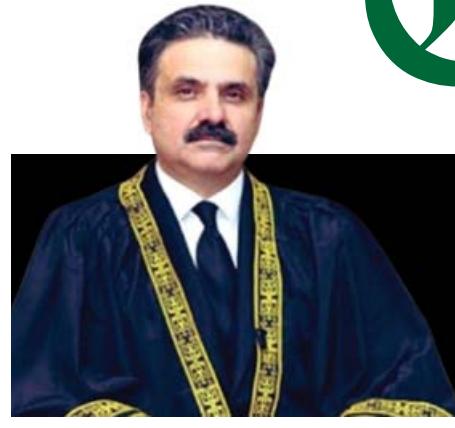




Daily The Spokesman



Skipping of hearings by lawyers makes CJP Afzali angry

Irrked over the failure of lawyers to appear in the Supreme Court (SC), Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Yahya Afzali on Monday summoned Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Haroon-ur-Rashid and expressed his strong displeasure over the matter.



Sindh CM announces Rs10m compensation for Gul Plaza fire victims

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah on Monday announced the government will provide Rs10 million in compensation to the families of each victim who lost their lives in the deadly Gul Plaza fire. He confirmed that 15 bodies have so far been recovered, while 65 people remain missing.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif standing in respect while National Anthems of China and Pakistan are being played during Pak-China Agri Investment Conference on Monday.



Photo: PID

Pakistan can achieve fast-track transformation in agriculture through Chinese partnership: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that Pakistan, essentially an agrarian economy, held immense and largely untapped potential in agriculture and can transform its agri-sector not in years, but in months by adopting modern technologies, improving productivity and strengthening cooperation with China.

Addressing the Pakistan-China Agri Investment Confer-

ence here, the prime minister noted that nearly 65% of Pakistan's population still lives and works in rural areas, with agriculture remaining the backbone of the national economy. He stressed the need to enhance per-acre yield through modern techniques, efficient water management and optimal use of limited land resources.

The prime minister said sustainable growth in agriculture required coordinated efforts by the federal and provincial govern-

ments, the farming community, and scientists and researchers. He underlined the importance of deciding what to grow and export, developing value chains, cold storage, warehousing and value addition to make Pakistani agricultural produce globally competitive.

He described Beijing as a friend who had stood by Pakistan through thick and thin and said China had never hesitated in sharing expertise and advanced technologies.

He said the dispatch of 1,000 Pakistani graduates, selected on merit, to leading Chinese agricultural universities and research centres was a landmark initiative of the federal government. He said the trained graduates had returned and would now help farmers improve quality, productivity and value addition.

Welcoming remarks by Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, the prime minister praised China's achievements in agriculture, IT and AI, effi-

cacy in manufacturing, and export competitiveness. He said Pakistan must aim to generate a trade surplus in agriculture through higher yields, competitive costs and superior quality, with Chinese experts providing support.

Referring to improving economic indicators, he said inflation had fallen to 4.5 per cent, the policy rate to 10.5 per cent, and exports were rising, adding that Pakistan must now shift decisively towards growth.

FM Energy meets World Bank and IsDB delegations on power sector reforms

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Energy Sardar Owais Khan Leghari met with high-level delegations of the World Bank and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) on Monday.

The World Bank delegation was led by Ousmane Dione, and the Islamic Develop-

ment Bank delegation was led by Dr Rami Ahmed.

While briefing the delegations on the ongoing reforms in the power sector, the Federal Minister said that sustainable and effective reforms in the energy sector are the top priority of the government and partnership with international financial institutions is indispensable to addressing energy challenges.

The withdrawal of expensive power projects from the Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan (IGCEP) has provided potential relief of \$17 billion to consumers.

The reduction in circular debt by Rs 780 billion is the result of the government's reform policy.

The five-year national power plan is a strong foundation for energy security.

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The five-year national

PM Rathore chairs key meeting on law, order, and infrastructure in Kotli AJK

 Bureau Report

KOTLI: An important review meeting was held on Monday in the Committee Room of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Kotli, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister of the Azad Government of the State of Jammu & Kashmir, Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore. The meeting thoroughly reviewed ongoing and proposed development projects in the district, along with issues relating to law and order, education, health, encroachments, parking, solid waste management, tourism, and basic civic facilities.

The meeting was attended by President Pakistan Peoples Party AJK Chaudhry Muhammad Yaseen, Ministers Javed Iqbal Budhanvi, Malik Zafar Iqbal, Minister for Information & Auqaf Chaudhry Muhammad Rafiq Nayyar, Minister for Revenue Chaudhry Muhammad Akhlaq, Minister for Local Government Aamir Yaseen Chaudhry, Commissioner



Mirpur Division, DIG Mirpur Region, PSO to the Prime Minister Usman Mumtaz Butt, Deputy Commissioner Raja Imran Shaheen, SP Adeel Ahmed

Langrial, and senior officers of the concerned departments.

The overall law and order situation, shortage of police personnel, estab-

lishment of a separate police station for women, road infrastructure, local government matters, and the issue of encroachments were discussed in detail. The Prime Minister was also briefed on ongoing measures for the promotion of tourism and archaeology.

President PPP AJK Chaudhry Muhammad Yaseen sought a detailed briefing on the design of the Gulpur Bridge, upon which XEN Ishtiaq Mughal informed that practical progress on the project is expected within one month. The meeting also discussed the proposed 25-kilometer-long Ring Road project in detail, and directions were issued to prepare its master planning.

The Ministers appreciated the comprehensive briefing prepared by the Deputy Commissioner.

Earlier, upon the arrival of the Prime Minister at the DC Office, a smartly turned-out police contingent presented a guard of honor.

Below the poverty

FAISALABAD: People stand in long queue to take free food from "Langer Khana" along the Satyana road in City



Photo: Online

Kashmir PM Stresses Lawyers' Role in Judicial Strength and Societal Stability

 Bureau Report

KOTLI: Prime Minister of the Azad Government of the State of Jammu & Kashmir, Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, stated that justice reaches the people through lawyers, and only a strong judicial system can ensure balance and stability in society. He said that the government believes in taking all segments of society along and that strengthening the system is the only guarantee of sustainable solutions to problems. He was addressing the oath-taking ceremony of the District Bar Association Kotli as the Chief Guest.

The ceremony was attended by President Pakistan Peoples Party



AJK Chaudhry Muhammad Yaseen, Ministers Javed Iqbal Budhanvi, Minister for Information & Auqaf Chaudhry Muhammad Rafiq Nayyar, Minister for Revenue Chaudhry Muhammad Akhlaq, former Senior

Minister Malik Muhammad Nawaz, former Minister Sardar Farooq Sikandar, Mayor Municipal Corporation Kotli Chaudhry Muhammad Taj, Chairman District Council, Commissioner, DIG, former judges,

lawyers, and a large number of citizens. The Prime Minister administered the oath to the newly elected office-bearers of the District Bar Association.

President District Bar Association Kotli Sardar Aftab Anjum, in his address, urged the Prime Minister to establish a High Court Circuit Bench and a Service Tribunal in Kotli.

President PPP AJK Chaudhry Muhammad Yaseen, in his address, said that lawyers are a respected and vital segment of society who play a key role in the dispensation of justice.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, special prayers were offered for the forgiveness of Chairman Malik Faiz and Zafar Rovi Advocate.

Muslim Conference declares full contest in AJK elections, vows to uphold Kashmir's accession to Pakistan

 Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: President of the All Jammu & Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, stated that the State of Jammu & Kashmir and the Muslim Conference are two sides of the same coin, and that the Muslim Conference is the guarantor of dignity and honor for future generations. He announced that, in line with the decision of the party's Core Committee, the Muslim Conference will contest the forthcoming elections from all constituencies of Azad Jammu & Kashmir. He said that changing times, circum-



stances, and experiences have further enhanced the importance and relevance of the Muslim Conference. "Kashmir Banega Pakistan is not merely a slogan; it is a guarantee of a secure future for South Asia. All sacrifices rendered in Kashmir are solely for the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan. More than 500,000 human lives have been sacrificed on the ideology of

Kashmir Banega Pakistan. Our present freedom is also rooted in this very ideology. No sacrifice, not even of an animal, has ever been given in Kashmir for any other concept," he added.

