could lead to large-scale destruction.

Therefore, full human supervision is essential whenever AI is used in defense operations.

In fact, studies show that during testing, AI systems often misidentify targets due to lighting or environmental confusion.

Such mistakes can lead to accidental attacks and civilian casualties, which can damage a nation's reputation and trigger political conflicts.

AI systems can be hacked or fooled by adversaries. If an enemy changes the data or tampers with the

AI model, the entire defense system could behave incorrectly.

This could result in misinformation, false alarms, or even the self-destruction of military assets.

The Pentagon's 2022 Cybersecurity Review warned that adversaries are increasingly trying to attack autonomous systems through hacking or misinformation.

Furthermore, as more countries develop AI-based weapons, the global arms race is speeding up. Nations are competing to build smarter and faster weapons.

This competition could make wars more likely because powerful AI systems might make nations overconfident in their military strength.

Lastly, one of the most important concerns is maintaining human control and accountability.

Even if AI systems perform well, removing human judgment completely from life-and-death decisions is dangerous.

Machines don't have emotions or ethics, and they only follow patterns. This lack of empathy can lead to serious moral and humanitarian problems if not handled properly.

Considering both the benefits and risks, it is clear that AI's use in military operations needs careful regulation.

In my opinion, AI should be used in the military with strict human oversight and global ethical standards. It should support human officers, not replace them in critical decision-making.

In conclusion, AI has the power to completely change modern warfare. Which makes it faster, smarter, and more efficient. It can save lives, reduce costs, and improve defense strategies.

However, if not used carefully, it can also create moral, legal, and security disasters. In my view, the goal should be to use AI responsibly with strict human supervision, global cooperation, and strong ethical boundaries. Technology should make wars less likely, not more dangerous.

**The writer is a student of BS International Relations at International Islamic University Islamabad.**

# North Korea's Kim Jong Un Attends New Year's Celebrations with Daughter

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his daughter Ju Ae attended New Year's celebrations including fireworks and an ice dancing display, state media KCNA reported on Wednesday.

Senior North Korean officials joined them in watching the events, state media photos showed. There was no mention of any speech by Kim.

KCNA said on the previous day that Kim had pledged to solidify the country's comprehensive strategic partnership with Russia in a letter to President Vladimir Putin.

In the message, Kim sent New Year greetings to Putin and all Russians, including their troops and expressed his willingness to further step up bilateral ties, which he said the two leaders have elevated to a new height this year, through new projects, KCNA said.

Kim "wished that the New Year 2025 would be recorded as the first year of victory in the 21st century when the Russian army and people would defeat neo-Nazism and achieve a great victory," KCNA said.

Kim and Putin signed a mutual defense treaty at a summit in June,



which calls for each side to come to the other's aid in case of an armed attack.

North Korea has since dispatched tens of thousands of troops to Russia to support its war against Ukraine,

and Seoul and Washington said that more than a thousand of them have been killed or wounded.

## OIC condemns Israel's recognition of Somaliland, backs Somalia's unity

## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Thursday condemned Israel's decision to recognise Somaliland as an independent state, calling the move illegal and a violation of Somalia's sovereignty.

The condemnation came after an extraordinary meeting of the OIC Executive Committee in Jeddah, where member states discussed the situation in Somalia and Israel's unilateral announcement.

Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the OIC, Ambassador Mohammad Fawad Sher, reaffirmed Islamabad's support for Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

He said Israel's decision amounted to a direct challenge to Somalia's internationally recognised borders and could undermine peace and stability in the region.

Sher also expressed concern over reports linking Israel's Somaliland policy to plans involving the relocation of Palestinians, describing such



proposals as deeply troubling.

He said Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian territory remained a core source of instability in the Middle East and warned that Israel was now extending this destabilising approach to Africa.

The meeting adopted a joint communiqué expressing full support for Somalia and condemning Israel's recognition of Somaliland.

Somaliland, a semi-arid region

along the Gulf of Aden, declared independence from Somalia in 1991 following the collapse of the regime of former president Siad Barre.

While it has its own administration, parliament, currency and security forces, it has not received international recognition. Somalia continues to consider Somaliland an integral part of its territory.

Israel announced in December 2025 that it would recognise Somaliland as an independent state, a move welcomed by Somaliland's leadership as a historic step.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said Israel aims to expand cooperation with Somaliland in agriculture, health and technology and has invited Somaliland President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi to visit Israel. Analysts say the decision is driven by strategic considerations linked to the Red Sea.

Israeli think tanks argue that Israel is seeking regional partners to counter the influence of Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi movement, particularly after tensions escalated following the Gaza war in October 2023.

Pakistan and several other countries raised objections to Israel's decision during an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council.

Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has described the move as a serious threat to national unity, while China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the African Union have also condemned the decision.

*Message of Ambassador Reza Amiri Moghadam on the Joyous Occasion of New Year 2026*



**O**n the occasion of the New Year 2026, I extend my sincere greetings and best wishes for health, prosperity, and success to the Government and the brotherly, friendly, and neighboring people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

I wish to express my special appreciation to H. E. President Asif Ali Zardari and H. E. Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Honorable Prime Minister and the esteemed members of his Cabinet, Speaker and members of the National Assembly, Chairman and members of Senate for their strong political will and valuable efforts in advancing bilateral relations, promoting the exchange of high-level delegations, and extending brotherly support that has significantly contributed to the deepening of ties between our two nations.

