



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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'I don't need international law': Trump says power constrained only by 'my own morality'

President Donald Trump said in an interview published Thursday that his authority as commander-in-chief is constrained only by his "own morality," dismissing international law and other external checks on the use of U. S. military, economic, and political power.



JUI-F chief Fazlur Rehman to arrive in Lahore tomorrow on three-day visit

JUI Punjab spokesperson Hafiz Ghazanfar Aziz said that on January 11 at 10:00 am, Maulana Fazlur Rehman will address a condolence gathering and madaris convention at Jamia Ashrafia, Lahore. Later, after Zuhr prayers, he will speak at a Khatm-e-Bukhari gathering at Jamia Madania Jadede on Raiwind Road.

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Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presiding over a meeting on Federal Government's Ramzan Package, on Friday.



Photo: Online

New transparent system replaces decades of corrupt practices in Ramazan Package: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said the federal government had established a transparent system to provide subsidized essential food items to the underprivileged during Ramazan, replacing a decades-old corrupt system of financial irregularities and mismanagement in utility stores.

He directed all relevant institutions to develop an even more

effective and beneficial relief package for the upcoming holy month.

The prime minister was chairing a review meeting on the proposed Ramazan package and third-party validation of last year's package.

During the meeting, he praised all relevant institutions and ministries on the report by a reputable audit firm regarding the transparency of last year's Ramazan package.

He noted that deserving individuals were deprived of their rights due to corruption in utility stores.

Financial support and social well-being for the poor and the middle class are among the top priorities of the government, the prime minister said directing that subsidy amounts for the Ramazan package for the deserving people should be distributed exclusively through digital wallets so that their

dignity and respect was not compromised.

During the meeting, the prime minister was informed that in the third-party validation of last year's Ramazan package, a world renowned and reputable audit firm declared the government package effective and transparent.

The meeting was attended by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Information Minister Attaulah Tarar,

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Syed Imran Ahmed Shah, Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister for Information Technology Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Prime Minister's Special Assistant Haroon Akhtar, Chairman National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, and other relevant senior officials.

DPM calls PC to act as central clearinghouse for economic decisions



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Friday stressed that the Planning Commission (PC) should act as the central clearinghouse for economic decisions, providing guidance to ministries and divisions to maintain policy consistency and development planning, while supporting sustainable reforms to strengthen Pakistan's economic governance.

The deputy prime minister chaired a meeting on economic reforms, high-

lighting the historic and central role of the Planning Commission (PC) in Pakistan's economic and development policymaking, a DPM's Office news release said.

He emphasized the need to empower PC to drive strategic policy give priorities, and oversee public investment effectively.

The DPM was of the view that the Planning Commission should serve as the apex body under the direct leadership of the Prime Minister, integrating a Policy & Planning Wing and a separate Development Wing.

He highlighted that all major economic decisions must align with the national economic strategy, with clear KPIs to ensure accountability, performance, and coherence across the government.

The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers for Finance, Planning & Special Initiatives, Climate Change; Minister of State for Finance & Revenue; SAPM Tariq Bajwa; Secretary Planning; National Coordinator SIFC; and senior officials from relevant ministries and divisions.

Privatisation Commission Board Takes Key Decisions On Major Privatisation Transactions

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Privatisation Commission (PC) Board, in its 247th meeting held today under the chairmanship of Mr. Muhammad Ali, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privatisation and Chairman, Privatisation Commission, took key decisions on privatisation of House Building Finance Company Limited, Roosevelt Hotel, New Islamabad International Airport and Power Distribution Companies (DISCOs) Batch II.

House Building Finance Company Limited (HBFCCL): The PC Board recommended termination of the ongoing negotiated sale process for a 51% shareholding. Pakistan Mortgage Refinance Company (PMRCL), was the sole bidder in the process and had submitted a bid of PKR 4.2 Billion as against the reference price of PKR 13.55 Billion approved by CCOP. The Board has recommended that the privatisation of HBFCCL be started afresh with the appointment of a new Financial Adviser.

Roosevelt Hotel, New York: The PC Board annulled the process for hiring of Financial Adviser for privatisation of Roosevelt Hotel and directed that fresh Expressions of Interest (EOI) be invited for the appointment of Financial Adviser. The decision was taken to ensure a more

robust and competitive process, as the pool of interested parties narrowed from seven to two following legal and technical compliance screening under the prescribed criteria.

Islamabad International Airport (IIAP): The Board recommended the inclusion of IIAP in the Privatisation Programme to the CCOP. It recommended moving forward with a concession model under an open, competitive process after the Cabinet Committee on Inter-Governmental Commercial Transactions (CCoIGCT) had earlier ruled out G2G mode on 1st January, 2026. Furthermore, the Commission has been authorized by the Board to engage in direct negotiations with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for its appointment as the Financial Adviser for this transaction.

DISCOs (HESCO & SEPCO): The PC Board also approved the formation of a transaction committee for the privatisation of HESCO and SEPCO.

The transaction committee will evaluate the deliverables submitted by Raiffeisen Investment, the Financial Advisor for the transaction.

The PC Board reiterated its resolve to conduct all transactions through structured, competitive, and transparent processes to achieve optimal outcomes for the national exchequer.

Mohsin Naqvi orders crackdown on begging and immigration mafias

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday directed the FIA Immigration Wing to launch an effective crackdown against professional begging networks and the people facilitating them, stressing that no leniency would be shown toward those tarnishing Pakistan's reputation.

According to the details, chairing a high-level meeting in Islamabad, Mohsin Naqvi reviewed the performance of the FIA's Immigration Wing and assessed ongoing efforts to curb illegal immigration and human trafficking.

Mohsin Naqvi directed to continue strict and indiscriminate action against mafias involved in illegal immigration. He said those involved in human smuggling deserve no leniency.

Mohsin Naqvi instructed the FIA to ensure the effective enforcement of immigration



laws and stressed that the airport immigration checking system should be further strengthened.

The interior minister said that those involved in trafficking "deserve no concession" and emphasised that Pakistan's name "cannot be allowed to be disgraced under any circumstances."

The minister instructed the FIA to ensure strict enforcement of immigration laws and ordered that immigration checks at airports be strengthened, with enhanced screening of travel documents.

The meeting was attended by the federal interior secretary, the additional interior secretary, the FIA director general, and zonal directors from Karachi and Lahore.

Atta Tarar slams PTI's 'soft corner' for outlawed TTP



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Friday strongly condemned the "soft corner" shown by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for Fitna al Khawarij, regretting their outright reluctance in denouncing the outlawed group's hostility towards the state and its people.

Addressing a press conference alongside veteran politician Zahid Khan, the minister said the PTI leaders absolutely faltered when questioned by the media about the proscribed organization. Tarar said the people of

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are brave and courageous, but unfortunately ruled by those who have "myopic mindset" with their "regrettable conduct".

During a visit to Lahore, their leaders stooped very low and resorted to use derogatory language against the women leaders of Punjab.

"If a minister of one province speaks such things about a female information minister of another province, he should think whether he can use the same words for his own sisters and daughters," said Atta Tarar while denouncing their conduct as "shameful and regrettable".

Under the leadership of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and his team, the fruits of economic revival are visible, he said, adding in the month of December alone, remittances reached \$3.6 billion, showing a 17 percent increase on a year-on-year basis.

Minister leads Islamabad environment review, orders streamlined action

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr Musadik Malik on Friday chaired a high-level meeting to review environmental protection measures and the preservation of green cover in the federal capital, stressing the need for coordinated and transparent action to address public health and ecological concerns.

During the briefing, Dr Malik was informed about an ongoing campaign aimed at reducing the presence of non-native paper mulberry trees in Islamabad.

Officials told the minister that the species is highly allergenic and a major contrib-

utor to severe allergies and asthma-related health issues among residents of the capital.

The campaign focuses on the selective removal of paper mulberry trees in areas where their concentration exceeds 90 percent, including Shakarparian, F-9 Park, and parts of the H-8 and H-9 sectors. These will be replaced with native, fruit-bearing trees and pine species.

Dr Malik was assured that the campaign would not lead to a reduction in Islamabad's overall tree cover, as plans are in place to plant more trees than those removed. Replantation efforts will include the installation of mature native trees to accelerate ecological recovery.

PML-N a Bouquet of All Communities, Muslim League (N) will form govt in AJK

 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON, and President Pakistan Muslim League (N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engineer Ameer Muqam has said that Pakistan and Kashmir are inseparable and integral to each other, and that Pakistan Muslim League (N) represents all communities and schools of thought.

Addressing a joining ceremony of PML-N Azad Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, Engineer Ameer Muqam welcomed Chaudhry Abdul Razzaq and his associates into the party, stating that after their inclusion, PML-N has emerged as an invincible political force in Samahni.

Engineer Ameer Muqam said that record development took place in Azad Kashmir during the tenure of Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan. He recalled that Nawaz Sharif ensured AJK's inclusion in the NFC Award even before any demand was raised. He emphasized that if the people of AJK desire development and prosperity, they



must once again support PML-N. Kashmir and Leader of the Opposition President PML-N Azad Jammu and Shah Ghulam Qadir congratulated

Chaudhry Abdul Razzaq on joining the party and warned that any conspiracy to weaken the constitutional structure of AJK would be resisted.

Former Prime Minister AJK Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan said that Pakistan Muslim League (N) is united, disciplined, and growing stronger with each passing day in Azad Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, Chaudhry Abdul Razzaq formally announced his joining of Pakistan Muslim League (N). He said that he has spent 39 years in politics and now joins PML-N with full confidence in its leadership.

He praised the governance model of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz, calling it a true reflection of visionary leadership. He said that under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan will overcome its challenges.

Secretary General Chaudhry Tariq Farooq, former ministers Dr. Najeeb Naqi, Chaudhry Muhammad Saeed, Chaudhry Rukhsar Ahmed, Raja Maqsood, and other party leaders also addressed the ceremony.

Sardar Attique condemns Indian Forces' cordon and search operations in Kathua IIOJK

 Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and President All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan has strongly condemned the cordon and search operations carried out by Indian forces in Kathua district of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).




In a statement issued to the media, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan said that such brutal actions by Indian forces cannot suppress the Kashmiri people's spirit of freedom. He said that Indian forces are playing holi with the blood of innocent Kashmiris on a daily basis and are actively involved in genocide, illegal land seizures, and attempts to convert the Muslim majority into a minority through a dangerous and systematic plan.

Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan further said that the Modi-led Indian government, in collusion with the Indian military establishment, has resumed the arming and training of organized Hindutva militant groups. He added that the establishment of new training centers near the Line of Control in various districts is clear evidence that Indian forces are providing weapons and ammunition to promote terrorism in the occupied valley.