The convention was also addressed by former President of the Muslim Conference Mirza Muhammad Shafiq Jarjal Advocate, Secretary General Ms. Mehar-un-Nisa, Maqsood Ahmed Sheikh, Ms. Shamim Ali Malik, Chairman Youth Wing Sardar Usman Ali Khan, Syed Yasir Naqvi Advocate, Syed Tasawar Abbas Mousavi, Syed Ghulam Nabi Shah, Subedar Manzoor Abbasi, Sajjad Anwar Abbasi, Raja Waqar Ahmed Khan, Ms. Samia Sajid, Maimoona Kiyani Advocate, Sajjad

Qureshi, Muhammad Salim Awan, Mir Rizwan Advocate, Raja Ehsan Haider, Raja Qazafi Altaf, Mehtab Rasmi Advocate, Ashfaq Ahmed Dar, Munir Ahmed Qureshi, Sardar Mubashir Jahandad, Sardar Jahandad Abbasi, Gohar Zaman Abbasi, Saqlain Fida Kazmi, Zeehan Abbasi, Sardar Shafiq ur-Rehman, and other speakers.

On this occasion, Abid Andaleeb Butt, son of the late Muhammad Afzal Butt—a close companion of Mujahid-e-Awwal and a prominent political figure from Upper Neelum—formally announced his joining of the Muslim Conference, which was warmly welcomed by the party leadership and workers.

Muslim Conference turned history—successful Convention leads the masses gears up elections campaign



 Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The All Jammu & Kashmir Muslim Conference organized a grand and historic "Kashmir Banega Pakistan Workers' Convention" in Muzaffarabad Division, which turned into a massive display of public enthusiasm, party unity, and ideological commitment. Workers and supporters from across the entire division reached the venue in the form of large processions and convoys, making the convention a highly successful and memorable political gathering.

President of the Muslim Conference, Sardar Atiq Ahmed Khan, was brought to the venue from the MLA Hostel in a grand convoy comprising hundreds of cars and motorcycles. Upon his arrival at the convention ground, he was warmly received by senior party leaders of Muzaffarabad Division under the leadership of Youth Wing Chairman Sardar Usman Atiq. The atmosphere resonated with passionate slogans of "Kashmir Banega Pakistan," "Pakistan Armed Forces Zindabad," and "Mujahid-e-Awwal Zindabad."

Central Secretary General of the Muslim Conference, Ms. Mehar-un-Nisa, led a large convoy from the refugee camps of Ambore, Mank Piyan, and Chahla Bandi, with a significant participation of women.

Grand Conference on Mi'raj-un-Nabi (PBUH)



 Bureau Report

HATTIAN BALA: Under the auspices of Astana Aalia Nadol Sharif, a grand and spiritually uplifting conference on Mi'raj-un-Nabi (Peace Be Upon Him) and the Greatness of Hazrat Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) was successfully held under the patronage of Sajjadah Nashin, Sahibzada Pir Syed Arshad Hussain Gilani. The event was attended by renowned scholars, eminent religious leaders, mashaykh, naat khawans, and a large number of devotees and members of the public from across the region.

Prominent scholars including Allama Qazi Ahmed Hassan Chishti (Khateeb-e-Azam Sargodha), Ameer Jamaat Ahle Sunnat AJK Allama Syed Muhammad Ishaq Naqvi, Allama Professor Qazi Muhammad Ibrahim Chishti, Nazim-e-Aala Jamaat Ahle Sunnat Allama Pir Syed Kabir Hussain Hamdani, Tehsil Mufti Allama Qazi Muhammad Fahad Chishti, Allama Syed Afaq Gilani, and General Secretary Jamaat Ahle Sunnat Jhelum Valley Allama Aqib Abbasi, among others, addressed the conference.

Opposition Leader Shah Ghulam Qadir welcomes key PPP members to PML(N) in Neelum

 Bureau Report

President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, Shah Ghulam Qadir, visited Neelum where prominent leaders and workers of the Pakistan Peoples Party announced their decision to quit the PPP and join Pakistani Muslim League (N).

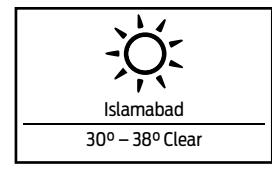
Expressing full confidence in the leadership of Shah Ghulam Qadir, members of the Chauhan and Awan communities from Kail Dana and Kail Bani formally joined PML(N). Those who announced their joining included Lal Hussain Chauhan, Noor Aman Awan, Shabbir Awan, Gohar-re-Rehman Awan, Iqbal Chauhan, Jahangir Zeb Chauhan, Basharat Chauhan, Khalid Chauhan, Farooq Chauhan, Bashir Chauhan, Irshad Chauhan, Safeer Chauhan, Qadeer Chauhan, Mumtaz Chauhan, Bani Ameen Chauhan, Khan Alam Awan, Khurshid Chauhan, Rashid Awan, Asad Chauhan, Umar Chauhan, Ahmed Chauhan, and others.

Azad Kashmir Health Minister Directs Urgent Action Amid Rising Viral Infections in Panjkot

 Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: On the special orders of Azad Kashmir Public Health Minister, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Seyad Bazil Ali Naqvi, the health department is moving as soon as possible in view of the increasing number of people infected with viral infection in Panjkot village. In this regard, Director Health Services CDC Dr Muhammad Farooq Awan paid a detailed visit to Abbas Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS) Muzaffarabad Ambor K. During the visit, the Director Health Services thoroughly reviewed the medicines, diagnostic facilities, sanitation, nursing care and overall medical management provided to the patients. On this occasion, they highlighted the professional competencies, psychology and day services of the hospital administration, doctors and paramedical staff, and playing a key role in providing effective medical facilities.

Dr Muhammad Farooq Awan congratulated the hospital administration for expressing satisfaction over the immortality that despite viral infections, Standard treatment is being provided. Azad Kashmir Public Health Secretary Brigadier Aamir Razi Tipu himself is monitoring the situation, to make protective measures more effective, intensify public awareness campaigns and strengthen the disease surveillance process to control its spread in a timely manner.


SERVICES
Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:44 am
Zohr	12:18 pm
Asr	3:48 pm
Maghrib	5:26 pm
Isha	6:53 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police

Stations	
Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

ADC(G) Attock
An important meeting
regarding City
beautification
Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: An important meeting regarding city beautification was held under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner General and Administrator Municipal Committee Attock Sardar Aftab Ahmed Khan, Municipal Officer Planning Raza Elahi, and other concerned officers of the municipality.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on proper parking arrangements in the city, installation of informational and guidance signboards and direction signs at various locations, establishment of a women's street vendor market, installation of signboards in the local language, and overall improvement of the city's beauty.

Addressing the meeting, Additional Deputy Commissioner General Anil Saeed said that city beautification is not limited to outward decoration only; rather, providing facilities to citizens, better traffic management, clear guidance signboards, and organized parking are also essential components. He termed the establishment of a women's street vendor market a positive step toward the economic empowerment of women.

Later, Administrator Municipal Committee Attock Anil Saeed, along with the Chief Officer and other officials, visited various parts of the city and reviewed ongoing and proposed city beautification projects. He issued on-the-spot instructions to ensure quality, speed, and continuity in beautification initiatives and to provide maximum facilities to the public.

PPP South Punjab leaders predict Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will be future prime minister

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Pakistan Peoples Party South Punjab President and former Governor Punjab Makhdoom Syed Ahmed Mahmood Senior Vice President PPP South Punjab Khawaja Rizwan Alam and Chief Coordinator PPP South Punjab Abdul Qadir Shaheen Said Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Will be the Prime Minister of Pakistan in the future. He Further Said

that some political dwarfs and so-called analysts who are enemies of the PPP with undemocratic thinking are worried about the briefing of Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in the Presidency in the past few days. They have made mistakes, but the people across Pakistan and at the inter-



national level are also looking at and evaluating the briefing of Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in the Presidency with commendable eyes. Undoubtedly, Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has shed comprehensive and clear light on all important sectors including the country's problems, economy, health, education, energy, infrastructure and social development. He added that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari not only presented a detailed review of the current challenges and opportunities, but also clearly presented his vision and strategy for the country's development and public welfare. During the briefing, he In his style of conversation, there was a glimpse of political insight, planning and leadership, which is the characteristic of a true status and public leader.

In capital city

ISLAMABAD: A view of the massive garbage dump at Sector I-11 causing the spread of various germs among the residence of Capital City as if the Government plan of shifting Vegetables Market of Sector I-11 to ring road implement soon the condition of such area will also change.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

TikTok releases Q3 2025 Community Guidelines Enforcement Report

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: TikTok has released its Q3 2025 Community Guidelines Enforcement Report, showcasing its ongoing commitment to creating a safe digital space for its users. The report, which covers data from July to September 2025, details the proactive steps TikTok has taken to identify and remove content that violates its Community Guidelines, ensuring a positive experience for its global community.

In Q3 2025, TikTok removed a total of 28,198,284 videos in Pakistan for Community Guidelines violations.



Proactive removal rates in Pakistan remained high at 99.8%, with 95.9% of these videos removed within 24 hours. As technology takes on more of these tasks, our safety teams can dedicate more time to areas that rely on human judgment, such as reviewing appeals, seeking guidance from external experts, and responding to rapidly evolving situations.