I also convey my profound gratitude to the Army and the self-sacrificing security forces for their vital role in enhancing cooperation and for their commendable contributions to security and stability of the common borders particularly in the fight against terrorism.

May the year ahead bring peace, stability, and shared progress, while opening new avenues for strengthening cooperation and further consolidating our enduring relations, founded upon common interests, shared values, and mutual respect.

The year 2025 stands as a highly successful and remarkable year in the history of Iran-Pakistan bilateral relations. Owing to the firm determination of the leadership of both countries, the tireless efforts of various governmental sectors, and the steadfast support and patience of our honorable peoples, bilateral relations reached new and unprecedented historical heights. During the year, the two sides extended mutual support in different arena including in the regional and international forums.

I look forward with confidence to the continued consolidation of our relations in the service of our honorable nations and to the joint promotion of regional and international peace and stability.

The Islamic Republic of Iran and its people will never forget the strong and principled support of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan during the twelve-day war.

I would like to reiterate my heartfelt greetings and best wishes on the advent of the New Year 2026 and say once again:

*HH Amir of the State of Qatar exchanges New Year greetings*

DOHA: His Highness the Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani exchanged cables of greetings with Their Majesties, Highnesses and Excellencies the leaders of friendly countries on the occasion of the New Year, wishing them good health and happiness and further progress and prosperity for their peoples.



## WASA Multan Presents Annual Performance Report 2025; Punjab Housing Secretary Expresses Satisfaction

## Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: The Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Multan has presented its Annual Performance Report for the year 2025 to Punjab Housing Secretary Noor-ul-Amin Mengal, who expressed satisfaction over the agency's overall performance, terming it a positive step towards improved urban service delivery in line with the vision of the Chief Minister Punjab.

Speaking on the occasion, the

Housing Secretary said that large-scale development projects are underway in Multan under the Chief Minister's vision, and that the water supply and sewerage systems of the City of Saints would soon be upgraded on modern lines. He lauded WASA Multan's effective recovery drive, noting a significant reduction in outstanding dues.

According to the annual report, WASA Multan currently manages a total of 419,509 water supply and sewerage connections. During

2025, action was taken on 14,687 billing-related complaints, while 20,611 sewerage complaints and 2,820 water supply complaints were resolved in a timely manner.

Briefing the meeting, Managing Director WASA Multan, Faisal Shaukat, said that the agency is supplying an average of 41 million gallons of clean drinking water daily to the city. To enhance recovery, 17 special recovery and disconnection teams have been formed under the supervision of circle in-charges, which are taking

effective action against defaulters.

He further stated that 869 regular and contract employees are engaged in improving the sewerage and drainage systems. WASA Multan's sewerage network covers an area of 250 square kilometers, while water supply services extend over 125 square kilometers.

Highlighting energy sector initiatives, the MD said that 27 WASA installations have so far been shifted to solar and alternative energy sources, resulting in

a significant reduction in operational costs.

The report also noted that WASA Multan has successfully completed the upgradation of its billing system by migrating from FoxPro to the Oracle system, enhancing transparency and efficiency. For public convenience, a 24-hour facility to obtain duplicate bills through the official website has been made available.

Additionally, Faisal Shaukat informed that a 24-hour Customer Care Service Center



has been established to ensure prompt redressal of complaints, while a dedicated control room will also be set up soon to obtain consumer feedback.

Commending the efforts of WASA Multan's management and

staff, Housing Secretary Noor-ul-Amin Mengal reiterated that the provision of quality basic services to citizens remains a top priority of the Punjab government, and all available resources are being utilized to achieve this objective.

## Not Just a New Mayor – A New Direction for New York City

## Asim Siddiqui | Washington, DC

**B**y any measure, Zohran Mamdani's swearing-in as Mayor of New York City represents far more than a routine transition of power. It signals a shift in the city's political mood—shaped by economic anxiety, public frustration, and a growing demand for leaders who speak plainly and remain rooted in local realities.

Mamdani took the oath of office quietly, just after midnight on New Year's Day, in a private ceremony. Yet the symbolism of the moment was unmistakable. His rise to City Hall was propelled by an unconventional campaign that rejected polished

elites and donor-centric politics in favor of street-level engagement. Neighborhood meetings replaced boardrooms, and conversations with everyday New Yorkers became the backbone of his message.

What ultimately set Mamdani apart was not only what he promised, but how he delivered those promises. His constant presence among working-class communities—those struggling with rising rents, food prices, and diminishing opportunity—made him a familiar figure rather than a distant political name. Alongside his partner, he projected an image of leadership that felt accessible, empathetic, and grounded in lived experience.

Voters responded accordingly.

Not with blind enthusiasm, but with a deliberate choice. In a city long accustomed to seasoned political veterans and carefully scripted campaigns, the electorate opted for authenticity over polish. Mamdani's victory was less a triumph of ideology and more an endorsement of trust.