He concluded by saying that the Kashmiri people are being punished for demanding their inalienable right to self-determination, and that India is using state terrorism as an official policy, which is highly condemnable.

If you want this shorter, UN / human-rights-focused, or international media toned, let us know.

Attock Police attempt to smuggle inter-provincial drugs hidden in cat food packets foiled

 Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Police carried out an effective operation against drug smuggling and successfully foiled an attempt to smuggle drugs from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Punjab. During the operation, an inter-provincial drug smuggler was arrested.

According to details, during routine checking at the Search Park area of Attock Khurd, a police team stopped a Hiace vehicle. Upon searching cotton bags carried by a suspicious passenger, police recovered 10 packets of hashish cleverly concealed inside cat food packets. The recovered hashish weighed a total of 12 kilograms.

The accused was attempting to deceive law enforcement agencies by disguising the narcotics as cat food. The arrested suspect was identified as Hazrat Bilal son of Mir Syed, a resident of Bara, District Khyber.

A case has been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act at Attock Khurd Police Station, and further investigation is underway.

District Police Officer Attock, Sardar Moarhen Khan, praised the police team for the successful operation and stated that drug traffickers are using new tactics, but Attock Police will continue to thwart every such attempt and ensure that culprits are punished according to the law. He emphasized that protecting the younger generation from drugs is their top priority.

Over 762,000 Pakistanis go abroad for employment in 2025, including 18,352 highly educated professionals

 Syed Tauqeer Zaidi

In 2025, a total of 762,499 Pakistanis went abroad for employment, marking an increase from 727,381 in 2024, according to the latest data released by the Bureau of Emigration.

The statistics reveal that Pakistani workers of various professional skills sought opportunities overseas.

Among them, 5,659 accountants, 10,503 chefs, 3,795 doctors, and 5,946 engineers left the country for work.

Additionally, 1,640 nurses, 1,725 teachers, 163,718 drivers, and 6,475 electricians also secured jobs abroad.

The Bureau reported that 465,138 laborers, 5,700 masons, 12,703 technicians, 11,777 managers, 2,306 plumbers, and 2,027 waiters went abroad in 2025. Of these, 18,352 were highly educated, 13,657 were highly skilled, and 222,171 were skilled workers.

Furthermore, 42,257 were semi-skilled, while 466,062 were unskilled laborers.

Saudi Arabia remained the top destination with 530,256 Pakistanis traveling there for work.

Other popular destinations included the UAE (52,664), Qatar (68,376), Bahrain (37,726), Kuwait (6,590), and South Korea (39).

Pakistanis also sought opportunities in Europe, the US, and Asia, including the United States (1,005), the United Kingdom (4,355), Germany (984), Italy (813), China (2,230), Japan (2,210), and Romania (1,109).

These figures highlight the growing presence of Pakistani workers in the global labor market, reflecting positively on both the national economy and Pakistan's reputation for skilled and dedicated professionals abroad.

KP assembly body discuss amendments to Right to Public Services (Amendment) Bill, 2025

PESHAWAR: A meeting of the Standing Committee of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Administration chaired by Fazal Elahi discussed framework of KP Right to Public Services (Amendment) Bill, 2025.



The meeting was attended by MPAs including Aftab Alam, Zarshad Khan and Rehana Ismail, officials from administration department, law department, finance department and the relevant officers.

During the meeting, the standing committee was given a detailed briefing on the framework of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Public Services (Amendment) Bill, 2025. The Committee deliberated on the proposed amendments to a total of nine sections of the act aiming improving administrative affairs and ensuring the provision of effective, timely and transparent services to the public.

On this occasion, the members of the committee also presented their opinions and suggestions on the proposed amendments.

Meeting was told that under the proposed amendments, all departments involved in public dealing will be made accountable before the RTI Commission. Furthermore, each department would be bound to submit its annual performance report regarding public services to the commission by 31 March every year to further strengthen transparency, accountability and public trust.

Dense Foggy

ISLAMABAD: Motorists are moving with turtle speed to avoid any incident at Srinagar Highway during dense foggy weather early in the morning in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

AJK Ministers Ch Rafiq Nayyar and Bazil Naqvi arrive in Karachi, receive warm welcome

 Abdul Majeed Tahir

KARACHI: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Minister for Information, Auqaf and Religious Affairs Chaudhry Muhammad Rafiq Nair and Minister for Health Syed Bazil Ali Naqvi arrived in Karachi, where they were warmly received at Karachi Airport by leaders and workers of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

Those who welcomed the ministers included Sardar Zulfiqar Ali, President PPP AJK Sindh Zone, Sardar Zafar Iqbal, Sardar Shaukat Khan,



Chaudhry Maqbool, Altaf Shah, and Azhar Awan. Mehnaz Akhtar Awan, Shamim Akhtar, along with other party leaders and workers, were also present. Speaking on the occasion, the ministers

said that under the leadership of Prime Minister AJK Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, the PPP government is fully committed to addressing public grievances and eliminating deprivation.

They expressed confidence that based on public service, development initiatives, and good governance, the Pakistan Peoples Party will once again secure a decisive victory in the upcoming elections. The ministers reaffirmed their resolve to meet public expectations through tireless efforts and thanked party officials and workers in Karachi for the warm reception.

Teachers' Professional Training ensures success of distance education: Vice Chancellor

 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Vice Chancellor of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIQU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood stated that continuous professional training of teachers is indispensable for maintaining and further improving quality in the distance education system. Skills-based training workshops play a key role in aligning faculty members with modern teaching requirements and emerging educational trends.

He expressed these views while addressing the closing ceremony of a three-day training workshop on distance education organized for new faculty members by the Department of Distance, Non-Formal and Continuing Education. The workshop aimed



to familiarize faculty members with new dimensions of distance education, effective teaching strategies and

modern pedagogical methods. Faculty members from various departments of the university participated actively

and enthusiastically in the training program.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the Vice Chancellor distributed certificates among the participants and resource persons and directed that such skills-based workshops be conducted regularly to further enhance academic standards.

On this occasion, Chairman of the Department, Dr. Muhammad Athar Hussain and the Workshop Coordinator, Dr. Muhammad Ajmal Chaudhry thanked the Vice Chancellor for the successful organization of the workshop and appreciated the efforts of their team. They reaffirmed their commitment to organizing training workshops on course development skills in the near future.

Islamabad
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SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:45 am
Zohr	12:15 pm
Asr	3:39 pm
Maghrib	5:17 pm
Isha	6:45 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
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MH	561116
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Potohar Town	9209224

Japan Embassy announces MEXT Teachers Training Scholarship Program 2026

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Japan in Pakistan has announced Teachers Training Scholarship 2026 of MEXT (The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology) for Pakistani teachers who have teaching experience of 5 years or more in primary or secondary school, public or private. Age should be 35 or less.

The purpose of this training course is to provide an opportunity to Pakistani teachers to conduct research on school education in Japan and learn new methodologies and teaching techniques from Japanese experts which may help them in their professional growth.

MEXT offers each year scholarships to international teachers who wish to conduct research on school education at designated educational institutions in Japan as teacher training students under the Japanese Government MEXT Scholarship program. This is maximum 18 month duration non-degree training course, but applicant will get a certificate after completing the required course at the university in Japan.

The last date to send applications is 12th February 2026.

The detailed information of the program can be found on the Embassy's website.

Ziauddin University hosts 1st International Conference on Molecular Medicine in Healthcare

Bureau Report

KARACHI: "Modern medicine is entering a new era in which precise, tailor-made treatment for each patient can only be guided by the molecular understanding of their disease. Artificial Intelligence is revolutionizing diagnostics and research, but its true potential is realized only when combined with human insight", said Prof Dr. SM Tariq Rafi, Chairman, Sindh Higher Education Commission.

Highlighting this critical shift away from traditional clinical practices to molecular-based health care, Professor Dr. Tariq Rafi said "By exploring the molecular basis of diseases, clinicians and researchers are now empowered to develop treatments that are highly effective and patient-specific. Artificial Intelligence is enhancing our ability to diagnose and understand complex condition."

The conference also featured Prof. Dr. Shahana Urooj Kazmi, President of the Pakistan Society of Microbiology, as a keynote speaker who explored the role of genomics and molecular technologies in developing effective therapeutics.

Shedding light on innovative methods to enhance treatment efficacy and targeted therapies another keynote speaker, Prof.

Dr. Raza Shah, Director of ICCBS, discussed supramolecular approaches in drug delivery while Dr. Syed M. Shahid from Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT), Auckland, New Zealand emphasized the molecular and lifestyle-linked risks of diabetes, and mentioned the importance of understanding molecular mechanisms alongside lifestyle interventions for better disease management.

Earlier in her speech, Prof. Dr. Talat Mirza, Executive Director Research, and Principal, College of Molecular Medicine, brought in attention the rising significance of molecular medicine, stating, "Molecular medicine is an emerging discipline that is already shaping the future of healthcare delivery. Leading medical institutes worldwide are integrating it into their academic programs."

Poster presentations were also held during the conference, showcasing innovative research by students and young researchers. In the postgraduate category, Dr. Kevin Joseph secured first position, followed by Dr. Afifa Razi in second place and Rafia Bilquis Siddiq in third. In the undergraduate category, Anoosha Asif won first position, Hafiza Saleha secured second place, while Amna Asad stood third.



Called on

ISLAMABAD: His Excellency Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, called on the Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr. Musadik Malik on Friday.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

SMEDA to organize first ever national sme clusters expo by end of the month

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) has going to hold the first 'Made in Pakistan: SME Cluster Showcase 2026'—a three-day landmark exhibition on Jan 24-26 at Lahore Expo Center. According to SMEDA CEO Ms. Nadia Jahangir Seth the exhibition aims to strengthen the country's micro, small and medi-

um enterprise ecosystem, as per SME development vision of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, which is being implemented in the direct leadership of SAPM Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan and Secretary MoIP Mr. Saif Anjum.

The expo, she said, is envisioned as a multi-year national platform that will evolve over time from product visibility and cluster recognition into structured B2B partnerships,

subcontracting ecosystems, export readiness and global buyer linkages. She hoped that the exhibition would expand market access and position SME clusters as a structured and competitive pillar of the national economy.

CEO SMEDA said that Pakistan's SMEs form the backbone of economy and are concentrated in regional and sectoral clusters but most of them, especially women-led busi-

nesses and micro enterprises, face challenges related to visibility, investment readiness and access to high-value domestic and international markets.