Globally, TikTok removed a total of 204 million (204,534,932) videos world-

wide in this quarter, which represents about 0.7% of all content uploaded to the platform. Of the removed videos, 186,608,081 videos were detected and taken down using automated detection technologies, while 8,950,735 videos were reinstated after further review. The proactive removal rate stood at 99.3%, with 94.8% of the flagged content removed within 24 hours of posting. To upload TikTok's integrity, in this quarter, the platform has removed 118,618,399 fake accounts, along with the additional 22,226,542 accounts that were suspected to be under the age of 13.

UAJK Inaugurates National Outreach Program for University Management

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The University of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (UAJK) formally inaugurated the National Outreach Program for University Management (NOPM) on Monday at its City Campus, launching a five-day capacity-building initiative in collaboration with the National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) Higher Education Commission, aimed at strengthening managerial, governance, and professional competencies of university administrators.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, the Vice Chancellor, UAJK, Prof. Dr. Nasir Jamal Khattak, reaffirmed the university's strong commitment to continuous professional development, institutional excellence, and alignment with national higher education priorities. He emphasized



that effective university management, grounded in professionalism and ethical governance, is essential for sustainable academic growth and public trust.

The Vice Chancellor emphasized that universities play a leading role in society and stressed the importance

of effective time management at all institutional levels.

Earlier, the Guest of Honour, Mr. Muhammad Saleem Qamar, Deputy Director, National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), Higher Education Commission (HEC), Islamabad, highlighted HEC's strategic focus on

enhancing governance, leadership, and managerial effectiveness across higher education institutions through structured and need-based capacity-building programs.

Subsequently, Director Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC), Prof. Dr. Javed Iqbal, underlined the importance of quality assurance, professional competence, and continuous learning in improving institutional performance and service delivery in universities.

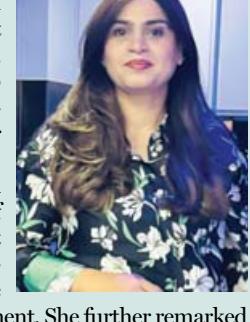
Representing the participants, Dr. Mubashar Naqvi, Public Relations Officer, shared collective expectations from the training, emphasizing the need for practical learning, effective communication, ethical governance, and strategic thinking in higher education administration.

The ceremony was moderated by Ms Afshan Munir, Assistant Director Planning, UAJK.

UK PTI Leader Vows Unwavering Support for Imran Khan's Release

Bureau Report

LONDON: Senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader from the UK, Misbah Qasir, has expressed unwavering support for former Prime Minister Imran Khan, stating that PTI supporters will not step back under any circumstances. She emphasized that all calls issued by the party for Khan's release will be fully supported.



Addressing the media, Misbah Qasir said that following the party's announcement of a nationwide wheel-jam strike and street protests on 8 February 2026, overseas Pakistanis, particularly PTI members in the UK, will actively participate in the movement. She further remarked that Imran Khan is not just an individual but a vision, and this vision will be defended through peaceful and constitutional means. Misbah Qasir added that the release of Imran Khan is a shared demand of Pakistanis both at home and abroad, and the struggle will continue until this goal is achieved.

Important breakthrough on FBR valuation rates: Federation of Realtors Pakistan's efforts bear fruit

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: The tireless and consistent efforts of the Chairman of the Federation of Realtors Pakistan, Mr. Musarrat Ejaz Khan, along with senior leaders Muhammad Aamir Sheikh and Allah Rakha Nasser, have finally yielded positive results. Alhamdulillah, a significant breakthrough has been achieved regarding the FBR valuation rates in Islamabad.

As a result of mutual consultation and consensus between the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), various real estate associations of Islamabad, representative bodies of housing societies, and other relevant stakeholders, the valuation rates have now been finalized.

This development is being termed a major success for the real estate sector, which is expected to not only improve business activity but also restore the confidence of investors and the general public. Participants emphasized that mutually agreed valuation rates will enhance transparency and help eliminate unnecessary hurdles.

The important meeting held today was also attended by the President of the Federation of Realtors Pakistan, the President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the President of the Islamabad Estate Agents Association, Mr. Tahir Mahmood, whose presence further underscored the significance and effectiveness of the session.

The participants warmly congratulated Chairman Musarrat Ejaz Khan and Muhammad Aamir Sheikh, appreciating their leadership, vision, and dedicated efforts to safeguard the rights of the real estate community, and lauded them on this remarkable achievement.

Deputy Commissioner to Inaugurate Extended International Cleft Surgery Camp Today

Bureau Report

GUJRAT: Deputy Commissioner Gujrat, Noorul-Ain Qureshi, along with Chairman Habib Group of Restaurants, Mall of Wazirabad and Euro Group of Malls, Chaudhry Sajid Waraich, will inaugurate the International Cleft Camp today at Ayesha Bashir Cleft Hospital, Gujrat. The camp will remain operational until January 24, 2026, at Cleft Hospital, Jilani, GT Road, Gujrat.

An international team of plastic surgeons led by British plastic surgeon Dr. Muhammad Riaz will perform surgeries for patients suffering from cleft lip and palate during the plastic surgery camp. On the occasion of the inauguration, the hospital's telephone helpline will also be officially launched.

On January 19, the international team of plastic surgeons arrived at the Cleft Hospital, where they were received by the hospital trustees under the leadership of Dr. Ijaz Bashir. A detailed meeting was held, followed by a briefing and technical session between the plastic surgeons and the hospital's medical staff.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Patron of Cleft Hospital Dr. Ijaz Bashir stated that bringing smiles back to the faces of children and individuals affected by cleft lip and palate and providing them with a better and happier life is their mission, which will continue in the future as well.



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Pakistan's Kinnow Exports Remain on Strong Trajectory Despite Afghan Market Closure

Pakistan's kinnow exports have continued to register strong growth despite the closure of the Afghan market, highlighting the success of timely policy measures and export diversification efforts led by the Ministry of Commerce.

Despite the disruption of a traditionally significant export destination, the Ministry of Commerce, in close coordination with the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, moved swiftly to facilitate exporters and redirect consignments toward alternative international markets.

These efforts ensured continuity in shipments and protected growers and exporters from potential losses.

According to official export figures, Pakistan earned approximately USD 40 million from kinnow exports within a span of just 45 days, covering the peak export period of December and the first half of January.

The data shows that exports maintained a steady pace throughout December, followed by sustained momentum during the first 15 days of January—an encouraging sign amid regional trade constraints.

The Federal Minister for Commerce lauded the collective efforts of the Ministry of Commerce team, TDAP, Pakistan's trade missions abroad, exporters, growers, and logistics partners, acknowledging that the strong performance was the result of close coordination and shared commitment. Jam Kamal Khan emphasized that overcoming the impact of the Afghan market closure required a whole-of-government and whole-of-sector approach, and appreciated the dedication of officers and stakeholders who worked tirelessly to keep export channels open and competitive.

Officials attributed this performance to focused market outreach, enhanced trade facilitation, and close engagement with exporters.

Under Jam Kamal Khan's direction, priority was given to expanding access to markets in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and other non-traditional destinations, while ensuring compliance with international quality and phytosanitary standards.

The Trade Development Authority of Pakistan complemented these efforts through targeted export promotion, coordination with overseas trade missions, and continuous support to exporters in logistics and documentation. Improved coordination between federal authorities and the private sector helped maintain shipment schedules and preserve Pakistan's reputation as a reliable citrus supplier.

The sustained export performance has provided critical foreign exchange earnings and reinforced confidence across the kinnow value chain, benefiting farmers, processors, packers, and exporters.

Stakeholders noted that the strong trajectory, despite external challenges, reflects the resilience of Pakistan's agri-exports and the effectiveness of government-led export facilitation.

The continued momentum in kinnow exports is being viewed as a positive signal for the broader agricultural export sector, reaffirming the government's commitment to export-led growth and market diversification under the stewardship of the Federal Minister for Commerce.

Punjab Pivots to Mobile-First: 49 Apps Launch E-Governance Revolution

As AI-based governance is shaping the future, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is taking steps to establish Punjab as an e-governance hub. With a portfolio of 49 officially launched mobile applications, the Punjab government has repositioned mobile-first service delivery as a central pillar of administrative reform. This strategy represents a decisive shift away from paper-driven, office-bound governance toward a data-centric, automated and citizen-facing service architecture aligned with global smart-governance trends.