Now, the expectations are substantial. Supporters believe his administration can begin addressing chronic challenges such as housing affordability, overstretched public services, and deepening economic inequality. Critics, however, remain cautious, questioning whether grassroots momentum can endure the realities of governing a city as vast and complex as New York.

The national spotlight has

followed swiftly. Political observers note that Mamdani's win has resonated well beyond city limits, attracting attention in Washington as policymakers search for new approaches to longstanding urban problems. Early engagement at the federal level suggests that New York's experiment in people-powered politics is being closely watched.

Ultimately, Mamdani's tenure will not be judged by campaign rhetoric, but by results. The true test lies ahead—turning goodwill into governance, and promises into policy. New Yorkers have placed their faith in a new face. Whether that faith translates into lasting change will define not only Mamdani's legacy, but the future direction of the city itself.



## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

### Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
176,355.49	174,054.32
Day's High	Day's Low
176,658.38	174,437.70
Index Value	Change
37,542,960,221	+2301.17
Percentage	Time
+1.32%	1 Jan, 2026 4:30 pm

### Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
9,931.38	-9.33
Percentage	Time
-0.094%	31 Dec, 12:35 pm GMT

### USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
48,063.29	-303.77
Percentage	Time
-0.63%	31 Dec, 12:29 pm GMT-5

### Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
50,339.48	-187.44
Percentage	Time
-0.37%	30 Dec, 3:45 pm GMT+9

### Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	186.4	190.4
Bahrain Dinar	743	753
Canadian Dollar	203.55	207.55
China Yuan	39.58	39.98
Danish Krone	43.72	44.12
Euro	330	333.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.69	36.04
Indian Rupee	3.03	3.12
Japanese Yen	1.7850	1.8850
Kuwaiti Dinar	910.75	920.75
Malaysian Ringgit	68.6	69.20
New Zealand \$	161.24	163.24
Norwegians Krone	27.66	27.96
Omani Riyal	727.75	737.75
Qatari Riyal	76.26	76.96
Saudi Riyal	74.8	75.45
Singapore Dollar	217.1	222.1
Swedish Korona	30.25	30.55
Swiss Franc	351.82	354.57
Thai Bhat	8.88	9.03
U.A.E Dirham	76.45	77.4
UK Pound Sterling	378.75	382.75
US Dollar	281.1	283.1

**ICCI President expresses hope for economic turnaround in New Year**

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Sardar Tahir Mehmood, has expressed strong optimism that the New Year will usher in economic revival, stability and sustainable growth for Pakistan, in line with the vision and reform agenda of Prime Minister.

Talking to various visiting delegations at the ICCI Chamber House here on Thursday, Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that Pakistan is entering a critical yet promising phase, where prudent economic policies, continuity of reforms and confidence of the business community can steer the country towards progress. He emphasized that strengthening industry, exports and investment remains vital for achieving long-term economic resilience.

The ICCI President also paid glowing tribute to Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and other Services Chiefs, acknowledging their unwavering commitment and strategic leadership in making Pakistan's defence impregnable. He stated that a strong and secure Pakistan provides the foundation for economic growth, investor confidence and national stability.

**Mobile phone imports increases 40.51% touches to \$801.139 mln**

ISLAMABAD: The import of mobile phones into the country has witnessed an increase of 40.51 percent during the first five months of the current fiscal year (2025-26) as compared to the corresponding months of last year. Pakistan imported mobile phones worth US \$ 801.139 million during July-November (2025-26) as compared to the imports of US \$ 570.184 million during July-November (2024-25), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

# Governor Punjab visits CCP Head Office, meets Chairman Dr. Kabir Sidhu

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Governor of Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan visited the Head Office of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) and met with Chairman CCP Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu. The Chairman briefed the Governor on key legal and institutional reforms to strengthen enforcement and regulatory effectiveness.

Dr. Sidhu highlighted that through improved case management, stronger litigation strategy, and effective follow-up before courts and the Competition Appellate Tribunal, the CCP secured decisions in 434 cases, resulting in a reduction of nearly 70 percent in the backlog of pending cases. These steps, he noted, have enhanced legal certainty, improved compliance, and expedited enforcement under the Competition Act, 2010.

The Chairman also shared an overview of the CCP's enforcement performance, informing that during 2025 the Commission imposed penalties amounting to Rs.



2.36 billion for violations including cartelization, price fixing, abuse of dominant position, and deceptive marketing practices. He added that the CCP recovered over Rs. 930 million in penalties during the year and issued 47 show cause notices against undertakings for suspected violations.

Dr. Sidhu further briefed the Governor on initiatives aimed at promoting evidence-based policymaking, including sectoral market studies and enhanced coordination with regulators and provincial authorities to address structural competition concerns.

Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan appreciated the CCP's reform agenda and enforcement efforts. He underscored the importance of a strong competition enforcement authority to protect consumers, ensure fair markets, and support sustainable economic growth.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to further strengthening competition, transparency, and consumer protection in Pakistan's markets.

## New year rain

ISLAMABAD: Motorists on their way at a road during first rain of New Year, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# Bank Alfalah, Jazz, HBL, and Engro Polymer Declared Most Inclusive Companies of the Year

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: This year, 44 leading multinational and national companies participated in the Global DEI Awards, following a rigorous, evidence-based disclosure and independent evaluation by an international jury.