The 'Cluster Showcase' aims to bridge these gaps by providing a high-impact platform that will connect SMEs with corporate buyers, policymakers, investors, financial institutions and international stakeholders, CEO SMEDA explained.

DC Mela Reviews Civic Facilities and Development Projects in Toba Tek Singh

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: In line with the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to improve civic facilities, strengthen the sanitation system and ensure the timely completion of development projects, Deputy Commissioner Umar Abbas Mela paid visits to various localities of Toba Tek Singh and reviewed the performance of relevant departments.

During his visit to the General Bus Stand, the deputy commissioner inspected the ongoing beautification work and directed officials to ensure that providing a clean and improved environment to the public remains the administration's top priority. He also reviewed the performance of field teams of the Suthra Punjab programme and issued instructions to further enhance sanitation arrangements. Later, DC Mela visited the Sahulat Bazaar, where he reviewed the facilities being provided to the public and assessed administrative matters. He also inspected the ongoing beautification work in Sadar Bazaar and instructed the concerned officers to complete the work at the earliest so that citizens could benefit from a cleaner and more aesthetically pleasing environment.

DC Mela said the district administration was giving top priority to the provision of improved public facilities, sanitation and close monitoring of development projects in accordance with the chief minister's vision.

Ch Khushi Muhammad Jutt, a pioneer leader of public service

Zafar Chishti

Chaudhry Khushi Muhammad Jutt, a resident of Chak No. 705-GB Kamalia, is a distinguished and visionary leader who has emerged as a true representative of the people. Contesting the election for the first time as an independent candidate from constituency PP-123, he secured thousands of votes, clearly demonstrating his strong public support and popularity.

Chaudhry Khushi Muhammad Jutt is a personification of truthfulness, sincerity, honesty and compassion for humanity. Unlike conventional politicians whose primary aim is fame or political prominence, his entry into politics is driven by a genuine desire to serve the people selflessly and to stand by them in times of hardship.

He not only cares for the welfare of his own constituency but also believes in serving humanity at large. On numerous occasions, he has carried out various welfare initiatives that have earned him immense respect and admiration among the masses. Notably, during the floods of the River Ravi in 2025, Chaudhry Khushi Muhammad Jutt played a remarkable role by providing flood-affected families with three meals a day along with complete arrangements for shelter and clothing.



PIDE Briefs 53rd CTP Probationers on Evidence-Based Policymaking and Governance Challenges

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) hosted a comprehensive briefing session for the probationers of the 53rd Common Training Programme (CTP) of the Civil Services Academy (CSA). The session was part of their CSA Probationers Islamabad study tour. It aimed to familiarize future civil servants with contemporary policy challenges, evidence-based research, and emerging development priorities, while strengthening their analytical and research capacities essential for effective public service.

The session opened with welcome remarks of Dr. Nadeem Javaid (SI), Vice Chancellor, PIDE, who underscored the central role of research-driven and people-centered policymaking in governance. Welcoming the probationers, particularly those from Balochistan and other far-flung areas, Dr. Javaid highlighted the immense responsibility they would soon shoulder as future leaders of the state.

Dr. Karim Khan, Dean (Academics), PIDE, delivered a comprehensive presentation highlighting PIDE's academic strength, research depth, and policy engagement framework. He outlined

PIDE's legacy as Pakistan's leading economic think tank and graduate institution, emphasizing its role in producing economists and public policy professionals serving in government, international organizations, and the private sector.

Speaking on behalf of the Civil Services Academy, Dr. Syed Shabbir Akbar Zaidi, Director (Common Training Programme/Capacity Building), explained that the primary objective of the visit was to strengthen officers' analytical and research capabilities, which are essential across all service groups.



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Anti-begging drive

The district administration has continued daily action against begging in the federal capital, detaining 12 people in one operation as part of an ongoing campaign to curb the practice.

The Islamabad administration is carrying out daily measures against begging across the city. In the latest operation, Assistant Commissioner Shalimar Muhammad Ali led an action that resulted in the detention of 12 professional beggars. The individuals were taken into custody and shifted to the relevant holding facility, according to officials.

Authorities said the action was part of a broader plan to address organized begging in public places, including markets, traffic signals, and residential areas. The administration stated that such activities affect public order and create problems for residents and visitors.

Officials added that teams are conducting routine checks in different sectors of the city. These checks are aimed at identifying individuals involved in professional begging and taking legal steps under the applicable laws. The administration said the drive is being carried out on a daily basis to ensure consistent enforcement.

The Assistant Commissioner said the district administration is committed to maintaining order in the federal capital. He added that the campaign will continue in coordination with other departments to ensure effective implementation. The administration also noted that records of detained individuals are being reviewed to identify repeat offenders.

Alongside enforcement, the administration appealed to citizens to cooperate with the authorities. Residents were urged not to encourage begging by giving money at roadsides or public places. Officials said public support is necessary to make the campaign effective and long-lasting.

The administration further stated that citizens can play a role by reporting instances of professional begging to the relevant authorities. Information provided by the public can help teams respond quickly and take action in targeted areas.

Officials emphasized that the aim of the drive is not only enforcement but also improving civic conditions in the city. They said efforts are being made to manage the issue in a structured manner, with regular monitoring and follow-up actions.

The district administration reiterated its request to the public to stand with the authorities in efforts to reduce begging in Islamabad. It said cooperation from residents will help ensure that public spaces remain orderly and accessible for all.

The administration confirmed that similar actions will continue in the coming days as part of the daily campaign. Citizens were advised to remain vigilant and support official efforts to address the issue across the capital.

Trump Signals a New Global Posture

Venezuela, Cuba, Mexico and Greenland at the Center of a Hard-Line Future Strategy
Washington, D.C. — In a series of closely watched remarks over the past 48 hours, Donald Trump has once again placed American power, leverage, and strategic dominance at the heart of his foreign-policy narrative, outlining a future approach that sharply focuses on Venezuela, Cuba, Mexico, and Greenland.

Though no formal executive actions have yet been announced, Trump's language has sent diplomatic ripples across Latin America, Europe, and the Arctic region, raising questions about how far the United States may be prepared to go in redefining its role in the Western Hemisphere and beyond a Message of Power and Positioning.

Speaking in broad but unmistakably forceful terms, Trump framed these regions as central to America's national security, economic interests, and geopolitical competition. His remarks emphasized that U.S. policy moving forward would be driven by outcomes rather than process, signaling impatience with long-standing diplomatic stalemates.

Observers noted that the tone marked a continuation — and intensification — of Trump's earlier worldview: alliances are transactional, sovereignty is respected conditionally, and American influence must be visible, measurable, and enforceable.

Venezuela: Pressure Without Apology

Venezuela emerged as the most urgent focal point. Trump portrayed the country as a symbol of failed governance, economic collapse, and regional instability. He suggested that future U.S. engagement would hinge on strict conditions tied to political reform, energy interests, and accountability.

While stopping short of announcing sanc-

tions or interventions, the rhetoric implied that Washington sees Venezuela not only as a humanitarian concern but as a strategic challenge with consequences for regional security and global energy markets.

Diplomats across Latin America reacted cautiously, warning that heightened pressure could destabilize an already fragile region, while others acknowledged that Venezuela's crisis remains unresolved after years of international efforts.

Cuba: No Concessions Without Change

Trump's comments on Cuba reflected a familiar skepticism toward engagement without reform. He reiterated that normalization cannot occur in the absence of demonstrable improvements in civil liberties and political freedoms.

By linking Cuba's future to broader regional dynamics, Trump signaled that the island nation's long-standing isolation may again become a tool of leverage rather than reconciliation. Analysts note that such a stance appeals to domestic political constituencies while placing Havana under renewed international scrutiny.

Mexico: Partnership Under Pressure

Mexico occupied a delicate position in Trump's remarks — described simultaneously as a vital partner and a source of unresolved challenges. Border security, migration, and organized crime were cited as ongoing concerns, while trade cooperation was framed as essential but conditional.

Mexican officials responded by emphasizing sovereignty and mutual respect, reiterating that cooperation must remain bilateral and lawful. Despite the tough rhetoric, experts believe that behind-the-scenes coordination on trade and security is likely to continue, even as public messaging remains tense.

Greenland: The Arctic Enters the Spotlight

Perhaps the most unexpected element of Trump's statements involved Greenland. By high-

lighting the territory's strategic location, natural resources, and Arctic relevance, Trump revived global debate over the future of the region amid rising interest from major powers.

Denmark and Greenlandic leaders swiftly reaffirmed that Greenland's future is determined by its people, not external ambitions. Still, Trump's remarks underscore growing U.S. concern over Arctic militarization, climate-driven access to resources, and competition with rival powers.

International Reaction and Strategic Implications

Across global capitals, reactions ranged from concern to cautious interpretation. European allies stressed the importance of diplomacy and international law, while Latin American leaders warned against policies that could revive Cold War-era tensions.

Security analysts argue that Trump's statements are best understood as strategic signaling — designed to shift negotiating positions before concrete policy moves are made. Others warn that rhetoric alone can reshape markets, alliances, and regional stability.

What Comes Next

In the short term, officials expect intensified diplomatic engagement rather than immediate action. Key indicators will include:

- Changes to sanctions frameworks
- Shifts in trade or border policy
- Increased U.S. activity in the Arctic
- Expanded diplomatic pressure on regional governments

In the longer term, Trump's message suggests a world in which American foreign policy is unapologetically interest-driven, less restrained by multilateral norms, and increasingly shaped by strategic competition.

A Defining Moment

Whether these remarks mark the beginning of a new phase in U.S. global engagement or remain a forceful preview of intentions, they have already succeeded in resetting the conversation. For allies and adversaries alike, the message is clear: under Trump's vision, geography, power, and leverage once again define America's place in the world.

Trump's War on the World Order: Burying the United Nations and NATO

In his first term, Donald Trump unsettled the international system but did not fully dismantle it. Bureaucratic inertia, judicial limits, and allied resistance acted as brakes. In his second term, those restraints have largely disappeared. What is unfolding now is not simply an assertive foreign policy, but a systematic effort to dismantle the post-World War II international order—an order built around the United Nations, collective security, multilateral problem-solving, and the idea that power must be tempered by rules.

That intent became unmistakable on January 7, 2026, when President Trump signed a Presidential Memorandum directing the United States to withdraw from 66 international organizations deemed no longer aligned with American interests. The order instructed all executive departments and agencies to cease participation in and funding for 35 non-UN bodies and 31 UN entities. This sweeping decision followed a government-wide review of every international organization, treaty, and convention in which the United States holds membership or provides financial support. The stated rationale was blunt: these institutions were judged to operate against U.S. national interests, sovereignty, economic prosperity, or security, or to function so inefficiently that American taxpayer dollars were "better allocated elsewhere."