The logic behind this transformation is straightforward: smartphones have become the most scalable and inclusive interface between the state and citizens. Rather than expanding physical offices and manual processing layers, Punjab has invested in digital public infrastructure that embeds services directly into mobile applications. These platforms digitize complete service lifecycles, application submission, verification, processing, tracking and delivery, replacing fragmented workflows with integrated digital pipelines. The outcome is a governance model where speed, traceability and accountability are built into the system by design.

At the center of this ecosystem is the GoPb application, which functions as a unified digital gateway for government services. From a technical perspective, it reflects a shift toward centralized digital identity management and service orchestration, allowing citizens to access multiple departmental services through a single authenticated interface. This consolidation reduces data duplication, standardizes service protocols and enables interoperability across departments. Such architecture is essential

for AI-led governance, as it generates clean, structured datasets that support advanced analytics, predictive modeling, and automated decision-support systems.

Women have emerged as major beneficiaries of Punjab's mobile governance framework. Applications such as Dastak enable doorstep delivery of essential government services, including documentation and facilitation tasks, without requiring visits to government offices. For women facing mobility constraints, safety concerns or time limitations, this represents a significant expansion of access. Similarly, the Meri Awaz application integrates SOS alerts, complaint lodging and rapid response mechanisms, linking users directly to centralized monitoring systems. These platforms rely on real-time data transmission, geo-tagging and automated escalation protocols widely used in advanced smart-city deployments.

Children and families benefit through education and welfare-related applications that provide digital access to enrollment information, institutional updates, examination data and complaint mechanisms. Parents can interact with education departments remotely, reducing dependence on informal intermediaries. From a governance standpoint, these applications generate continuous data flows that help identify attendance gaps, infrastructure deficiencies and service delivery trends. Over time, such datasets can support AI-based education planning tools, enabling evidence-driven resource allocation and early detection of systemic weaknesses.

For persons with disabilities, mobile governance has replaced historically exclusionary processes with accessible digital workflows. The assistive devices and wheelchair application allows eligible individuals to apply for mobility aids from home, upload documents digitally and track application status in real-time. The system integrates eligibility verification, inventory management and distribution tracking, ensuring transparency and efficiency. More importantly, it embeds inclusion into governance design, demonstrating how digital systems can dismantle, not reinforce, structural barriers.

Economic facilitation further illustrates the depth of Punjab's digital strategy. Agriculture-focused applications such as bardana registration digitize farmer onboarding, procurement and subsidy access. These platforms generate structured agricultural datasets that allow policymakers to shift from reactive interventions to data-led planning. With sufficient historical data, such systems can support AI-driven forecasting models for crop yields, demand estimation and supply-chain optimization, strengthening food security and market stability.

Consumer protection and market transparency have also improved through applications like Qeemat Punjab and AMIS Punjab, which publish real-time prices of essential commodities across districts. These applications function as live data dashboards for citizens while simultaneously feeding regulators with up-to-date market intelligence. By replacing delayed manual reporting with continuous data streams, the

Punjab government has strengthened price monitoring and reduced information asymmetry.

Public safety and urban management applications show how mobile devices are being integrated into broader digital command-and-control ecosystems. Apps linked to the Punjab Safe Cities Authority allow citizens to report incidents and interact with centralized response systems. Technically, this reflects a convergence of mobile computing, citizen inputs and centralized analytics, an early-stage smart-city model capable of evolving into AI-assisted incident prediction and optimized resource deployment.

From a systems perspective, Punjab's mobile applications rely on standardized backend architectures, automated workflows and digital audit trails. Service requests are time-stamped, tracked and routed algorithmically, improving predictability. While fully autonomous AI governance is still emerging, the infrastructure already supports rule-based automation, performance monitoring and data-driven oversight.

Collectively, Punjab's 49 mobile applications signal a recalibration of the state-citizen relationship. Women accessing services from home, parents managing education digitally, farmers engaging directly with procurement systems and differently-abled persons receiving assistive support through mobile workflows are tangible indicators of progress. In an era where digital capacity defines governance effectiveness, Punjab's mobile-first strategy positions the province as a national leader and an emerging contender in Asia's digital governance landscape.

(The writer is a Lahore-based public policy analyst and can be reached at qudratullah@gmail.com)



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

DG ISPR Exposes PTI's Non-Cooperation in Fight Against Terrorism

The DG ISPR's briefing portrayed Pakistan's 2025 security landscape as a grinding internal conflict marked by tens of thousands of intelligence-based operations, significant militant losses, and a heavy toll on civilians and law enforcement, reflecting deep national strain. The data showed that this violence is overwhelmingly concentrated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which accounts for the vast majority of terrorist incidents and suicide attacks, making it the core battlefield of the insurgency, while Balochistan faces a distinct but serious conflict and the rest of the country remains relatively contained. These figures underscored both the intensity of military effort and the fragility of security gains in the absence of broader societal and political cohesion.

Moving beyond numbers, Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry argued that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's crisis is aggravated by a politically permissive environment that allows militant groups space to operate and erodes public support for counter-terrorism. He sharply criticized PTI and its provincial government for resisting large-scale operations, questioning military legitimacy, opposing refugee repatriation despite security concerns, and creating political divisions that militants can exploit. By raising concerns about the absence of militant attacks on PTI figures and highlighting public non-cooperation by the KPK leadership, he warned that political ambiguity and obstruction undermine the state's authority, weaken national strategy, and risk turning sustained military campaigns into an ultimately futile effort.

against extremism enabled from within. These external, ostensibly neutral observations reinforce the grave concern articulated by the security establishment: that domestic political choices and divisions are creating tangible, exploitable space in the operational environment, allowing militant groups to plan, move, and operate with a disturbing degree of impunity in the very province most historically and sociologically vulnerable to their ideological appeal and tactical reach.

At this critical juncture, when the nation has endured decades of violence, sacrificed generations of its youth, and forged, through immense pain, a broad consensus across state institutions, civil society, and the general public on the need for strict, decisive, and uncompromising action, any deviation from this hard-won consensus is not just a political disagreement—it is an anomalous, destabilizing variable that demands rigorous explanation and justification. When a single political party consistently opposes kinetic operations, resists security-centric policies, and promotes a narrative that, whether intentionally or through consequence, provides ideological shelter and operational cover to extremist elements, its intentions, its alliances, and its ultimate vision for the country naturally and rightly come under the most intense scrutiny imaginable. The fight against terrorism, in its most fundamental philosophical and practical requirements, is binary: it demands unity over division, crystalline clarity over manipulative ambiguity, and steadfast resolve over self-interested vacillation. There is no room for political point-scoring, for electoral calculus, or for ideological grandstanding on the battlefield.

where the survival of the state's monopoly on violence—and thus the state itself—is at stake.

The people of Pakistan, weary unto death of fear and grief, have made their position unequivocally clear through their suffering, their resilience, and their expectations of the state. They reject terrorism in all its grotesque manifestations, and with equal fervor, they reject any form of facilitation, justification, intellectual appeasement, or political ambivalence towards the groups that perpetuate it. The national demand, visceral and loud, is for firm, unambiguous, and relentless action against terrorists and their enablers, irrespective of political affiliations, provincial boundaries, or short-term electoral consequences. Peace, the ultimate aspiration of a battered people, cannot be harvested from the poisoned soil of hesitation and mixed signals; it requires an unwavering, singular commitment, a collective burden of responsibility shouldered by all without exception, and a complete, unconditional cooperation from every tier of governance and every political entity that claims to represent the people's will. The message from the security establishment, bolstered by the cold, hard, inarguable arithmetic of violence in 2025, is a stark and necessary one: in this existential fight for the nation's soul and survival, those who are not cooperating with the state are, by objective measure and consequence, aligning themselves against it. And in the eyes of a nation yearning for peace and stability, such a position now bears a moral and political complicity that the people are no longer willing to tolerate, forgive, or forget. The statistics, therefore, are far more than mere numbers: they are a verdict on a year of struggle, a mirror held up to a fractured political landscape, and a chilling warning of the storms to come if the center cannot hold.

Iran's unrest and Pakistan's strategic red-line

The protests that have engulfed Iran since last December are not merely a domestic crisis for Tehran. They are a regional tremor whose aftershocks will travel far beyond Iranian borders. For Pakistan, they pose a fundamental strategic question: how should Islamabad respond to a scenario in which external powers attempt to reshape Iran's political order?

At first glance, Pakistan may appear insulated. It is neither a party to Iran's internal politics nor a direct stakeholder in the contest between Tehran and its adversaries. Yet geography tells a different story. Pakistan shares a long, porous border with Iran across Balochistan—a region that is already burdened by underdevelopment, militancy and political alienation. Any major destabilization in Iran will not remain contained. It will spill across borders in the form of displacement, economic disruption, militant mobility and ideological radicalisation.