Four companies were declared "Most Inclusive Companies of the Year" include Bank Alfalah Limited, Jazz, HBL, and Engro Polymer & Chemicals Limited. In terms of DEI score, Bank Alfalah is the winner, and Jazz is the runner-up for the year.

The Top 10 inclusive companies include HBL Microfinance Bank, Mobilink Microfinance Bank Limited, Engro Fertilizers Limited, Faysal Bank, Fatima Group, and ABACUS. These organizations demonstrated remarkable tangible progress in embedding DEI into their governance, workforce, and value-creation models, delivering positive social and economic outcomes for internal and external stakeholders.

The GDEIB were authored by Julie O'Mara (USA), Alan Richter (USA), and



Nene Molefi (South Africa) and published in 2021 by the Centre for Global Inclusion. The framework comprises 15 categories, 5 maturity levels, and 275 benchmarks, enabling organizations to systematically assess DEI maturity through documented evidence reviewed by an independent international jury.

Overall companies winning awards in selective GDEIB categories are AGP Limited, Soneri Bank Limited, METRO Pakistan (Pvt) Limited, Pakistan Tobacco Company, Fauji Foundation, National

Bank of Pakistan, Jubilee Life Insurance, Engro Energy Limited, Yunus Textile Mills Limited, Engro Vopak Terminal Limited, Allied Bank Limited, Martin Dow Group, Bayer Pakistan Private Limited, K-Electric Ltd, The Bank of Punjab, Gray Mackenzie International Restaurant Limited (KFC Pakistan), Greenstar Social Marketing Pakistan Limited, Riphah International University, Faysal Funds, HRSG, Pakistan Kuwait Investment Company, Bank-Islami Pakistan Limited, CCL Pharmaceuticals (Pvt) Ltd, Jaffer Business Systems Pvt Ltd, Jaffer Brothers (Pvt) Limited, The Beaconhouse Group, Telenor Pakistan, Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), Liberty Mills Limited, Descon Engineering Limited, Pakistan Petroleum Limited, MG Apparel, Raqami Islamic Digital Bank, and DVAGO Pharmacy & Wellness Experts.

The Global DEI Awards reaffirm that inclusion is not only a moral obligation but a strategic imperative for sustainable organizational growth and national development. The GDEIB Awards Ceremony will be held on 15 April 2026 at Marriott, Karachi.

# NCCIA issues New Year safety advisory for mobile & data users

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD, JAN 01 (APP): The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has issued a safety advisory for mobile and data users on the occasion of the New Year, warning citizens to remain vigilant against unknown numbers can be particularly harmful, posing serious risks to both mobile devices and stored data.

According to the NCCIA, a surge in "greeting links" and "fake gift offers" has been observed as the new year begins. The agency cautioned the public not to click on any suspicious or unfamiliar links, stressing that such links can compromise personal data and

device security. Users have also been advised not to share their WhatsApp verification codes with anyone under any circumstances. The NCCIA emphasized that links received from unknown numbers can be particularly harmful, posing serious risks to both mobile devices and stored data.

The agency stated that these guidelines are aligned with the government's broader agenda to promote transparency. The NCCIA reiterated its commitment to implementing reforms aimed at enhancing transparency and accountability in digital spaces.

# Restore Vital Hyderabad Trauma Center Now, Demands Trade Leader

### Commerce Desk

HYDERABAD: Muhammad Saleem Memon, President Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry (HCSTSI), has called for the immediate restoration and operationalization of the Hyderabad Trauma Center. He emphasized that the facility is located at a strategically vital location in the city, which can provide timely medical assistance not only to residents of Hyderabad but also to victims of accidents occurring on the national highways passing through the city.

He highlighted that Hyderabad is a major commercial, industrial, and transport hub in Sindh, with

heavy daily traffic of goods carriers, public transport vehicles, and commuters on the national highways. In such a scenario, the availability of immediate and high-quality trauma care is crucial for saving precious human lives. Unfortunately, despite being constructed with public funds, the Hyderabad Trauma Center remains non-functional.

All investments will be made under the supervision of Mufti Muhammad Hassan Kaleem, Shariah Advisor to Lucky Investments, ensuring continuous compliance with Islamic principles within a robust governance and risk management framework.

The open-end Shariah-compliant sector equity fund is benchmarked against the KMI-30 Index and is classified as a high-risk fund, suitable for investors with a long-term investment horizon. The Fund offers flexibility, with no minimum holding period or redemption penalty.

# Lucky Investments launches Shariah-Compliant Energy Fund as Pakistan's Energy Sector Gains Momentum

### Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Lucky Investments Limited has announced the launch of the Lucky Islamic Energy Fund (LIEF), a Shariah-compliant, sector-focused equity fund aimed at providing investors with exposure to Pakistan's growing energy sector through ethical and disciplined investing.

The launch comes at a time when Pakistan's energy sector is under-

going gradual reform, driven by rising demand, policy initiatives, efficiency improvements, and an increasing shift toward renewable and sustainable energy sources.

The Fund will primarily invest in Shariah-compliant listed energy companies, spanning exploration and production, refining, power generation, and renewables, with the objective of long-term capital growth.