That institutional retreat has been paired with a dramatic expansion of hard power. The U.S. defense budget for 2026 stands at approximately US\$901 billion, already the largest in the world by a wide margin. President Trump has now proposed raising military spending to US\$1.5 trillion in 2027, citing "troubled and dangerous times." This figure would

exceed the combined defense spending of the next several major powers. By comparison, the entire European continent—including all NATO members except the United States—collectively spends roughly US\$300–350 billion annually, lacks unified command, and depends heavily on U.S. strategic enablers. The gap underscores a shift from deterrence to dominance.

That dominance was displayed on January 3, 2026, when U. S. forces carried out a sudden military operation in Venezuela, capturing President Nicolás Maduro and transferring him to the United States to face federal drug-trafficking charges. U. S. naval and air assets surged in the Caribbean, while Venezuelan oil exports were effectively sealed off under intensified enforcement. Regardless of legal justifications, the geopolitical meaning was stark: a sitting head of state was removed by force. The precedent shattered long-standing norms of sovereignty and reinforced the administration's belief that power, not process, is the ultimate arbiter.

From the Caribbean, the strategic focus turns northward—to the Arctic and Greenland. Greenland has moved to the center of U. S. attention because climate change is rapidly transforming the region. As Arctic ice melts, new sea routes are emerging that could shorten Asia–Europe shipping distances by up to 40 percent. Analysts estimate that a fully viable trans-Arctic corridor could eventually carry trade worth hundreds of billions of dollars annually, reducing reliance on chokepoints like the Suez Canal

and reshaping global commerce.

Greenland also holds significant mineral potential. The island contains deposits of rare earth elements, zinc, iron ore, uranium, neodymium, dysprosium, cerium, gallium and other critical minerals essential for advanced electronics, defense systems, and energy technologies. The strategic value lies in future access combined with geography. Greenland sits astride the North Atlantic and Arctic approaches, offering proximity to Russia's northern flank and growing Chinese polar interests.

Demographically and politically, Greenland is small but democratic. Its population of roughly 56,000, overwhelmingly Inuit, governs itself through an elected parliament under a system of extensive autonomy within the Kingdom of Denmark. What Greenland lacks is military capability. That asymmetry fuels the dangerous assumption that control could be asserted without resistance—a notion that sends shockwaves through Europe.

For European allies, particularly Denmark, this is a profound betrayal. Denmark was among NATO's most committed contributors in Afghanistan, suffering one of the highest per-capita casualty rates. For decades, Europe accepted reduced military autonomy in exchange for American protection. Now, the prospect that territorial threat could originate from the alliance's dominant power has forced a strategic reckoning. Only France and the United Kingdom retain full-spectrum capabilities, including nuclear deterrence. The

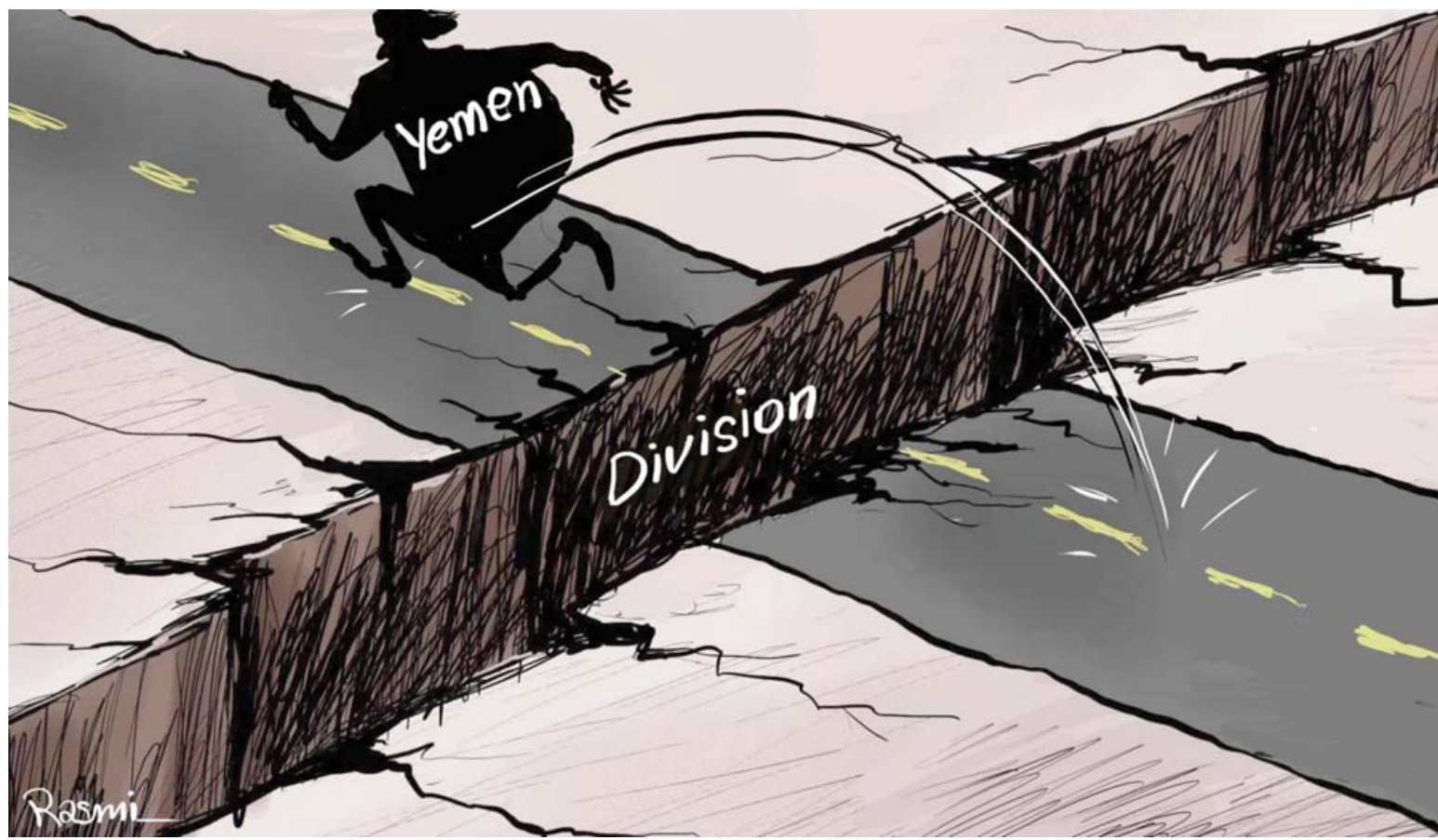
rest are scrambling to rebuild defenses hollowed out by dependence.

This strikes at the heart of NATO. An alliance cannot survive when its strongest member behaves as a territorial revisionist. If the United States were to assert control over Greenland, NATO would not collapse under external attack; it would die of internal contradiction. In such a scenario, the strategic logic underpinning the war between Ukraine and Russia would also change. A hollowed-out NATO would no longer represent a coherent expansion threat to Russia, eroding the rationale that has sustained confrontation with Ukraine.

What emerges is a world in accelerated realignment. Europe is reconsidering dependence, Latin America braces for renewed interventionism, and Asia prepares for maritime and economic confrontation. With the United Nations weakened and multilateral forums abandoned, disputes that once might have been mediated now drift toward unilateral force.

These are perilous times. The January 7 withdrawal from 66 international organizations marks not a tactical adjustment, but a strategic severing from the architecture that once stabilized global politics. Power is being centralized, institutions dismantled, and restraint discarded. History suggests that such moments rarely end quietly. The choice before the world is stark: rebuild collective order—or prepare for an era in which power alone decides, and the world order is not merely weakened, but buried.

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

Dark Legacy: A Chronicle of Kashmir's Tragedies

In the annals of Indian-occupied Jammu & Kashmir, January emerges as a period of deep anguish and solemn commemoration. This month serves as a stark reminder of a protracted conflict that has ravaged the region for decades, marked by systematic bloodshed, punitive collective actions, and lingering injustices. From the onset of the 1990s insurgency to recent times, January has repeatedly borne witness to horrific mass killings and egregious rights violations by state and non-state entities alike. These events have seared themselves into Kashmiri consciousness, amplifying demands for accountability, justice, and a definitive break from perpetual violence.

Bijbehara's Shrine Siege Aftermath (22 January 1994)

Two days after the Kupwara killings, Bijbehara suffered its own tragedy on 22 January 1994 when BSF forces shot dead 51 demonstrators. The protesters had gathered against the military cordon of Srinagar's Hazratbal shrine. The Bijbehara massacre further demonstrated security forces' pattern of lethal overreaction to unarmed civil protests.

Systematic Brutality and Collective Retaliation

These January atrocities form part of a systematic pattern rather than isolated tragedies. Security forces have frequently answered minor incidents with mass civilian killings, arson, and property demolition. The torching of entire settlements, as seen in Sopore, and the targeting of minority groups, as in Wandhama, reveal brutal counter-insurgency tactics. Peaceful demonstrations have consistently ended in mass deaths, evidenced by Gawkadadal and Bijbehara, showing a disturbing disregard for unarmed civilian life and a persistent absence of consequence for perpetrators.

Enduring Impunity and Rights Abuses

Perhaps most disturbing is the entrenched

culture of impunity surrounding these crimes. Those responsible for ordering and executing these massacres have almost never faced prosecution. This immunity has enabled widespread enforced disappearances, systematic torture, and staged gunfights, with thousands still unaccounted for. The unearthing of mass burial sites across multiple districts underscores the magnitude of atrocities. New Delhi has consistently rejected these documented abuses as "fabricated propaganda," widening the chasm of distrust between Kashmiris and the Indian establishment.

Global Condemnation and Diplomatic Inaction

International bodies have repeatedly voiced alarm over Kashmir's human rights crisis. The United Nations and Amnesty International have issued numerous condemnations and demands for accountability. Yet these appeals have largely been ignored, with India maintaining its stance of denial and rejecting external oversight.

Unhealed Wounds and the Road to Justice

The January massacres stand as enduring symbols of Kashmir's unresolved trauma, where militarization continues to punish civilian populations. The cry for justice and truth remains unanswered, keeping historical wounds festering. As Kashmiris annually mourn these tragedies, global conscience cannot afford to look away. Sustainable peace demands truth-telling, judicial accountability, and definitive cessation of violence.