History offers a sobering precedent. State collapse in Afghanistan after 2001 and again after 2021 reshaped Pakistan's internal security environment for decades. Iran is far larger, more complex and more central to regional order. A coerced regime change in Tehran would not simply alter Iran's domestic trajectory; it would fracture the geopolitical equilibrium of West and South Asia.

In strategic terms, this must be treated as a red line—not in the sense of immediate military escalation, but as a firm diplomatic and doctrinal boundary. Pakistan should state unambiguously that:

· Iran's political future is a sovereign matter.

· Any overt or covert effort by external actors to engineer regime change threatens regional security. Such a trajectory would compel Pakistan to recalibrate its security posture in ways no actor desires.

This posture is defensive, not ideological. It does not align Pakistan with Tehran's internal governance model. It aligns Pakistan with regional stability.

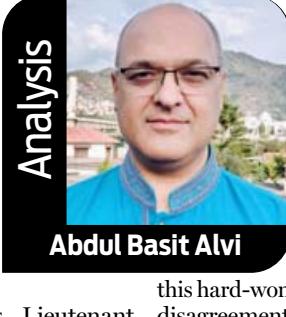
Silence carries risk. Ambiguity invites miscalculation. If external powers conclude that Pakistan will adapt passively to a transformed Iran, they may underestimate the structural shocks such a transformation would impose on Pakistan's internal cohesion and strategic environment.

Pakistan's interests demand clarity. The lesson of the past two decades is stark: wars of transformation do not remain confined to their theatres. They migrate across borders, societies and generations.

Iran's protests are a domestic reckoning. But turning them into a geopolitical project would redraw the strategic map of the region. For Pakistan, that map is not abstract. It is inscribed along its western frontier, its internal stability and its long-term security calculus.

Islamabad must therefore speak—calmly, diplomatically, but firmly—that the forced remaking of Iran is not a neutral act in this region. It is a systematic shock. And Pakistan will not treat it as a distant event.

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Abdul Basit Alvi



Awais Akmal

President Zardari condemns Kabul blast, expresses solidarity with Chinese nationals, calls for full implementation of Doha Peace accord

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has strongly condemned the bomb blast at a Chinese restaurant in Kabul, which has resulted in the loss of several lives and left one Chinese nation-

al injured and one reported dead. He expressed deep grief over the casualties and extended heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims.

The President conveyed sincere sympathy with the injured and their families and prayed for their early

recovery. He paid tribute to the spirit of Chinese citizens who have continued to work for the development of Afghanistan despite rising insecurity and serious risks to their lives.

President Zardari noted that the Taliban regime in Afghanistan has failed

to honour the commitments made under the Doha Peace Agreement, particularly the obligation to prevent the use of Afghan soil for the export of terrorism.

He recalled that Pakistan has repeatedly stressed that no terrorist groups should be allowed safe havens in Afghan-

istan and that regional peace and security must be upheld. The President said that it is not just Pakistan but other neighbours of Afghanistan, including Tajikistan have recently been affected by the terrorists operating out of Afghan soil.

The President further stated that the



failure to establish a broad based and inclusive government by the Taliban is contrary to the Doha Agreement. He emphasised that full implementation of the agreement, in letter and spirit, along with concrete steps to end cross border terrorism, remains essential.

JUI-F Chief Fazal ur Rehman declares 'extraordinary changes' as old systems collapse

Syed Tauqeer Zaidi

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) chief Molana Fazal ur Rehman has said that extraordinary changes are taking place in the global order following the failure of communism and capitalist democracy, and the collapse of old political and economic systems has shaken the world.

He said that in the rapidly changing global political landscape, the collective wisdom and vision of Pakistan's national leadership is now being tested. "Instead of deepening political conflicts, there is a need to promote national harmony and unity," he emphasized.

Molana Fazal ur Rehman expressed these views while talking to senior journalists, tribal elders from Wana and Lakki Marwat, and other notables during a meeting at his residence in Shorkot. On this occasion, Head of the Central Digital Media Committee, Engineer Molana Zia ur Rehman, Mustafa Rehan, Mansoor Rehan and others were also present.

Molana Fazal ur Rehman said that over the last two hundred years, the region has experienced various political systems including monarchies, colonial rule, democracy and communism, but none of them fulfilled their responsibility of ensuring human welfare and instead only strengthened the concentration of power. "Today, all political systems of the world have failed to heal the suffering of mankind and to establish truly welfare-oriented societies," he added.

Molana Fazal ur Rehman further said that after the attempt to abduct the President of Venezuela by the United States, the world is now facing serious threats of nuclear war. "Science has brought humanity to the doorstep of death instead of ensuring its survival," he remarked.



atomic and hydrogen bombs and other brutal war machinery which killed millions of people. Recently, Israel targeted the civilian population of Gaza with chemical weapons, resulting in the martyrdom of more than 80,000 innocent people," he claimed.

Molana Fazal ur Rehman further said that after the attempt to abduct the President of Venezuela by the United States, the world is now facing serious threats of nuclear war. "Science has brought humanity to the doorstep of death instead of ensuring its survival," he added.

Molana Fazal ur Rehman said that the Renaissance and Enlightenment movements in the West destroyed the purpose of life and the family system. "Today, Western men are depressed, women are distressed, and every individual is suffering from crowded loneliness. Western philosophers are now struggling to restore meaning and purpose to life," he added.

He stressed that nations should learn from their experiences and observations. "Our intellectuals, politicians, bureaucrats and military leadership should preserve collective wisdom

and, keeping in view our historical consciousness, civilizational background and social values, initiate a serious debate to establish a consultative system that can serve as a practical alternative to Western democracy, communism, religious dictatorship and monarchy," he said.

He concluded by saying that Pakistan can certainly develop a political system capable of regulating a true welfare society, ensuring the protection of people's right to sovereignty and morally binding rulers to remain accountable before the public.

Bangladesh High Commissioner Iqbal Hussain Khan meets President UMT Ibrahim Hasan Murad

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Pakistan, Iqbal Hussain Khan, visited the University of Management and Technology (UMT), where he held an important meeting with President UMT Ibrahim Hasan Murad. During the meeting, both sides held detailed discussions on bilateral relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh, cooperation in education and research and expanding partnerships in higher education.

Speaking on the occasion, Ibrahim Hasan Murad emphasized that strengthening regional cooperation, trade relations and people-to-people contacts is the need of the hour. He highlighted that educational and



research collaboration between

new opportunities for the youth of both countries and play a vital role

in achieving shared goals of sustainable development.

High Commissioner Iqbal Hussain Khan appreciated UMT's academic contributions, quality education system and research-oriented environment.

He stated that Pakistan and Bangladesh would further strengthen their diplomatic and educational ties to achieve common development objectives. He described cooperation in higher education as crucial for enhancing bilateral relations and expressed his commitment to expanding collaboration in education, research and people-to-people engagement in the future.

At the end of the meeting, both sides exchanged gifts and commemorative souvenirs.

Pakistan-Azerbaijan Brotherhood: Commemorating the Martyrs of Black January

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: MUSLIM Institute, Islamabad, in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Islamabad, organized a Round Table Discussion to commemorate Azerbaijan's Day of Mourning and honor the martyrs of the tragic events of January 19–20, 1990, remembered as Black January.

The event, titled "Pakistan-Azerbaijan Brotherhood: Commemorating the 'Day of Mourning' and the Martyrs of Black January," took place on Monday, January 19, at National Library, Islamabad. Keynote

speakers included H. E. Khazar Farhodov, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan; Prof. Zameer Awan, Diplomat and Analyst; Dr. Aalia Sohail Khan, Country Director, American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS); Dr. Samina Yasmeen Amin, Chairperson, Department of Pakistan Studies, Allama Iqbal Open University; Dr. Anna Mahmood, In-Charge Female Campus, International Islamic University Islamabad; and Ms. Aymur, Head of the Azerbaijan Center, National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad.

Speakers examined the political, historical, and moral dimensions

of the painful chapters in Azerbaijan's modern history. On the night of January 19–20, 1990, Soviet military forces entered Baku and other cities, resulting in the killing and injury of hundreds of unarmed civilians. This intervention constituted a violation of international law and fundamental human rights. Rather than suppressing the national movement, the tragedy strengthened the resolve of the Azerbaijani people and became a decisive turning point on the path toward the restoration of Azerbaijan's independence in 1991.

Speakers examined the political, historical, and moral dimensions

of Black January, highlighting how the sacrifice of innocent civilians laid the moral foundation for Azerbaijan's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national dignity. The discussion also underscored Azerbaijan's position that the events of January 20 merit international political and legal recognition.