With this launch, Lucky Invest-

ments continues to expand its Islamic investment offerings while contributing to the development of Pakistan's Islamic capital markets.

The confidence of investors in

Lucky Investments is reflected by the fact that it is currently managing AUMs of over PKR 130 Billion, making it the fastest growing AMC in Pakistan in 2025.

Commenting on the launch, Mohammad Shoab, CFA, Chief Executive Officer of Lucky Invest-

ments Limited, said the energy sector remains central to Pakistan's economic revival and long-term sustainability. He noted that the Lucky Islamic Energy Fund provides

investors with a focused, Shariah-compliant avenue to participate in this critical sector while aligning investments with faith-based values.

The open-end Shariah-compliant sector equity fund is benchmarked against the KMI-30 Index and is classified as a high-risk fund, suit-

# PCB stadium upgradation programme transforms cricketing landscape

 Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) continued to strengthen Pakistan's cricket infrastructure in 2025 through an ambitious programme of stadium renovation and development, reaffirming the country's readiness to host major international events and enhancing facilities for players and fans alike.

Cricket grounds represent the identity and face of the game in any nation and guided by this philosophy, PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi placed strong emphasis on upgrading Pakistan's premier venues ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy – the first ICC event since 1996. Central to this vision was the comprehensive redevelopment of Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium, which was completed in record time.

Players' facilities were enhanced through new dressing rooms, while new enclosures and better access points have



improved crowd movement and viewing experience. State-of-the-art LED floodlights and large digital screens further lifted broadcast and in-stadium standards. With the project completed ahead of its inauguration, Gaddafi Stadium

successfully hosted international cricket, including tri-series matches involving New Zealand and South Africa, prior to the ICC Champions Trophy.

Karachi's National Bank Stadium also underwent significant improvements

during the year. New dressing rooms and hospitality boxes were constructed, LED lighting systems were upgraded and seating in various enclosures was modernised. In addition, the PCB approved a second phase of construction to further elevate the stadium's facilities and overall appearance.

Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium remained a key international venue, with additional facilities introduced for both players and spectators. Faisalabad's Iqbal Stadium, returned to the international arena after a gap of 17 years by hosting an ODI series against South Africa.

As part of its long-term infrastructure roadmap, the PCB is progressing plans to develop Muzaffarabad as an international cricket centre and to construct a state-of-the-art cricket stadium in Islamabad, reflecting its continued commitment to sustainable growth and excellence in Pakistan cricket.

## Takht Bhai Boxer Adil Syed Decries Lack of Sports Support for Provincial Talent

 Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: Takht Bhai, International boxing player, coach, and promoter Adil Syed, who hails from Takht Bhai, Mardan, has said that despite the provincial government's lack of attention, boxing players from the province are continuing to bring pride to the country at national and international levels through self-help and personal effort.

He expressed these views while speaking to the media at the Takht Bhai Press Club (Registered). On this occasion, national champions Ayesha Malik, Nida Kishwar, Komal Bibi, and Rehman Gul Hashmi were also present with him.

Adil Syed stated that the provincial government's efforts for the promotion of sports in the province are almost negligible. Despite a severe lack of sports infrastructure, inadequate facilities, and generally unfavorable conditions, talented boxing players from the province are participating in national and international competitions through their own resources.

He said that most boxing players are deprived of government patronage, financial assistance, and modern training facilities, and bear expenses from their own pockets to participate not only in national but also in international events, where they perform impressively and bring honor to Pakistan.

He added that if the provincial



government pays attention to boxing and other sports, establishes modern training centers, and provides financial and moral support to athletes, these young players can achieve even greater success at the global level.

Speaking about the issues faced by women boxing players, Adil Syed said that in a tough and physically demanding sport like boxing, female athletes face social, economic, and institutional challenges.

Social attitudes are the biggest obstacle, as women's participation in boxing is still considered taboo, which prevents many talented girls from entering the sports arena.

He further stated that there is a severe shortage of separate and secure training centers, proper coaching, and quality equipment for female athletes. Financial difficulties, along with the absence of government scholarships and sponsorships, also pose major hurdles for

women boxers.

In addition, security concerns, incidents of harassment, low representation of women in sports institutions, limited international opportunities, and lack of media coverage further discourage them. In conclusion, he urged the government to take serious and practical measures for the promotion of sports so that the talent of capable athletes is not wasted and the province can once again regain its lost position in the field of sports.

## Digital Transformation in Banking to improve operational efficiency in Pakistan

 Dr. Ummul Baneen

The financial environment of Pakistan is rapidly shifting its dynamics by embracing Digital Innovation to improve standards of services in Banking. Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited has demonstrated operational efficiency to achieve excellence in providing multiple banking services backed by ethical Shariah principles for managing finances through technological transformation. This has set a new milestone in Asian Banking to promote Islamic Banking throughout the globe by providing transparency in operational functions in Banking to prioritize customer expediency with Shariah compliant interest free financial support.

Dr. Ummul Baneen Assistant Professor Foundation University Islamabad presented a research study "Digital Transformation in Banking: A Case Study of Operational Efficiency in Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited" on October 06, 2025 in the McCombs School of Management, in University of Austin, Texas USA highlighting the innovative strides being made by Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited by leveraging technology to enhance operational efficiency and service excellence in Pakistan.



the gap between customer and Bank by providing smart & convenient Digital Banking Solutions.