The narratives of Sopore, Wandhama, Kupwara, Handwara, Gawkadadal, and Bijbehara must be preserved in historical memory. They testify to Kashmiri resilience while urging the international community to align with their quest for justice and human dignity.

Writer is chairman Kashmir institute of international Relations and can be reached at: chairman@kiir.org.pk and saleemwani@hotmail.com

Xi chairs CPC leadership meeting to hear work reports of state institutions

Xinhua

BELJING: The Communist Party of China (CPC) leadership met on Thursday to hear a series of work reports from the leading Party members' groups of the top legislature, central government, top political advisory body, supreme court and supreme procuratorate.

The Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee also heard a work report from the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee.

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, presided over and addressed the meeting.

The meeting emphasized that China is confronted with profound and complex changes in its development environment over the five-year period ahead, with arduous and demanding tasks on the agenda. It stressed the imperative of upholding, making full use of, and further developing the Party's leadership — the country's



greatest institutional strength — to provide the fundamental guarantee for advancing Chinese modernization.

Last year, the leading Party members' groups of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the State Council, the National Committee of the Chinese

People's Political Consultative Conference, the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate resolutely upheld the authority of the CPC Central Committee and its centralized, unified leadership, and made significant advancements in various fields, the meeting noted.

It also commended the work of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee over the past year.

Noting that 2026 marks the 105th founding anniversary of the Party and the beginning of China's 15th Five-Year Plan period (2026-2030), the meeting urged the leading Party members' groups to focus on major economic and social development tasks for the 15th Five-Year Plan period, and to pool their strength to advance work in various fields.

They were also told to deliver outstanding performances through concrete efforts for the interests of the people, and to fulfill their principal responsibility of full and rigorous Party self-governance.

MoU signed to enhance digital transformation projects in Oman

ONA

MUSCAT: The National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today with Future Cities, a subsidiary of Omantel Group.

The agreement aims to strengthen cooperation in several advanced technical fields supporting digital transformation projects in the Sultanate of Oman.

Under this MoU, the areas of cooperation include cleaning and processing data to ensure high quality and developing solutions based on AI technologies.

The CEO of the NCSI emphasized that this MoU is part of the Centre's efforts to strengthen partnerships with national entities in the fields of AI and data quality improvement.

He noted that this cooperation will allow the NCSI to leverage innovative solutions to develop and analyze statistical data, thereby enhancing the Centre's ability to provide accurate indicators for decision-makers.

On his part, the CEO of Future Cities stated that this MoU repre-



sents a major step in expanding the company's role as a technical partner for government institutions. He clarified that the collaboration will utilize the company's capabilities in data cleaning and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies to bolster the national

data ecosystem.

He added that the integration of expertise between the two parties will support the development of innovative smart solutions, contributing to the efficiency of government services and supporting smart city initiatives.

This agreement falls within the framework of national efforts to accelerate digital transformation and benefit from future technologies, enhancing Oman's readiness in the fields of big data, AI, and smart city applications.

Hashoo Foundation Drives Community-Led, Youth-Driven Peacebuilding through Social Entrepreneurship

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Hashoo Foundation (HF), in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), in partnership with KPCVE, and with financial support from the European Union (EU), marked a major milestone in youth centred and community-driven peacebuilding through social entrepreneurship at the "Roots to Results: Partnerships for Change Impact Ceremony." The event contextualized the transformation of Kali Rana and showcased nine youth-led social enterprises that had graduated from the Social Lab, a social impact incubator, alongside a locally grounded social entrepreneurship model, demonstrating tangible outcomes for partners and policymakers to replicate and scale across Pakistan.

Prominent dignitaries in attendance included the Guest of Honor, Dr. Najeeb Ullah, Member Planning Commission (Science and Technology); Ms. Amnah Batool, Focal Person, Prime Minister's Youth Programme; Ms. Fatima Raza, Programme Officer, Crime Prevention, UNODC Pakistan; Dr. Muhammad Qasim Khan, Director General, KPCVE; Dr. Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, Director General, Islamic Research Institute; and Ms. Mahwish Afridi, Project Lead and Director Strategic Support Unit, Hashoo Foundation.

The event brought together government representatives, development partners, industry experts, academia, media, and civil society to witness how HF's Social Lab and the internationally award-winning SMaRT (Sustainable Methods and Resilient Technologies) Village model translate grassroots innovation into measurable



social and economic impact.

Funded by the European Union, executed by UNODC Pakistan and NACTA, and implemented by Hashoo Foundation in collaboration with KPCVE and the University of Swat, the project promotes youth-led social entrepreneurship as a tool for peacebuilding. Under the Education 4.0 framework, 46 youth participants received future-ready technical and soft-skills training in social entrepreneurship through the Social Lab. As part of the peace dividend, essential goods and inputs were procured for all nine social enterprises, enabling them to operationalize their business ideas in Gulibagh, transforming the community into a SMaRT Village.

A key highlight of the ceremony was the Social Innovation Avenue Walk—an immersive, curated experience featuring all nine social enterprises that graduated from the Social Lab ecosystem. The Avenue provided stakeholders with an opportunity to engage directly with Agents of Change from Social Lab's Cohorts I and II, witnessing firsthand how each enterprise addresses local challenges,

creates inclusive livelihoods, and strengthens community resilience.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Najeeb Ullah reaffirmed "The Government of Pakistan remains committed to create an enabling environment where resilience-driven innovation and social entrepreneurship thrive as essential pillars of inclusive growth. This is integral to our national development agenda and reflects our long-term vision for sustainable prosperity."

Ms. Fatima Raza, UNODC Pakistan, reaffirmed UNODC's commitment to preventive, people-centred approaches to Countering and Preventing Violent Extremism (CVE/PVE), noting that empowering youth with future-ready skills and market access directly addresses the structural drivers of violent extremism.

Dr. Muhammad Qasim Khan, Director General, KPCVE, highlighted the project's strong policy relevance, emphasising the importance of evidence-based action research and the collaborative role of academia, civil society organisations, and government in fostering sustainable peace.

Mahwish Afridi, Project Lead at Hashoo Foundation, stated: "Roots to Results validates the strength of our ecosystem approach. The Social Lab and SMaRT Village strategy enable local solutions for community-driven peacebuilding by integrating socio-economic development with participatory decision-making. By leveraging local enterprises, shared resources, and inclusive governance, the model addresses conflict drivers while promoting sustainable livelihoods and collective resilience."

Held under the broader framework of the EU-funded Countering and Preventing Terrorism in Pakistan (CPTIP) project, the event showcased collective efforts to strengthen social cohesion, peacebuilding, and youth-driven innovation in Swat, a region adversely affected by terrorism. UNODC, together with its local partner Hashoo Foundation, has played an instrumental role in equipping vulnerable youth in the region to develop viable social enterprises that utilise local resources and contribute to economic growth from micro to macro levels.

Belarus, Thailand discuss launch of joint trade-economic committee



BelTA

MINSK: Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Thailand Vladimir Borovikov met with Director-General of the Department of European Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand Krongkanit Rakcharoen during his visit to the Kingdom of Thailand on 8 January, BelTA learned from the Belarusian diplomatic mission in Vietnam.

The parties reviewed the progress in implementing the agreements reached during the visit of Belarusian Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxim Ryzhenkov to Thailand on 16 July 2025. The importance of more actively utilizing the potential of people-to-people diplomacy was noted.

On the same day, Vladimir Borovikov held a meeting with Director-General of the Department of Trade Negotiations of the Ministry of Commerce of Thailand Chotima Yimsawasdikul.

The discussions focused on launching the joint Belarus-Thailand committee on trade and economic cooperation as soon as possible, based on the intergovernmental memorandum signed in July 2025.

Oman: UTAS-Al Mussanah concludes third online forum on enhancing learner autonomy in the digital age



ONA

MUSCAT: Under the auspices of His Excellency Dr Said Hamed Al Rubaii, Vice Chancellor of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS), the Preparatory Studies Centre (PSC) at UTAS-Al Mussanah successfully hosted the 3rd Online PSC Forum, entitled "Enhancing Learner Autonomy: Strategies for a Digital Age," on 7-8 January 2026.

The two-day online forum brought together academics, educators, and education specialists to discuss contemporary approaches to empowering learners and fostering self-directed learning in digitally enriched educational environments. The event responded to the growing need for innovative teaching strategies that place learners at the centre of the learning process, particularly in the context of rapid technological transformation.

The forum programme featured two keynote addresses delivered by internationally recognised scholars. The first keynote was presented by Professor Jo Mynard from Kanda University of International Studies (Japan), a leading authority on learner autonomy and advising in language learning. The second keynote was delivered by Professor Cem Balçıklı from Gazi University (Türkiye), whose research focuses on teacher education, learner autonomy, and language teacher development. In addition, the forum included six specialised online sessions that addressed topics such as technology-enhanced learning, autonomy-supportive pedagogies, and innovative classroom practices.

This initiative aligned with UTAS's strategic vision of enhancing educational quality, promoting innovation in teaching and learning, and integrating digital technologies to support sustainable educational development. The forum provided participants with valuable insights and practical perspectives while fostering professional collaboration and knowledge exchange within Oman and beyond.

Kyrgyzstan commissions 63 agricultural enterprises in 2025




Kabar

BISHKEK: By the end of 2025, as part of the development of Kyrgyzstan's agro-industrial complex, 63 agricultural processing and trade and logistics infrastructure facilities were commissioned across the country. The Ministry of Agriculture reported that these include trade and logistics centers, grain processing plants, fruit and vegetable production facilities, dairy production facilities, meat production facilities, fish production facilities, wool production facilities, vegetable oil production facilities, as well as organic production facilities. The implementation of these projects has created 2,707 jobs, contributing to regional development, increasing employment, and strengthening the production potential of the country's agro-industrial complex. Furthermore, in January-November 2025, the share of food processing enterprises in the republic's total industrial output was 17.4%.

According to preliminary estimates, over the first 11 months of 2025, agro-industrial enterprises produced food products worth 94.2 billion soms at current prices. The physical volume index was 127.8%.

It is noted that as part of the implementation of the Kyrgyz Republic Development Program through 2030 and in accordance with state policy targets for the development of the agro-industrial complex, 385 agricultural processing plants are planned to be commissioned, increasing the processing rate to 25%. The total investment in this area will amount to 20.96 billion soms. "By 2026, 75 agricultural processing plants are planned to be commissioned, with estimated investment volumes totaling 9.1 billion soms. The Ministry will continue its comprehensive efforts to achieve the established targets," the agency emphasized.