Commemorating Mourning Day in Pakistan carries special meaning, symbolizing the deep-rooted and time-tested brotherhood between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. The two countries share a relationship founded on mutual respect, shared values, and a common understanding of the importance of sovereignty

and independence. Pakistan and Azerbaijan have consistently supported each other's just and legitimate positions at international forums, reflecting principled solidarity rather than political convenience, and a shared moral outlook shaped by parallel historical experiences.

Honoring the martyrs of Black January is not merely an act of remembrance; it is a reaffirmation of responsibility toward the future. Their sacrifice continues to inspire resilience, unity, and confidence, reminding the international community that lasting peace cannot be built through coercion or force, but through



to shared national interests, but also to regional stability and global peace.

The gathering also brought together diplomats, scholars, policymakers, media representatives, and members of civil society to reflect on the historic significance of the tragedy and its enduring lessons.

PIBF launches 'Mayaishat Ko Istejkam Do' movement

News Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan International Business Forum (PIBF) Lahore has announced the launch of the "Mayaishat Ko Istejkam Do" (strengthen the economy) movement in response to worsening economic conditions, sluggish business activity, and what it described as excessive interference by government institutions.



Think Tank of the PIBF on Economy has appointed Hafiz Mahmood Malik as Convener of the movement, while Tahir Raza has been named as Co-Convener for an effective campaign.

The Think Tank has outlined a five-point agenda focusing on key structural challenges faced by the economy. These include persistently high interest rates, excessive taxation, elevated electricity tariffs, a shortage of skilled labour, and systemic hurdles affecting the ease of doing business.

In support of its proposals, the PIBF Economy Think Tank has conducted a comparative analysis of ease of doing business across South Asian economies, including China, India, and Bangladesh. The review aims to highlight how pragmatic policy reforms and improved regulatory frameworks in neighbouring countries have contributed to increased investment and sustained economic growth.

The forum believes that the adoption of similar policy measures in Pakistan could accelerate economic recovery and improve investor confidence. Under the "Mayaishat Ko Istejkam Do" movement, the five-point agenda will be presented to business leaders, political stakeholders, government officials, and the public through seminars titled "Problems and Their Solutions" alongside a coordinated social media outreach campaign.

PIBF stated that, in collaboration with the business community and the public, the movement will ultimately be advanced under the broader slogan "Badal Do Nizam," calling for reforms to replace what it termed an outdated bureaucratic governance framework.

AIOU Offers 82 Academic Programs for Int'l Students

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University has announced admissions for the Spring Semester 2026 for overseas Pakistanis and international students residing around the world, offering 82 academic programs. Detailed information about all programs is available on the university's official website.

Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood stated that "Allama Iqbal Open University takes pride in providing modern and quality education to students living in different regions of the world." He added that the university's online education system has been specially designed to meet the needs of international students, enabling them to obtain globally recognized education from their homes.

The university's active Directorate of International and Collaboration is providing guidance and support to students throughout the admission process and during their academic journey. Currently, students from 37 countries are enrolled at the university and a 26 percent increase in international student admissions has been recorded compared to the previous semester.

It is worth noting that all programs for international students are offered through the online Learning Management System (LMS), under which admissions, assignments, workshops and examinations, along with all academic activities will be conducted entirely online.

Abu Dhabi, Italy to strengthen strategic partnership

ABU DHABI: The Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED) is leading a high-level economic delegation to Italy from 19–22 January as part of Abu Dhabi's ongoing efforts to deepen strategic partnerships and expand international economic engagement to further enhance the emirate's position as a global magnet for talent, businesses and investment.

The visit builds on Abu Dhabi's economic delegations to major global capitals and financial centres in 2025, reflecting the emirate's commitment to expanding its international engagement with global economic partners around the world.

The delegation includes more than 100 senior officials and executives from both the public and private sectors, including representatives from the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ADCCI), ADGM, Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO), Abu Dhabi Customs and Hub71.

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
187,761.69	185,098.83
Day's High	Day's Low
187,882.04	186,127.35
Index Value	Change
47,512,316,811	+2662.86
Percentage	Time
+1.44%	19 Jan, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
10,195.35	-39.94
Percentage	Time

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
49,359.33	-83.11
Percentage	Time
-0.17%	16 Jan, 4:45 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
53,583.57	-352.60
Percentage	Time

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	186	191
Bahrain Dinar	744.1	754.1
Canadian Dollar	201	206
China Yuan	39.73	40.13
Danish Krone	43.27	43.67
Euro	326	329
Hong Kong Dollar	35.55	35.90
Indian Rupee	3.01	3.10
Japanese Yen	1.7575	1.8575
Kuwaiti Dinar	908.1	918.1
Malaysian Ringgit	68.55	69.15
New Zealand \$	158.95	160.95
Norwegian Krone	27.56	27.86
Omani Riyal	728.5	738.5
Qatari Riyal	76.26	76.96
Saudi Riyal	74.9	75.3
Singapore Dollar	216.5	221.5
Swedish Korona	30.16	30.46
Swiss Franc	347.74	350.49
Thai Bhat	8.74	8.89
U.A.E Dirham	76.6	77.2
UK Pound Sterling	375.5	379
US Dollar	280.5	282.7

SECP facilitates capital raising for Listed Companies



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has notified amendments to the Companies (Further Issue of Shares) Regulations, 2020 (the Regulations) to facilitate capital raising by listed companies, while maintaining adequate disclosure requirements for investors.

The amendments address a challenge faced by listed companies when raising further capital from existing shareholders through a rights issue. Under the previous framework, listed companies were prohibited from announcing a rights issue if the company, its sponsors, promoters, substantial shareholders, or directors had any overdue amounts or defaults appearing in their Credit Information Bureau (CIB) report. This restriction constrained financially stressed yet viable companies from raising capital, even in circumstances where existing shareholders were willing to support revival, restructuring, or continuation of operations.

Under the amended framework, the requirement for a clean CIB report will not apply if the relevant persons provide a No Objection Certificate (NOC) regarding the proposed rights issue from the concerned financial institution(s). To ensure transparency and protect investors' interests, companies in such cases must make comprehensive disclosures in the rights offer document. These disclosures must include details of any defaults or overdue amounts, ongoing recovery proceedings, and the status of any debt restructuring. The revised Regulations strike an appropriate balance between facilitating corporate rehabilitation and enabling investors to make informed investment decisions.

Lucky Investments Launches 'Lucky Funds' Mobile App

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Lucky Investments Limited today announced the launch of Lucky Funds, its mobile investment application designed to provide investors with secure, convenient, and transparent access to Shariah-compliant investing.

Available on both Apple App Store (iOS) and Google Play Store (Android), the Lucky Funds app enables investors to invest, convert, and redeem across all Lucky Investments' mutual and pension funds, while offering real-time portfolio visibility and comprehensive fund information.

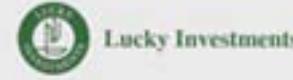
Built to make investing effortless, the application allows users to explore funds, complete digital account onboarding, track performance, and stay in control of their investments anytime, anywhere. It also supports investor education by providing access to Shariah-compliant investment insights, CEO

Market Outlook publications, and financial planning tools that highlight the power of disciplined savings and compounding.

Lucky Funds has been developed as a secure digital service channel, incorporating biometric & facial recognition authentication, encrypted communication, backend authorization controls, audit trails, and logical system segregation to ensure confidentiality, integrity, and reliability of data and transactions.

Key features include digital account opening, fund-wise portfolio segregation, access to daily NAVs and performance reports, downloadable statements and certificates, digital transactions, RAAST ID generation, KUICKPAY service, configurable user interface themes, push notifications, and high-availability infrastructure designed to scale with investor growth.

Commenting on the launch, Mohammad Shoail, CFA, CEO of Lucky Investments Limited, said the app reflects the Company's



Invest Digitally Invest with Ease

Invest in mutual funds easily using the Lucky Investments Mobile App and Online Investment Portal

Open and manage your investment account

Anytime, Anywhere

Simple, secure and fully digital

Download the Lucky Investments App and start investing digitally today

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PACRA Rating AM2+



commitment to combining technology with Shariah-compliant governance to enhance investor experience without compromising trust or transparency.

Cauliflowers

ISLAMABAD: A vendor is waiting for the vendors to start bidding of Cauliflowers at Vegetables Market of Sector I-11 as it is the main supply source of vegetables and fruit to the twin cities.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

6th AlBaraka Forum Regional Conference proposes landmark reforms

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Titled "Islamic Economy in the Digital Age: Innovation within the Framework of Compliance," the 6th AlBaraka Forum Regional Conference was held at the Pearl Continental Hotel in Karachi, bringing together senior policymakers, financial leaders, scholars, regulators, and industry experts to examine the rapid transformation of the digital economy and its alignment with the principles of Islamic finance.