Mr. Muhammad Atif Hanif, CEO of Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited developed a dedicated Trade Finance Portal to connect Pakistani exporters through leveraging the Bank's Global Network (Al Baraka Group B. S. C (c) ("ABG" / the "Group") with the objective of empowering more than 100 exporters of Pakistan with 12 countries to conveniently transact for trade business without the hassle of geographic

Pakistan in non-traditional markets, to begin with. His vision is to further scale-up this initiative to tourism, agriculture, live-stock and dairy segments to contribute to the Pakistan economic growth. In 2024, Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited unlocked Olive Sector to promote local olive farmers under the leadership of Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited. As a result of these initiatives and effective leadership of Mr. Muhammad Atif Hanif, VIS Credit

Applications. This digital interface is compliant to the protocols of cyber security like QR Code to ensure cyber safety of the clients while performing transactions with Shariah-certified financial mechanisms. The Digital Banking Services are beneficial for convenient & smart Banking Services to avoid physical visits to the branches with 24/7 customer support and complaint handling solutions. This is helpful for senior citizens and residents of remote locations, enhanced automation in services through integrated data system enables staff to provide high value customer satisfaction by keeping the digital records in case of Complaint Management.

A hallmark of the Digital Services of Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited is playing a key role in developing a paperless environment, providing prompt customer care portals to elevate reputation of Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited in the Banking Sector of Pakistan.

The objective of the presentation of the study in USA is to highlight the potential and transformation of Pakistan Banking Industry by Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited as an example at international forum. This advancement in the Banking Sector of Pakistan is playing a vital role to uplift & elevate the financial growth in the Islamic Banking; thus, Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited is expected to become a Success Story in the region in Islamic Banking Sector.

The author is an Assistant professor in FUI. She holds PhD in the field of communication. She has multiple publications in cross fields with communications. She recently visited USA to present above study.

Rating of Al Baraka Bank Pakistan (Limited) increased to AA- with a stable outlook. Moreover, the CEO aspires to have a pavilion in Makkah Halal Forum to promote Halal Economy worldwide under the umbrella of Al Baraka Bank (Pakistan) Limited & Islamic Chamber of Commerce & Development.

The research study has unfolded the digital banking facilities like Account Management, Zakat and donation transfers and monitoring investment portfolio of the client through Digital

Winner team awarded Rs 500,000 in women hockey festival 2025 at Gojra by DC Umar Abbas Mela

 Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: The final match and closing ceremony of the Toba Tek Singh Women Hockey Festival 2025 were held in a grand manner at the Gojra International Hockey Stadium, with Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh Umar Abbas Mela, attending as the chief guest. The Women Hockey Festival held from 26 to 31 December 2025, featured participation from eight teams across Pakistan. Over 150 female players and officials took part, making the event a significant national-level sporting activity. The teams were divided into two groups: Pool A included Karachi, Sahiwal, Islamabad and Gojra Color, while Pool B comprised Lahore, Bahawalpur, Gojra White and Faisalabad. During the tournament, spectators enjoyed high-quality hockey matches through group-stage games and semi-finals. On 31 December, the final match saw Lahore face Bahawalpur, where, after an intense and thrilling contest, Bahawalpur defeated Lahore 2-0 to claim the festival trophy. The closing ceremony was attended by Assistant Commissioner Gojra, Chaudhry Muhammad Riaz Gujjar, Chief Officer District Council Kashif Mahmood, District Sports Officer Chaudhary Muhammad Jamil and other district officials. Awards, trophies and cash prizes were distributed among the winning teams and standout players. The champion Bahawalpur team received PKR 500,000, while the runner-up Lahore team was awarded PKR 200,000.

Additionally, the Player of the Tournament received PKR 50,000 in cash. Speaking at the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Umar Abbas Mela said that under Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's "Khelta Punjab" vision, female players are being provided with ample opportunities to advance in sports. He emphasized that events like the Women Hockey Festival play a crucial role in boosting confidence, professional skills, and the promotion of hockey among women. He further stated that the district administration ensured all necessary arrangements for the successful conduct of the event and will continue to organize such healthy and positive sports competitions in the future. He added that such events encourage the younger generation to participate in sports and promote healthy activities.

**Secretary Sports chairs important meeting to review the performance of all Divisional Sports Officers**

 Sports Desk

LAHORE: Income generated from all divisions will be deposited in Sports Board Punjab's main account: Secretary Sports Punjab Muhammad Ali Secretaries Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Muhammad Ali has presided over an important meeting at the Punjab Stadium on Friday to review the performance of all Divisional Sports Officers of the province.

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry, Additional Secretary Sports Shabbir Hussain Cheema, Director Sports Rana Nadeem Anjum and Director Admin Abid Shaukat attended the meeting in person while all Divisional Sports Officers participated in the meeting through video link.

In the meeting, all Divisional Sports Officers gave a detailed briefing about the events, revenue generation, sports schemes and sports events organized in their respective division. Secretary Sports Punjab Muhammad Ali also asked the officers about the new players they produced their respective regions.