**Bull & Bears**

PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
184,409.67	185,543.01
Day's High	Day's Low
186,180.32	183,700.83
Index Value	Change
36,715,643,369	-1133.34
Percentage	Time
-0.61%	9 Jan, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,130.55	+85.86
Percentage	Time
+0.86%	9 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
49,418.06	+151.95
Percentage	Time
+0.31%	9 Jan, 11:12 am GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
51,939.89	+822.63
Percentage	Time
+1.61%	9 Jan, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	186.5	191
Bahrain Dinar	744	754
Canadian Dollar	201	205
China Yuan	39.58	39.98
Danish Krone	43.72	44.12
Euro	327	330.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.69	36.04
Indian Rupee	3.03	3.12
Japanese Yen	1.7775	1.8775
Kuwaiti Dinar	908	918
Malaysian Ringgit	68.6	69.20
NewZealand \$	161.24	163.24
Norwegians Krone	27.66	27.96
Omani Riyal	728.5	738.5
Qatari Riyal	76.26	76.96
Saudi Riyal	74.85	75.5
Singapore Dollar	217.5	221.5
Swedish Korona	30.25	30.55
Swiss Franc	351.82	354.57
Thai Bhat	8.88	9.03
U.A.E Dirham	76.45	77.35
UK Pound Sterling	377	381
US Dollar	280.8	282.75

Pharmaceutical and IT sectors hold strong potential in U. S. market: Usman Shaukat

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), Usman Shaukat, has underscored the importance of further strengthening Pakistan-United States trade and investment relations, describing the U. S. as one of Pakistan's most important and strategic economic partners. He expressed these views during his meeting with Ms. Natalie Baker, Chargé d’Affaires, U. S. Embassy, held at the residence of the U. S. Ambassador. The meeting focused on enhancing bilateral economic cooperation, exchange of trade delegations, and exploring new avenues for collaboration between the business communities of both countries.

Usman Shaukat emphasized that trade delegations and business opportunity conferences serve as effective platforms for sharing perspectives, identifying challenges, and unlocking new opportunities in bilateral trade. He briefed the Chargé d’Affaires on RCCI’s upcoming business delegation to the United States and highlighted Pakistan’s improving investment climate, particularly the facilities being extended to foreign investors and overseas Pakistanis under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to encourage greater engagement of the U. S. private sector in Pakistan.

Usman Shaukat noted that the United States is Pakistan’s largest export destination, with total bilateral trade in goods and services estimated at around USD 10.1 billion in 2024. While textiles continue to dominate Pakistani exports, he emphasized growing prospects in information technology, pharmaceuticals, and value-added products. He also highlighted the U. S. as a major source of foreign direct investment (FDI) and remittances, which further strengthens economic ties.



Livoltek Concludes Successful Product Launch Event for IP66 Hybrid Inverter Series

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Livoltek, a global leader in smart solar, energy storage, and EV charging solutions, has successfully organized and concluded a product launch event in Pakistan, marking the official introduction of its IP66-rated Hybrid Inverter Series (HP1) along with its advanced Commercial & Industrial (C&I) Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and integrated PV + BESS + EV Charging solutions. This post-event announcement underscores Livoltek’s continued commitment to supporting Pakistan’s growing demand for reliable, efficient, and intelligent energy infrastructure across residential, commercial, and industrial sectors.

Commenting on the successful conclusion of the launch event, Ms. Tracy Xie, Sales Operations Director (South Asia) at Livoltek, stated that the event reflects Livoltek’s strong and long-term commitment to the Pakistani market. She emphasized that Livoltek’s integrated portfolio—covering hybrid inverters, battery energy storage, and EV charging solutions—is designed to help customers overcome grid limitations, optimize energy costs, and prepare for the accelerating adoption of electric mobility and distributed energy systems across the region.

The event was attended by senior Chinese management, highlighting Livoltek’s focus on technical excellence and supply chain reliability. Mr. Yang, BESS Expert and Solution Manager, and Mr. Rui, Supply Chain Manager, engaged with partners and stakeholders during the event. The Pakistan sales team, led by Mr. Zia Khalid, Regional Sales Head, along with Mr. Amir Shahzad, Distribution Capability Manager, played a key role in engaging distributors, EPC partners, and customers, reaffirming Livoltek’s strong local presence, market understanding, and commitment to long-term partnerships in Pakistan.

Previously, Mr. Max Maa, Director Sales at Livoltek, noted that Pakistan is rapidly transitioning toward smarter and more resilient energy solutions. He stated that Livoltek is proud to support this transition by delivering climate-ready and intelligent technologies tailored to local requirements, enabling customers to reduce grid dependence, enhance energy security, and confidently adopt clean energy solutions.

Prime Minister’s Ramadan Package A Great Initiative f: Malik Bostan



KARACHI: Malik Muhammad Bostan, Chairman of the Currency Exchange Companies Association, praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif’s initiative to provide financial assistance and social protection to the poor and middle class, calling it a commendable step. He stated that low-income families in Pakistan should receive financial aid and subsidies on essential food items. Additionally, proposals should be developed for the Ramadan package that would alleviate the difficulties of the middle class, allowing them to access food at affordable prices.

He further emphasized that the federal and provincial governments should establish a transparent system for Ramadan across the country. However, he raised the question that although low-cost food items were once available through utility stores nationwide, these stores were shut down due to mismanagement. He acknowledged that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured that the exploitative system of the past is being replaced with a transparent one.

He urged the Prime Minister to direct all relevant institutions to ensure the availability of a more effective and beneficial package for Ramadan 2026, starting from February, so that deserving, poor, and working-class families can observe Ramadan with dignity and peace.

BingX Introduces BingX TradFi, Expanding Access to Global Financial Markets

Pakistan, January 9, 2025 – BingX, a leading cryptocurrency exchange and Web3 AI company, is excited to introduce BingX TradFi, an innovative feature that enables users to trade futures on a diverse range of global assets, including commodities, forex, stocks, and indices.

With a remarkable variety in the choice of assets, outstanding trading experience, and top-notch security, BingX TradFi demonstrates its strong capability in providing a comprehensive solution to TradFi for crypto enthusiasts.

With this launch, BingX takes a significant step beyond cryptocurrency trading by integrating real-world financial assets into its platform.

BingX TradFi creates an all-in-one portal where users can diversify their portfolios and capitalize on emerging market opportunities, with the recent addition of new commodity assets like aluminum, lead, cocoa, and soybeans, as well as new forex pairs including USDSGD, EURSGD, GBPSPGD, and USDBRL. Accessible directly via futures trading, BingX TradFi streamlines the trading experience without additional steps.

Advancing Digital Financial Inclusion Through the Offline Payments Innovation Challenge



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: As we enter 2026, accelerating digital payments adoption remains a national priority, with intermittent connectivity persisting to be one of the most critical bottlenecks limiting scale and inclusion. While significant progress has been made in recent years, the inability to access stable internet or cellular coverage in many parts of the country continues to limit everyday digital transactions. Digital payments, in particular, remain elusive for millions of users and businesses, specifically in rural, remote, and disaster-affected areas.

The participants presented their solutions over two days to a six-member national and international judging panel comprising Ms Layanah Al-Wreikat, Director, JoPacc, Jordan; Ms Sabiha Ahmed, Private Sector Development Advisor, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office; Mr Shauzab Ali, Principal Project Officer, Asian Development Bank; Mr Muhammad Inaduddin, Director, Digital Innovation & Settlement Department, State Bank of Pakistan; Dr Zartash Afzal Uzmi, Professor and Lead, Center for Digital Assets Research, LUMS; and Mr Sharjeel Murtaza, Chief Digital Officer, Karandaaz Pakistan.

Commenting on the initiative, Mr Waqas ul Hasan, Chief Executive Officer, Karandaaz Pakistan, said “Digital payments in Pakistan cannot assume perfect connectivity, as large parts of the country operate in low- or no-connectivity environments.

ABHI Microfinance Bank, Pathfinder Group partner to advance Agent Interoperability and Earned Wage Access

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: ABHI Microfinance Bank Limited (“ABHI Bank”) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Pathfinder Group to establish a strategic collaboration centered on agent interoperability, enabling wider access to formal financial services for underserved and frontline segments across Pakistan.

The partnership places Agent Interoperability at the core of the arrangement, allowing ABHI Bank to integrate with VRG’s interoperable agent platform. Through this collaboration, ABHI Bank customers will be able to access permissible banking and financial services via VRG’s agent interoperable network, in line with State Bank of Pakistan regulations extending banking reach beyond branches and smartphones.

Speaking on the partnership, Mariam Pervaiz, (CCO) ABHI Microfinance Bank, said: “Agent interoperability is a critical building block for financial inclusion in Pakistan. This collaboration allows us to extend banking access through shared infrastructure, while also delivering earned wage access and salary services to workers who need flexibility, not complexity.”

Muhammad Salman Ali, (CEO) Virtual Remittance Gateway, added: “Our agent Interoperability platform is built on modular, cloud-native middleware technology architecture, providing end-to-end secure transaction processing. Partnering with ABHI Bank enables us to combine Interoperable USSD with Agent Interoperable Network with practical financial solutions and services for our workforce and the wider ecosystem.”

Also present at the ceremony were Chairman Pathfinder Group Mr. Ikram Saigol and Entrepreneur in Residence Abhi Mr. Kabeeer Naqvi alongside their teams.



Int'l firms' participation in PSL teams' auction to promote foreign investment in country: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday welcomed the participation of international firms in the auction for the two new franchises of the Pakistan Super League (PSL), stating that it would help promote foreign investment in the country.

He said overseas Pakistanis were playing a critical role in the nation's development.

The prime minister was speaking to representatives of the two firms that won the franchise bids. Hamza Majeed of the OZ Developers and Fawad Sarwar of the Southeast Asian holding company FKS attended the meeting.

He extended congratulations to the representatives of the Sialkot and Hyderabad teams and conveyed his best wishes for their future.

The prime minister also congratulated Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board, Mohsin Raza Naqvi, and his team for ensuring a successful and transparent auction.

"The entire auction process for the new PSL teams was broadcast live on television, which reflects transparency," the prime minister remarked, adding



that the new teams would prove to be a breath of fresh air.

He noted that the active participa-

tion of national and international firms in the bidding demonstrated the PSL's growing popularity at the global level.

The meeting was also attended by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Information Minister Attaullah Tarar.