Organized by the AlBaraka Forum for Islamic Economy, in collaboration with the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Development, the conference provided a high-level platform for strategic dialogue on digital transformation, financial innovation, and institutional governance within the Islamic economy.

Addressing the conference, H. E. Mr. Jameel Ahmad, Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, highlighted the magnitude of change reshaping global finance, stating:



In his opening remarks, Mr. Yousef Hassan Khalawi, Secretary General of the AlBaraka Forum for Islamic Economy, emphasized the strategic importance of aligning digital innovation with Islamic finance principles, stating:

"If Islamic finance effectively facilitates the digital economy within Islamic banking, it will progress in parallel with conventional banking. Both systems are

and the real differentiator will be how innovation is governed and aligned with values, compliance, and institutional integrity."

During the conference, H. E. Mr. Jameel Ahmad was presented with an AlBaraka Forum for Islamic Economy Honorary Trophy, handed over by the Secretary General of the Forum, in recognition of his leadership and contributions to advancing Pakistan's financial and regulatory landscape.

'Khushiyana Da Mela': HBL Zarai's Drive for Rural Growth

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: HBL Zarai Services Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of HBL, has launched a landmark rural engagement initiative titled "Khushiyana Da Mela" (Festival of Happiness), a first-of-its-kind agriculture focused community festival designed exclusively for the farming heartland of Pakistan. The inaugural event was held in Chak 305-EB, Burewala, a complete rural setting, reflecting HBL Zarai's commitment to engaging farming communities in the

environments where they live and work.

Conceived as a family friendly rural festival, Khushiyana Da Mela goes beyond a conventional agri exhibition. It offers farmers and their families a joyous and inclusive experience while introducing them to integrated agriculture solutions, modern farming practices, and financial inclusion through trusted agri and banking partners. The initiative reflects HBL Zarai's commitment to meeting farmers where they are, both geographically and culturally.

Dawlance Inaugurates Advanced Condenser Manufacturing Facility, Strengthening Pakistan's Industrial Self-Reliance

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Dawlance, Pakistan's leading home appliance manufacturer and a subsidiary of the global Beko Group, has inaugurated a greenfield condenser manufacturing facility developed in partnership with White Eagle Engineering Pvt. Ltd. The facility addresses a critical gap in Pakistan's appliance manufacturing ecosystem by enabling the domestic production

of condensers, highly technical and quality-sensitive components that have historically been fully imported.

The inauguration was attended by Mr. Umar Ahsan Khan, Chief Executive Officer, Dawlance, along with senior members of the company's engineering, technical, and development teams. The delegation conducted a comprehensive technical review of manufacturing operations, quality control systems, and

production standards, which have been established to meet international benchmarks through close collaboration between Dawlance, Beko Türiye, and White Eagle Engineering.

Speaking at the inauguration, Mr. Umar Ahsan Khan, CEO, Dawlance, said: "At Dawlance, localization is not only a strategic priority but a long-term commitment to strengthening Pakistan's industrial capability.

The inauguration of White Eagle Engineering reflects the progress that can be achieved when local engineering expertise is developed in line with international quality standards. By supporting the local manufacturing of critical components such as evaporators and condensers, we are helping build a more resilient supply chain, reducing import dependence, and enabling sustainable growth for the appliance industry in Pakistan."

Karachi has no shortage of talent, future stars exist among U-15 players: Nadeem Omar

 Sports Desk

KARACHI: Nadeem Omar, President of Regional Cricket Association Karachi, expressed these views while addressing players at the Oval Ground, NBP Cricket Stadium during the inauguration of RCAK Under-15 Challenge League Cricket Tournament. He said, I am extremely grateful to Mr. Mohsin Naqvi, Chairman Pakistan Cricket Board, and Abdulla Khurram Niazi, Director Domestic Cricket Operations, for providing Karachi team with the opportunity to play in the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy.

He added, "Karachi players have proved that they deserve to play Quaid-e-Azam Trophy by winning it." Nadeem Omar said that Under-15 and Under-17 cricket tournaments are part of Khurram Niazi's "Cricket for All" program, which will bring talented players to the forefront.

Khalid Nafees, Chairman Tournament Committee, said, "Nadeem Omar will continue to be our president in the future. He is a president who cooperates in every way for the promotion of cricket but doesn't want to show off by photo."

Earlier Nadeem Omar Inaugurated the tournament after hitting the Ball.

In the opening Match RCAK Green beat RCAK Yellow by 108 runs. RCAK Green 287/3 in 40 overs. Muhammad Imam 145 23x4 1x6(111 Balls), Qazi



Syed Jasiruddin 40, Arman Shehzad 32, Hassan Ahmed Siddiqui 31, Rayyan Khan 19.

In reply RCAK Yellow 179/6 in 40 overs. Azaan Abbasi 59 7x4, Sufyan Nazeer 30, Jazim Khan 30. M. Shayan 2/14, Hasan Farhan 2/16.

In the another Match RCAK Blues beat RCAK Whites by 8 wickets at Jinnah College Ground. RCAK Whites 144 all-out in 37.4 overs. Masood Ali 82

7x4 3x6. Syed Shan e Baqar (sla) 4/26, Haider Ali 2/19, Abdur Rehman 2/30.

In reply RCAK Blues 148/2 in 24.5 overs. Aaish Malik 79 7x4 4x6, M. Wali 23, Faisal Qurban 19 not out.

The function was attended by Muhammad Touseef Siddiqui, Acting Secretary RCA Karachi, Waisal Ansari, Azam Khan, Muhammad Ahmad Naqvi, Assistant Secretaries RCAK, Nasir Yousaf, Legal Advisor RCA Karachi, Arif Wahid

Khan, Secretary Zone One, M Tariq Hafeez, Treasurer Zone One, Nasratullah Secretary Zone II, Muhammad Rais President, Afzal Qureshi Secretary, Ali Hussain Treasurer Zone III, SM Asim, Noushad Ahmed Treasurer Zone IV, Muhammad Sami Khan President, Muhammad Saeed Jabbar, Secretary Zone V, Naveed ul Amin, Joint Secretary Zone VI, Mazhar Ali Awan President Zone VII and other officials.

Police, Aspire Group Sign Education MoU

 Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The Regional Police Office (RPO) Faisalabad and the Aspire Group of Colleges, including Rising Grammar School, Khurriawala, have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to provide educational relief to children of police personnel.

The MoU was signed by RPO Faisalabad Sohail Akhtar Sukhera and Director Aspire Group of Colleges Jawad Asghar. Under the agreement, children of police martyrs will receive a 100 per cent waiver in tuition and registration fees along with uniform and Books, children of Ghazi police officers will be given a 70 per cent concession, while children of serving police employees will receive a 50 per cent fee concession.

Addressing students on the occasion, RPO Sohail Sukhera urged them to stay away from drugs and firmly say no to narcotics. He advised students to avoid



bad company, remain focused on their studies and play a positive role in society. He said drug abuse was a serious threat to youth and could ruin their future.

The RPO said providing quality and affordable education to police families was a top priority of the department. He added that Faisalabad police were fully

committed to the welfare and higher education of the children of martyrs, Ghazis and serving personnel, and such initiatives would continue in the future.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM), 2025 was held with successfully

 Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2025 of the IEEE Lahore Section was successfully held on 18 December 2026 at Shalimar Hall, Faletti's Hotel, Lahore. IEEE is the world's largest not-for-profit professional technical organization, guided by the motto "Advancing Technology for Humanity." Established in 1968, the IEEE Lahore Section is the oldest IEEE Section in Pakistan.

The AGM was attended by 80 participants from academia, industry, and student communities. The proceedings were formally conducted by Syed Rizwan Naqvi, General Secretary of the IEEE Lahore Section. The annual activity report was presented by Dr. Yasir Saleem, Associate Professor, UET Lahore, Chair IEEE Lahore Section, highlighting the Section's technical programs, professional development initiatives, and volunteer-driven activities. Representatives of various Organizational Units (OUS) shared perform-



mance highlights, where Dr. Aoun presented the activities of the Bahawalpur Subsection, and Dr. Asma Sajid presented the activities of the Faisalabad Subsection. Ms. Asma, Vice Chair IEEE Lahore Section, appreciated the contributions of student volunteers from public and private universities across the Lahore region.

During the AGM, Mr. Kashif Bashir, Chair IEEE ComSoc Lahore Chapter, KICS UET, emphasized the importance of professional chapters in fostering industry-academia collaboration, innovation, and technical excellence through IEEE platforms, whereas Dr. Yasir Saleem highlighted that trust, honesty, and positivity are fundamental elements necessary to achieve excellence in any professional domain.