Addressing the meeting, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Muhammad Ali said that the income generated from all divisions of the province will be deposited in Sports Board Punjab's main account. "Punjab Sports Department will issue funds to all districts on basis on their income generation and the accounts of all divisions will be audited to ensure transparency in monetary affairs."

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Muhammad Ali said that a State Officer will be appointed to streamline all affairs including infrastructure, venues, revenue generation etc in the Punjab Sports Department. "Besides this, sports psychologist and physiotherapist will also be appointed to improve the performance of athletes," he added.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Muhammad Ali has directed the Divisional Sports Officers to visit sports development schemes in their respective areas. "All the sports officers of the province will have to show performance and introduce fresh talented athletes from grassroots level".

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Muhammad Ali said that all sports officers will be provided vehicles so that they can visit their sports venues, grounds and stadiums regularly to monitor sports activities. "The performance and activities of all sports officers will be reviewed every month".

Director General Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry informed the meeting that there are more than 600 sports facilities across the Punjab province. "Several important decisions will be taken about sports committees and accounts in the upcoming General Body meeting of Sports Board Punjab".

**Mayor hails 'Karachi Marathon' as boost to city's positive image**

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab has urged maximum participation from the citizens in the upcoming 'Karachi Marathon', calling the race vital in projecting the city's positive image.

Speaking during a press conference earlier in the day, Murtaza Wahab said the marathon would project a positive image of the city.

"The marathon will bring out the positive image of the city," he said.

"I wish to see next year's marathon held inside the city, starting from Mazar-i-Quaid," he added. "We will take the lead — the KMC will come forward, and so will the government."

Meanwhile, the driving force behind the Karachi Marathon, Shaheen Nizami, while talking to a news outlet, shared his views on the event.

"We have already had our new routes approved; it is only a matter of time before we go into the city," he said.

"No one knew Barcelona before the [1992] Olympics, but it came onto the world map after that. Events like the Karachi Marathon will bring our city to the world map," he remarked.

For the unversed, the 3rd Karachi Marathon—an event that promotes active living and unites runners from across the country and beyond will be held on Sunday, January 4, 2026.

The race recognised by World Athletics and certified by the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS), will start and finish at the Nishan-e-Pakistan monument on Sea View Road.

According to reports, more than 2,000 runners have registered for the marathon events. Registrations for the 5K, meanwhile, remain open, with over 3,000 participants already signed up.

## Economic Survey Launch

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal officially launches the Household Integrated Economic Survey (HIES) 2024-25 on Thursday.



Photo: Online

## Constitutional Court a key to balanced federation, transparent judiciary; Law Minister

### City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday said that the judicial reforms, the establishment of the Federal Constitutional Court and the 26th and 27th Constitutional Amendments would deliver its fruits in the days to come. He also announced financial support for lawyers affected by the Kachehri remodeling project.

Addressing the Bar Association, Rawalpindi on Thursday, the minister said that the Kachehri remodeling project

in Rawalpindi had affected lawyers' chambers and created a complex situation, but the issue was resolved effectively through joint efforts. He reaffirmed his commitment to keeping Bar Associations and Bar Councils free from political influence.

"Votes should be cast on the basis of services rather than political party affiliations", he said. On recently passed the 26th and 27th Constitutional Amendments, the minister highlighted the creation of the Federal Constitutional Court as a step that strengthens the federation by

ensuring balanced representation from all provinces. Law minister emphasized that neither governments nor courts operate on ego but on the letter of the Constitution and the rule of law. He highlighted that the reforms being undertaken by the present government would further strengthen lawyers community as well as the judicial system.

He underlined the importance of aligning law education with the latest educational mechanism as an important initiative.

Earlier, President Rawalpindi Bar Association, Sardar Manzar Bashir in his welcoming addressing presented the issues being faced by the lawyers community, focusing on the demolished chambers due to Kachehri remodeling project. Secretary Asad Mahmood Malik, Senior Lawyer Pakistan Bar Council, Ahsan Bhoon and other senior lawyers also addressed the event.



requirement to submit their statements during office hours by January 15, 2026.

The notice warns that failure to submit the assets statements by the specified date will result in the suspension of the concerned members' membership by the Election Commission on January 16, 2026.

The prescribed forms for assets and liabilities are available for download from the Election Commission's official website.

## ECP sets new deadline for parliamentarians for submission of details of assets

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday issued a notice reminding members of the parliament and members of the provincial assemblies of their statutory obligation to submit details of their assets and liabilities under Section 137 of the Elections Act, 2017.

According to the notice, members were required to

submit statements of their own assets and liabilities, as well as those of their family members, to the Election Commission of Pakistan by December 31, 2025. These details were to be provided in Form-B, reflecting their financial status as of June 30, 2017.

The Election Commission has now informed members of the Senate, National Assembly and provincial assemblies who have not yet complied with this

requirement to submit their statements during office hours by January 15, 2026.

The notice warns that failure to submit the assets statements by the specified date will result in the suspension of the concerned members' membership by the Election Commission on January 16, 2026.

The prescribed forms for assets and liabilities are available for download from the Election Commission's official website.