Cabinet Committee Reviews SOE Performance

Continued from Page 8

It was highlighted that losses remain heavily concentrated in a small number of entities, particularly in the transport and power distribution sectors. National Highway Authority and several power distribution companies continued to be major loss contributors, reflecting structural issues, high depreciation, financing costs, and the public service nature of certain operations that are not commercially viable. The Committee was briefed on the categorization of SOEs into green, amber and red categories based on financial sustainability, with a view to prioritizing reforms and decision-making.

On fiscal support, the Committee noted that total government support to SOEs increased to PKR 2,078 billion during FY 2024-25, driven mainly by higher equity injections to clear CD stock, while subsidies showed a modest decline. At the same time, inflows from SOEs to the government increased to PKR 2,119 billion, supported by higher dividends, tax receipts and interest income on government lending.

The debt profile of SOEs was

discussed in detail. Total SOE debt at the portfolio level increased to PKR 9.57 trillion, comprising cash development loans, foreign re-lent loans, bank borrowings and accrued interest. The Committee was also briefed on the quantification of unfunded pension liabilities across SOEs, estimated at around PKR 2 trillion, which was identified as a major legacy risk requiring policy attention. Guarantees and other off-balance-sheet contingencies were reported at PKR 2.16 trillion.

The Chair commended the Central Monitoring Unit for strengthening transparency, consolidating SOE financial information on an IFRS-aligned basis, and establishing a comprehensive digital database to support evidence-based decision-making. He noted that the presentation reflected meaningful progress in oversight, disclosure and risk identification, particularly in areas of fiscal flows, debt mapping and unfunded pension liabilities.

The Chair emphasized that these improvements provide a credible foundation for informed policy action and

sustained reforms, and reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving governance, enforcing accountability, and placing State-Owned Enterprises on a path toward financial sustainability and operational efficiency.

While appreciating the progress achieved, the Committee members stressed the need for enforcement of audit completion in compliance with the SOEs Act, 2023, and timely transition to IFRS-based reporting by February 2026. The importance of realistic business plans, sector-specific engagement, loss reduction strategies and hard budget constraints, particularly for chronically loss-making entities, was also underscored.

The Cabinet Committee directed that the findings of the report be shared with relevant ministries to inform reform measures and that progress on audits, governance reforms, debt rationalization and fiscal risk containment be reviewed regularly. The Committee approved the submission of the Annual Consolidated Performance Report for publication, noting it as an important step

toward enhanced accountability, transparency and informed policymaking in the management of State-Owned Enterprises.

Earlier, the Cabinet body also considered and approved appointment of independent directors in the Gujranwala Power Company (GEPCO), Jamshoro Power Generation Company Limited (JPCL), Energy Infrastructure Development and Management Company (EIDMC), Independent System Market Operator (ISMO), Islamabad Electronic Supply Company (IESCO) and Tribal Areas Electric Supply Company (TESCO).

The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari; Federal Minister for Science and Technology Khalid Hussain Magasi; Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal; Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan; Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, along with Secretaries and senior officials from relevant ministries, divisions and regulatory bodies.

Police Performance in Multan: The Widening Gap Between Claims and Reality

The widening gulf between the claims of Multan police and the bitter realities faced by citizens is no longer a mere administrative lapse; it has become a moment of serious reflection for our collective conscience. Amid the dazzle of social media posts and the echo of press conferences, tales of alleged recoveries worth millions are narrated as if crime has been eradicated from the city. On the ground, however, reality bluntly contradicts this narrative.

The ordinary citizen continues to lose motorcycles, cash and valuables, standing at police station doors with little more than hope for justice. Fahim Hasan Bhatti, personal assistant to Malik Muhammad Akmal Wains Editor Roznama Badalta Zamana Multan Editor and CEO of Mux News — was robbed of Rs100,000 in cash and a mobile phone outside his home. FIR No 2218/25 was registered at New Multan police station, yet recovery remains zero. Computer engineer Muhammad Ahsan Rohani was deprived of his mobile phone and motorcycle within the jurisdiction of BZ police station, with the same outcome: no recovery. My class fellow, Dr Javeed Akhtar, had his motorcycle stolen from outside Nishtar Hospital hostel; FIR No 391/21 was registered at Chehlik police station, but years later the file remains frozen where hope goes to die.

Similarly, Muhammad Aftab, an employee of SM Food Factory, lost his Honda 125 motorcycle in Old Kotwali's area. Despite approaching SP Saifullah Gujjar Gulgasht and filing complaints on 1787 and the Pakistan Citizen Portal, and FIR No 884/24 being registered, the result remains unchanged. Zafar Iqbal's case (FIR No 833/25, Shah Shams police station) tells the same story — the recovery column still blank.

IG Punjab, these are only a handful of cases all involving our close friends and employees. Beyond these lie countless untold stories scattered across every street of this city, unheard and unat-

tended. The question is not why FIRs are registered. The real question is: to whom are recoveries actually handed over? Whose losses are compensated, and who is left holding nothing but receipts and hollow assurances? On this distinction, the police have never issued a clear or transparent explanation.

As long as performance is measured through press releases and publicity, and the redress of a citizen's loss is reduced to the mere entry "FIR registered", recoveries worth millions will remain paper victories. True success will come the day the common man gets back his stolen motorcycle, looted cash and, most importantly, his lost trust. Until then, questions will persist and silence itself will stand as a grave answer.

The contrast between truth and the image projected on social media has become the core reason for the erosion of public trust in the police. On one side, drums are beaten over the recovery of cars, tractors and motorcycles, with success stories piled high and performance portrayed as exemplary. On the other, the ground reality is that these recoveries benefit only a select few, while deprivation remains the lot of the ordinary citizen.

On a daily basis, a large number of cases are consigned to files under the pretext of "no clue". On paper, the case is closed; in reality, the victim's wounds remain fresh. The question is not whether the police are taking action, but for whom these actions are taken. Is the rule of law equal for all, or has justice itself become dependent on influence and connections?

Another alarming aspect is the conduct witnessed in Multan police's khuli katcheries. Instead of acting as representatives of the public, some journalists appear as recommenders. The police oblige them, files begin to

move, and what is impossible for an ordinary citizen becomes achievable within moments. This practice not only undermines the very concept of justice but further weakens the police's public credibility.

This situation raises a fundamental

question: have the institutions responsible for protecting citizens' lives and property failed, or are they functioning only for a chosen few? Until this question is answered honestly and practically, social media glamour will not be able to rebuild public trust. Trust is not born of advertisements or press releases; it emerges from equal access to justice — and that is the yardstick by which police performance is being judged today.

A silent yet extremely damaging practice within senior police offices, particularly SP offices, has hollowed out public trust from within. Complaints lodged through the Pakistan Citizen Portal or police helpline 1787 filed with the hope that at least higher authorities will listen — are often "dropped" with misleading, vague and factually contradictory comments. This is not the discretion of a station house officer; it is a process carried out at the SP office level, where a single stroke of the pen shuts the door on a citizen's plea for justice.

This is not mere administrative apathy; it is a mockery of state trust. When complainants are told that "action has been completed" or that "the complainant is satisfied", while in reality no recovery has taken place and no meaningful contact has been made, one must ask: who are these reports meant to satisfy — the public or the higher-ups?

This disparity — between glowing performance claims on social media and the silent burial of complaints in offices — is inflicting irreparable damage on the police's credibility, not just in Multan but across the province. When citizens see

their complaints vanish into the system, they lose faith not only in the police but in state institutions as a whole.

Direct intervention by the IG Punjab Police has now become unavoidable. The entire mechanism needs to be reviewed afresh to end the practice of "disposing" complaints under the guise of resolution, and to ensure that the people of Multan get back their valuable property — motorcycles, vehicles, cash — and their trust.

Steps to restore trust include:

Independent audit system: Quarterly independent audits of decisions taken on complaints filed via the Citizen Portal and 1787 to determine on what basis cases were dropped.

Mandatory written justification: SP offices must provide detailed, written and evidence-based reasons before dropping any complaint — visible to the complainant as well.

Complainant verification: No case should be marked "satisfied" without written or digital confirmation from the complainant; internal notes should not suffice.

Recovery tracking dashboard: A public dashboard in every district showing FIR numbers, nature of crime and recovery progress to expose the gap between claims and reality.

Officer accountability: Where it is proven that misleading comments were deliberately used to drop complaints, exemplary departmental action must follow.

Reforming khuli katcheries: These forums should serve public accountability, not recommendations, with decisions formally recorded and compliance reports issued.

If the true purpose of policing is the protection of citizens' lives and property, then the police must move beyond promotional narratives to deliver practical justice. Otherwise, every complaint quietly marked "dropped" will continue to widen the distance between the police and the public — a distance no press conference can ever bridge.

Wing 999 Inter Departmental Cricket League Tournament

Omar Associates and Y. J Sports Won their 2nd Match in a row

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Due to Brilliant Unbeaten knock 98 with the help of 15 boundaries 3 Sixes by Arbaz Khan Omar Associates defeated Pakistan Stallions by 9 Wickets in their 2nd Match of Wing 999 Inter Departmental Cricket League Tournament at KCCA Stadium.

In the another Match Y. J Sports also winning their 2nd Match after beating Pak Saudi International by 7 Wickets at Agha Khan Gymkhana Ground.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi with the collaboration of Wing 999 Sports.

Scores in Brief:

Omar Associates beat Pakistan Stallions by 9 wickets at KCCA Stadium. Pakistan Stallions 135 all out in 36.2 overs. Muhammad Hussain 48 5x4 1x6, Zaid Omar 30. Jawwad Ahmed (sla) 3/16, Adeel Meo (sla) 3/25, Zafar Ali 2/28.

In reply Omar Associates 138/1 in 16.2 overs. Arbaz Khan 98 15x4 3x6 not out.

In the 2nd Match Y. J. Sports beat Pak Saudi International by 7 Wickets at Agha Khan Gymkhana Ground. Pak Saudi International 76 all-out in 28 overs. Javed Khoso 23. Waleed Ahmed (ob) 4/16, Zaid (sla) 3/22.

In reply Y. J. Sports 78/3 in 12.1 overs. Haris Ali Khan 24, Danish Rafiq 22 not out.

PCB Zone-IV Inter Club Cricket Tournament

Rising Star won their 2nd Match

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Due to All-round Performance by Afhan Khan first he scored 112 with 12 boundaries and 6 Sixes and then got 3 Wickets for 35 runs and some good bowling by off Spinner Muhammad Maaz, Kashif Iqbal 3 Wickets each Rising Star Cricket club winning their 2nd Match in PCB Zone-IV Inter Club Cricket Tournament at Landhi Gymkhana Ground.