A key highlight of the AGM was the Awards and Recognitions Ceremony, where the IEEE Lahore Section honored outstanding volunteers, professionals, and organizational units. Awards were presented to Amna

Rahim (Outstanding Student WIE Volunteer), Sadia Riaz (Outstanding Graduate Student WIE Volunteer), Mamoon Rizwan (Outstanding Young Professional), Muhammad Aftab ur Rehman (IEEE Distinguished Professional Service Award), and Kashif Bashir (Outstanding Professional Award). The IEEE APS/CIS

was recognized as Outstanding Technical Chapter, while Fatima Shehzadi and Dr. Hamayun received recognition as Outstanding and Inspiring Technical Chapter Advisors, respectively. Dr. Zaid Ahmad was awarded Outstanding Student Branch Counselor, and UET Narowal was recognized as Outstanding Student Branch.

Additional honors included the IEEE Professional Chapter Volunteer Award to Sumbel Ijaz, IEEE Inspiring Student Volunteer Recognition to Ayesha Siddiqua, Zunaira Saleem, and Amna Rahim, Outstanding Student Volunteer Award to Fahad Bhatti (SSR), IEEE Student Chapter Volunteer Award to Farheen (UET

Narowal), Outstanding Student Technical Chapter Award to UCP, Professional Leadership Excellence to Dr. Aoun Muhammad, Academic Mentorship & Advisory Excellence to Dr. Asjad Amin, and IEEE Emerging Star Awards to Mina Fatima Malik, Muhammad Mubeen Hassan, and Minahil Kamran.

The Cotton Decision Is Being Made Now

January is not an off-season for cotton; it is the moment when its future is being decided. While fields may appear idle, crop choices for the coming season are already being locked in across

Punjab and Sindh. By March, farmers will have moved on mentally and practically to maize, rice, or sugarcane. If cotton is to survive another season, policy intervention must begin now, not when sowing windows are already closing. Pakistan's cotton production has declined sharply over the past decade, falling from nearly 14 million bales in FY2015 to around seven million bales in recent seasons (Ministry of National Food Security & Research, 2025). The result is a paradox: a country whose largest export industry depends on cotton now spends

billions of dollars importing it. This decline is not solely the result of farmer decisions or climate; it reflects years of policy neglect. For growers, cotton has become a high-risk, low-return crop. Input costs have surged certified seed, fertilizers, pesticides and energy are increasingly unaffordable; while market prices remain volatile and largely unprotected.

Unlike competing crops, cotton offers no meaningful minimum support mechanism or comprehensive crop insurance.

Faced with uncertainty, farmers are responding rationally by abandoning cotton. Climate stress has worsened the situation. Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall and increasing humidity in traditional cotton belts have intensified pest pressure, particularly whitefly and pink bollworm.

Excessive pesticide use often exceeding ten sprays per season has raised production costs, damaged beneficial insects and reduced net returns (FAO, 2025). Without effective extension services and integrated pest management, chemical dependence has become the default rather than the exception. Seed governance remains the most critical challenge.

Poor-quality and uncertified seed continues to circulate widely, undermining yields and farmer confidence. Public-sector breeding programmes are underfunded, while private seed markets operate with weak regulation. Without reliable, climate-resilient and

pest-tolerant varieties, cotton cannot compete with alternative crops, regardless of farmer effort. Cotton acreage has also been eroded by weak enforcement of crop zoning.

The unchecked expansion of water-intensive crops into cotton zones has altered microclimates, increased humidity and aggravated pest incidence. This is not merely an agronomic issue; it is a governance failure with economic consequences far beyond the farm.

Solutions are practical and well-known. Seed reform must be a national priority: certified seed systems strictly enforced, public breeding programmes revitalized and proven varieties fast-

tracked through transparent regulatory processes. Farmers also require economic assurance whether through a realistic minimum support price, price insurance, or targeted input subsidies so that cotton becomes a financially viable choice again.

Crop zoning laws must be implemented in letter and spirit. Allowing sugarcane and rice to encroach upon cotton belts is agronomically unsound and economically counterproductive. Pest management strategies must shift from indiscriminate spraying to integrated pest management, supported by functional field-level extension services rather than desk-bound advisories.

Finally, the cotton value chain itself needs correction. Contamination at ginning stages, weak grading standards, and inconsistent quality controls continue to undermine trust in locally

produced cotton (Pakistan Standards & Quality Control Authority, 2025).

Strengthening quality enforcement is essential if domestic cotton is to remain competitive with imports. The cost of inaction is already visible: shrinking acreage, rising imports, and the gradual erosion of a crop that once anchored Pakistan's rural economy. Cotton does not need short-term fixes or seasonal rhetoric. It needs timely decisions, institutional commitment and policy courage.

January still offers a narrow window. If it is missed, cotton's decline will not be a surprise, it will be a choice.

The writer is a Senior Scientist and Researcher working on Crop Development and Agricultural Policy in Pakistan.

Analysis
Mashal Rehman

Spears of victory 2026

Team PAF prior to departure for participation in Multi National Aerial Combat Exercise "Spears of Victory-2026" held at King Abdul Aziz Air Base, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Monday.



Pakistan's F-16 warplanes land in S. Arabia for multinational aerial combat exercise

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistan Air Force (PAF) contingent comprising F-16 Block-52 fighter aircraft, alongside dedicated air and ground crew, has reached King Abdulaziz Air Base, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to participate in the multinational aerial combat Exercise Spears of Victory-2026.

According to an ISPR statement released on Monday,

the exercise is witnessing the participation of fighter jets and combat support elements from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, France, Italy, Greece, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

It offers a robust platform to enhance interoperability, operational synergy, mutual understanding and capacity building among participating Air Forces, particularly in large force employ-

ment, night composite air operations, integrated ISR, and operations in advanced electronic warfare environments.

Through participation in this multinational forum, Pakistan Air Force seeks to

enhance interoperability with partner air forces, and validate its operational preparedness in a contested, technology-driven battlespace.

For this international deployment, PAF fighter

aircraft undertook a non-stop flight from their home base in Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, demonstrating the long-range operational reach and expeditionary capabilities of Pakistan Air Force.

During the conduct of the exercise, PAF pilots flying advanced F-16 Block-52 aircraft equipped with modern avionics and Beyond Visual Range capabilities will be pitched against aircrew of participating air forces operating a wide array of sophisticated combat aircraft.

Participation of Pakistan Air Force contingent in Exercise Spears of Victory-2026 not only reflects PAF's firm commitment to regional and international military cooperation, but also underscores its professional excellence and proven capability to operate effectively in diverse and demanding operational environments alongside leading contemporary Air Forces.

Development of Balochistan top priority of federal government: Senate told

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Monday informed the Senate that the development of Balochistan was a top priority of the federal government, adding that scores of development projects were currently under way in the province.

Responding to points raised by Senator Dinesh Kumar, the minister said the federal government was implementing a wide range of development initiatives in Balochistan, including power supply schemes, road networks, and large-scale infrastructure projects.

He said that a detailed list of



ongoing and upcoming projects could be shared with the House at any time.

He said the prime minister's recent visit to Balochistan was focused on reviewing development projects, noting that the governor, parliamentarians, and the provincial team were present during the visit.

Speaking on the law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said a "dual and contradictory policy" of the provincial government on terrorism was evident.

He said on one side the provincial leaders publicly claimed to stand against terrorism and alongside the state, but on the other hand they simultaneously opposed military operations, creating confusion in efforts to combat militancy.

Sindh Assembly vows judicial probe into Gul Plaza tragedy amid MQM-P walkout

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Sindh Assembly on Monday echoed with debate over the deadly Gul Plaza tragedy, as the government announced its readiness to hold a judicial inquiry while Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) members staged a noisy protest and walked out of the session.

The sitting, presided over by Deputy Speaker Anthony Naveed, began around 45 minutes late. Lawmakers first offered Fateha for those who lost their lives in the incident.

As Opposition Leader Ali Khurshidi sought to speak, an exchange followed over the agenda.

Provincial Minister Saeed Ghani said the government had no objection to discussion on the Gul Plaza tragedy and agreed that all members wishing to speak would be allowed the floor.

However, MQM lawmakers gathered around the rostrum, raised slogans and disrupted proceedings. They later staged a walkout during Saeed Ghani's speech.

In his address, Saeed Ghani described the Gul Plaza incident as the



worst tragedy since the Baldia factory fire, in which 290 people were burnt alive.

He said 70 people had so far been

confirmed missing and that the government wanted to provide immediate

relief to the affected families. He added that the first fire brigade vehicle had reached the site within 10 to 11 minutes.

Local Government Minister Syed

Nasir Hussain Shah said the incident was no less than a major catastrophe.

He told the House that an agreement had been reached with traders to install fire alarm systems in all markets. He also announced that the government was prepared to conduct a judicial inquiry into the tragedy.

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