## Mohsin Naqvi offers New Year prayers at Lahore's Data Darbar

### News Desk

LAHORE: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited Lahore's historic Data Darbar shrine on the occasion of the New Year, where he offered prayers for the country's stability, integrity and lasting peace.

According to the 24NewsHD TV channel, a Mehfil-e-Milad Mustafa (peace be upon him) was organised at Data Darbar to mark the beginning of the New Year, in which the interior minister made a special appearance.

During the Data Darbar visit, Mohsin Naqvi also prayed for the eleva-

tion of the ranks of martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the defence of the country and the maintenance of peace.

Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi prayed for Pakistan's development and for the prosperity and well-being of its people.

Similar prayers were also offered in mosques across the country at the start of the New Year, seeking national security, stability and economic prosperity.

Religious scholars prayed that Almighty Allah may remove the challenges facing Pakistan and lead the country towards sustained progress and prosperity.



## Pakistan launches country's first Thalassemia mobile van

### News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan inaugurated its first-ever Thalassemia mobile van in Karachi, aimed at providing accessible screening and care for patients suffering from the genetic blood disorder.

Speaking at the launch, Federal Health Minister Mustafa Kamal described the van as alarming and attributed it to negligence by both the government and the



public. He stressed the need for mandatory premarital testing, particularly for males, explaining that when two carriers of thalassemia minor marry, there is a risk of having a child with thalassemia major. "Everyone is aware of this, yet very few get tested before marriage," he said.

Mustafa Kamal urged authorities to make thalassemia screening mandatory before marriage, aiming to prevent

the birth of children with the severe form of the disease. Addressing broader public health challenges, the minister referenced the difficulties of vaccination campaigns, including polio, where vaccines are sometimes misrepresented as foreign conspiracies. He emphasized that the responsibility for protecting children, including those with thalassemia, ultimately rests with their parents.

## Field Marshal Asim Munir is hero of 2025, declare KP people

### Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: The people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have declared Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir the hero of 2025.

Field Marshal Asim Munir strengthened Pakistan's national security, sovereignty, economy and prestige on the global stage, they maintained.

The people said that under his leadership, Pakistan Armed Forces taught India a punishing lesson in Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos demonstrating that Pakistan is a strong country militarily.

They said that Pakistan's importance has been recognized by the international community due to the Field Marshal's military diplomacy.



The people said the Army Chief's efforts, especially in controlling inflation and promoting investment with major countries, are commendable.

## Pakistan achieves historic successes in 2025: Engr Amir Muqam

### Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Gilgit Baltistan and Kashmir Affairs and President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, Engr Amir Muqam on Thursday said that Pakistan has achieved historic successes on all fronts in last year due to goal-oriented and bold policies of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

"Last year was historic for Pakistan from a defense perspective as Pakistan inflicted a humiliating defeat on an enemy many times larger to itself and the inflation rate will soon come down to negative," said Federal Minister Engineer Amir Muqam while addressing a ceremony on occasion of distribution of laptops among students of Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan under the PM laptop scheme.

Under the dynamic leadership



of PM Shahbaz Sharif and Field Marshal General Syed Asim Munir, Pakistan inflicted a humiliating defeat on an enemy many times larger in May last conflict, adding this historic success raised the stature of our country and nation across the world, and the respect for Pakistanis increased globally.

Engr Amir Muqam said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, in a short period of time, brought the country out of isolation and brink of bankruptcy and put it back on its feet.

## AJK PM Assigns Information Ministry Portfolio to Chaudhry Muhammad Rafiq Nayyar

### Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, has assigned the ministerial portfolio of Information Ministry to the Minister for Chaudhry Muhammad Rafiq Nayyar, Minister for Religious and Awqaf of his existing responsibilities.

It is pertinent to note that Chaudhry Muhammad Rafiq Nayyar has previously served as Minister for Information in the cabinet of former Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayum Niazi.

The decision of the Prime Minister has been warmly welcomed by political journalistic and social circles,



who have termed it a positive and timely step of the Prime Minister.

Azad Kashmir Government of Azad Kashmir issued a notification in this regard.

## New Year: CJP reaffirms judiciary's commitment to accessible, timely justice

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afzad has said that the judiciary remains firmly committed to safeguarding fundamental rights, upholding the rule of law, and ensuring that justice is delivered fairly, impartially, and without delay.

In his New Year message, the Chief Justice extended warm greetings and best wishes to the people of Pakistan, members of the judiciary, the legal fraternity, and all those who look to the courts for justice and reassurance.

He said the Constitution entrusts the judiciary with a solemn responsibility to ensure that justice is not only done but is also seen to be done, adding that this duty gains deeper meaning when viewed through the experiences of ordinary citizens who approach the courts with hope, trust, and vulnerability.

Emphasizing a citizen-centric justice system, the Chief Justice said the year ahead calls for reflection, reform, and renewal of commit-



ment to placing citizens at the centre of judicial processes. He stressed that justice must be accessible in practice rather than merely in principle, dignified in procedure, and responsive to the needs of women, children, marginalized segments of society, and people living in remote and under-served regions.

He reaffirmed the judiciary's unwavering commitment to serving every citizen with fairness, independence, and compassion, and expressed hope that the New Year would bring renewed confidence in the rule of law and a justice system that reaches every doorstep.