Scores in Brief:

Rising Star Cricket club beat New Nest Cricket Club by 32 runs at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Rising Star Cricket club 196 all-out in 28.2 overs. Afhan Khan 112 12x4 6x6 (in 58 balls), Mohammad Maaz 28. M. Faraz Khan 3/20, Asif Ali 2/31, Syed Tajammul 2/33.

In reply New Nest Cricket Club 164 allout in 27.5 overs. Naeem Ahmed Khan 53 4x4c2x6, Amjad Hussain 50 6x4. Muhammad Maaz (ob) 3/25, Kashif Iqbal (ob) 3/25, Afhan Khan (sla) 3/35.



Veteran Administrator Abdul Qadir Memon elected President of Pakistan Billiards & Snooker Association

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Abdul Qadir Memon has been elected as President of the Pakistan Billiards & Snooker Association (PBSA) at the AGM held at Karachi Gymkhana Club, Karachi. Mr. Abdul Qadir Memon has served as Senior Vice President and Honorary Treasurer of PBSA and brings with him rich experience and knowledge.

Mr. Memon has served as Patron Pakistan Tax Bar Association, President Pakistan Tax Bar Association (for two terms of two years) and Karachi Tax Bar Association (for two terms).

Mr. Abdul Qadir Memon has served as Chairman National Clearing Company of Pakistan, Pakistan Mercantile Exchange Limited and Bank-Islami Modarabas Investment Ltd. He has contributed as Director Pakistan Stock Exchange Ltd; State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan, Institute of Corporate Governance and Institute of Financial Markets of Pakistan.

Mr. Abdul Qadir has also served as National President, Pakistan Junior Chamber International and Memon Professional Forum. He has widely travelled across the globe and actively participating in sports activities.

Mr. Memon is also contributing his heart and soul to the welfare activities in the country. He is currently serving as President of the Patients' Bebbud Society for The Aga Khan University Hospital and Trustee of Hamdard Laboratories (Waqf) Pakistan.



Haider Ali's Noakhali Express register first BPL win in seven attempts

SYLHET: Hasan Mahmud's four-wicket haul helped Noakhali Express edge past Rangpur Riders by nine runs in the 20th match of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) 2025-26 here at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium on Friday.

Set stiff 149, Riders fell short and could only muster 139-9 at the end of their 20 overs.

Dawid Malan and Litton Das added 21 on the opening wicket partnership before both were back in the hutch in successive overs. Malan scored seven while Das hit three boundaries before getting bowled for 15 off 13.

As a result, Rangpur Riders were in early trouble with 23-2 in four overs.

With his side in trouble, Ifikhar Ahmed and Towhid Hridoy launched a recovery with a 63-run partnership, although it was on the slower side, taking 51 balls.

The pair's calculated batting brought the total to 86 in 12.3 overs before Ifikhar got caught. The right-hander remained the top scorer with 37 from 31 balls with the help of six fours.

Hridoy and Mahmudullah added 14, but a lower middle order collapse slumped them to 112-6 in 16.5 overs.

Nonetheless, with 15 required off the last over, Hasan Mahmud delivered an impressive over, picking up three wickets while giving away only five runs, sealing the first win of the tournament for his side.

Earlier, put into bat first, Rangpur Riders bowlers did well to bundle out Noakhali Express for 148 in 19.4 overs.

Soumya Sarkar and Shahadat Hossain were off the blocks quickly, adding 25 in 2.1 overs.

But Mustafizur Rahman broke the threatening stand with Hossain's wicket, who scored 14 from eight.

Meanwhile, Sarkar and Habibur Rahman Sohan steadied the innings as they stitched a 43-run partnership, which brought the total to 68 at the end of seven overs.

Sohan's brisk 30 off 16 included two sixes and three fours.

With Noakhali Express cruising, Riders' bowlers made a roaring comeback with quick wickets in the middle overs.

CCoSOEs Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chairing a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on State Owned Enterprises (CCoSOEs) at the Finance Division today.



Photo: PID

Cabinet Committee Reviews SOE Performance, Reaffirms Commitment to Transparency and Structural Reforms

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Cabinet Committee on State-Owned Enterprises (CCoSOEs) was held today at the Finance Division under the chairmanship of the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb. The Cabinet Committee

was presented the Annual Consolidated Performance Report of Commercial and Non-Commercial State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) for FY 2024-25, prepared by the Central Monitoring Unit (CMU) of the Finance Division. The presentation made by Majid Soofi Director General CMU, covered in depth detail of SOE 260

degree view covering the financial and non-financial performance of SOEs, government support and fiscal flows, contribution of SOEs to the exchequer, debt profile, corporate governance and compliance status, business plan assessments, and the proposed way forward under the SOEs Act, 2023.

The Committee was

informed that during FY 2024-25, aggregate revenues of SOEs stood at approximately PKR 12.4 trillion, reflecting a decline largely attributable to reduced profitability in the oil sector following lower international oil prices. Aggregate profits of profit-making SOEs declined by 13 percent to PKR 709.9 billion compared to

PKR 820.7 billion last year, while aggregate losses of loss-making SOEs showed improvement, declining by around 2 percent to PKR 832.8 billion. Despite this improvement, the net result was an overall net loss of PKR 122.9 billion for the SOE sector, compared to a net loss of PKR 30.6 billion in the previous year.

Raja Nasir, Achakzai urge lawyers to support Opposition's movement

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Tehreek-Tahafuzz Ain-Pakistan leader Raja Nasir Abbas has said that rule of oppression and force can not run for long time and it is bound to end very soon.

Addressing a moot in Lahore High Court on Friday, Raja Nasir lauded the role of women in rights struggle. He said that Gold Almighty had given equal rights to women because women are well aware of meeting her responsibilities in a society. He said that a political rights movement which has participation of women is bent on gaining success.

He said that the government has committed atrocities in Muridkay, adding that



murder of one man is tantamount to the murder of the entire mankind.

Raja Nasir demanded that without eradicating the system of oppression, the country can

not move on. He urged lawyers community to come forward and fight against the bad

system. He urged the nation to come out on the street against the system on February 2, 2026.

Tehreek-Tahafuzz Ain-Pakistan leader Mahmood Achakzai thanked lawyers for honouring the Opposition leadership.

He said Tehreek-Tahafuzz Ain-Pakistan did not come to Lahore to abuse the other political parties. Achakzai asserted that PTI has record majority and massive political support but still Imran Khan was put behind the bar. He lamented that all it was because of the lack of the discipline of the PTI. He said that when Tehreek-Tahafuzz Ain-Pakistan started journey from Islamabad, there was not a single speaker with their caravan.

Balochistan govt decides to introduce electric bike scheme for common man



Bureau Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan government has decided to introduce electric bike scheme for the common man.

The provincial cabinet meeting chaired by Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti in Quetta on Friday decided to provide electric bikes to students, working women and government employees with 30 percent subsidy, provincial cabinet decides

The cabinet agreed that electric bikes will also be provided to common citizens on easy installments and the scheme will be implemented under bank financing.

About 250,000 provincial government employees spend Rs6 to 7 billion annually on their medical treatment, cabinet meeting revealed.



Provincial cabinet also decided to introduce health insurance scheme for government employees.

Cabinet meeting further decided to audit advance medical payments and public endowment fund.

Provincial cabinet approved extension of Enterprises Development Programme to Gwadar, Kech and

Awaran. For promotion of meritocracy, cabinet agreed on appointments on merit for Balochistan.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti addressing provincial cabinet meeting said thanks to Prime Minister for cooperation in communication and education projects for Balochistan.

He said electric bikes will be given

to people from all walks of life on easy installments.

The resources obtained from the taxes of the common man are the trust of the people, Chief Minister said.

He said it is unfair that the common poor man of Balochistan should suffer and a large part of the resources should be spent on a specific class.

Published by: Almass Ayoub Sabir from Zero Point Printers Rawalpindi

Govt accords special importance to B2B cooperation in IT, emerging technologies: PM



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday appreciating the growing interest of the UAE investors in Pakistan's digital economy, said that the Government of Pakistan accorded special importance to business-to-business (B2B) cooperation in the fields of information technology, digital innovation, blockchain, and other emerging technologies.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of the UAE's

Sajwani Group, said that the recent high-level contacts and exchanges had increased mutual trust between the private sectors and investors of Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates, providing a strong foundation for advancing bilateral cooperation.

Prime Minister Shehbaz, who also hosted a luncheon for the delegation, expressed confidence that, with the strong support of the political leadership of both countries, the engagement in the private sector would take Pakistan-UAE economic cooperation to new heights.

Police kidnapped lawyer: Alleges Jamaat-e-Islami



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has alleged that its lawyer was kidnapped by police in an attempt to prevent the party's candidate from submitting nomination papers for the by-election in Punjab Assembly constituency PP-167.

According to Jamaat-e-Islami, the incident occurred on the day nomination papers were to be filed for the PP-167 seat, which fell vacant following the death of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) candidate Irfan Shafi Khokhar. JI's candi-

date for the seat, Chaudhry Abdul Qayyum Gujjar, was represented by lawyer Ijaz-ul-Hassan Ghauri.

JI Lahore Ameer Ziauddin Ansari Advocate claimed that Punjab Police kidnapped Ghauri before he could submit the nomination papers and took him to Mustafa Town Police Station.

He alleged that the purpose of the abduction was to block the submission of Chaudhry Abdul Qayyum Gujjar's nomination papers and to clear the way for the ruling party's candidate to be elected unopposed.

Complaint against LHC CJ Aalia, Justice Gul filed in SJC



Bureau Report

LAHORE: A complaint has been lodged with the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) against Lahore High Court (LHC) Chief Justice (CJ) Justice Aalia Neelum and Justice Abhar Gul Khan, seeking a formal review of their academic qualifications and professional eligibility to hold judicial office.

According to the TV channel, the complaint, reportedly filed by multiple individuals, mostly parents of female district judges, has triggered fresh scrutiny of the vetting process for senior members of the judiciary at a time when institutional integrity remains at the centre of public debate.

According to the complaint, Justice Abhar Gul Khan's academic

credentials are "suspicious," and the petitioners have asked the SJC to summon his complete educational record and carry out a thorough examination before his confirmation as a permanent judge.

The complainants insist that verification of their degrees is necessary to ensure that only qualified individuals remain entrusted with judicial authority.

The petition argues that both Justice Neelum and Justice Abhar Gul are "not fit to remain on the bench" if their qualifications fail to meet the required standard.

It urges the SJC to conduct an independent review of their academic backgrounds and, should the allegations be substantiated, remove both judges from their posts.