



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول
ہم سے عثمان بن ابی شیبہ نے بیان کیا کہ ہم سے قاسم بن مالک مثنیٰ نے بیان کیا کہ ہم سے سعید بن عبد الرحمن نے بیان کیا کہ ان سے سائب بن یزید نے بیان کیا کہ نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کے زمانہ میں ایک صالح تمہارے زمانہ کے مد سے ایک مد اور تمہاری کے برابر ہو تا تھا۔ بعد میں عمر بن عبد العزیز کے زمانہ میں اس میں زیادتی کی گئی۔
(صحیح بخاری: حدیث نمبر 6712)
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Afghanistan embassy offers condolences over Gul Plaza fire in Karachi

The Embassy of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in Islamabad on Thursday expressed deep sorrow and condolences over the tragic fire incident that occurred at Gul Plaza in Karachi, resulting in the loss of precious human lives and injuries to several others.



Mustafa Kamal calls for Karachi to be placed under federal control, demands repeal of 18th Amendment

Addressing a press conference in Karachi, Mustafa Kamal said the entire city is questioning who the state has handed Karachi over to and why no meaningful action is being taken. He said the people of Karachi are looking towards the state to step forward and listen to them, alleging that the city's population is being subjected to systematic neglect and suffering.

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Signing Ceremony

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif view of debris of the demolished Chambers of Lawyers at F-8 Football ground after the Supreme Court ultimatum, which was till 01-05-2021, as the Workers of Anti encroachments.



Photo: Online

Photo: Online

PM Shehbaz, Field Marshal share pleasant moments with Turkish FM Fidan



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar has shared a video of pleasant moments between Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Asim Munir and Turkish Foreign Minister.

Deputy Prime Minister released a video in his X message. After concluding my numerous official engage-

ments in Davos, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and DPM Ishaq Dar shared pleasant moments before departing Davos for home.

The video goes on viral on social media as people of both countries hailed cordial relations between Pakistan and Türkiye.

Pakistan signs 'Board of Peace' charter to support Gaza peace

Spokesman Report

DAVOS: Pakistan on Thursday signed the charter of the Board of Peace as part of its ongoing efforts to support the implementation of the Gaza Peace Plan.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif signed the document along with other world leaders including those from Qatar, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan Argen-

tina, Kosovo, Paraguay, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Bulgaria and others.

President of the United States Donald Trump was the first to sign the charter who later witnessed the ceremony held on the sidelines of the 56th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum held here.

Pakistan had received the invitation from President Trump to join the Board which was later accepted.

Pakistan was among the eight Muslim states who announced to be part of the body on Wednesday which included Arab Republic of Egypt, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, the Republic of Indonesia, the Republic of Türkiye, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the State of Qatar.

It was announced that each country would sign the joining documents according to its

respective relevant legal and other necessary procedures, including Egypt, Pakistan, and the UAE, that have already announced to join.

Pakistan had expressed the hope that with the creation of this framework, concrete steps would be taken towards the implementation of a permanent ceasefire, further scaling up of humanitarian aid for the Palestinians, as well as reconstruction of Gaza.

Continued on Page 7

DPM Dar, Thai FM reaffirm commitment to expand bilateral cooperation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a meeting with Foreign Minis-

ter of Thailand Sihasak Phuangketkeow on the sidelines of the 56th annual meetings of World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

The two ministers reviewed

Pakistan-Thailand bilateral relations, and reaffirmed their commitment to expand cooperation across diverse domains, including economic, trade, investment and agriculture, a press release issued



by the Foreign Office Spokesperson said on Thursday.

During the meeting, they also discussed regional and interna-

tional developments.

Both sides also congratulated each other over 75 years of establishment of diplomatic relations.

ECO ministerial meeting concludes in Islamabad



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The tenth two-day Ministerial Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization on Disaster Risk Reduction concluded in Islamabad today.

The meeting concluded with reaffirming the commitment by member states to strengthen regional cooperation, disaster resilience and coordinated action against disasters.

According to the National Disaster Management Authority, these commitments, aligned with the Izmir Treaty, ECO Vision

2025, and the Sendai Framework, were incorporated into the Islamabad Declaration 2025.

Speaking on the occasion, the NDMA Chairman Lt General Inam Haider Malik said that Islamabad Declaration is a collective resolve to safeguard communities of ECO countries against the growing threats of disasters.

The Chairman said that Pakistan stands ready to share its expertise and advanced capabilities through the National Emergencies Operation Center to strengthen ECO's regional preparedness and resilience.

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Sardar Attique insists peaceful Kashmir resolution vital for South Asian security

 Spokesman Report

SIALKOT: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, has said that the Kashmir issue is not merely a border dispute but a matter of life and death for more than two crore people. A peaceful, political and negotiated resolution of the Kashmir issue is essential for a secure future of South Asia. No power in the world can improve Pakistan-India relations by sidelining the Kashmir freedom movement. He emphasized that the sacred blood of six hundred thousand Kashmiris cannot go in vain, as it is against the law of nature.

He expressed these views while addressing the District Bar Association Sialkot on their invitation. He stated that the State of Jammu and Kashmir is an indivisible entity and that the refugees of Jammu and Kashmir and the Kashmiri diaspora are as much a part of the state as those residing within its territory. He highlighted the historic bond of "Muhajir and Ansar," established 1,500 years ago in Madinah, and said that Muslims cannot turn away from this sacred



tradition. Earlier, President District Bar Sialkot, Saeed Ahmed Bhalli Advocate, and Secretary Bar, Chaudhry Shehbaz Shams Advocate, warmly welcomed Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan and paid rich tribute to his political consistency and principled stance. They termed Mujahid-e-Awal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, his family and the Muslim Conference as invaluable assets of the Kashmir freedom movement.

At the end of the ceremony, the Bar Association presented a commemorative shield to the President Muslim

Conference. Former President Muslim Conference Mirza Muhammad Shafiq Jaral Advocate, renowned human rights activist Muhammad Ejaz Noori, and President Muslim Conference Punjab, Waheed-ul-Haq Hashmi Advocate, were also present on the occasion.

High-level meeting

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Hanif Abbasi's High-level meeting with Kazakhstan Ambassador highlights Pakistan Railways' mega project under the PM's Regional Connectivity Vision — a milestone for the entire region on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Jammu & Kashmir Action Committee Vows Continued Struggle for Rights, Condemns Accord Violations

 Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Core Committee of the Jammu & Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JKJAAC) held its meeting today, 21 January 2026, at Muzaffarabad, and unanimously adopted the following resolutions:

The JKJAAC reaffirms its firm commitment to continue its struggle with full determination and conviction for the protection of the fundamental rights of the people of Azad Jammu & Kashmir and for safeguarding its natural resources. It clearly states that the future of the State of Jammu & Kashmir cannot be decided without the free and independent will of its people. As an interim arrangement, any attempt to alter the status or identity of Azad Jammu & Kashmir without



the consent of its inhabitants will be strongly resisted. The Committee strongly condemns the continuous violations of the 4 October 2025 Agreement by the Government of Pakistan and the

Government of Azad Jammu & Kashmir, and declares these violations an attempt to once again force the people of Azad Jammu & Kashmir into severe protest by trampling upon their fundamental rights and natural resources under the present democratic system.

The JKJAAC expresses its dissatisfaction over the deviation of the ruling elite from the objectives of the Freedom Movement that led to the establishment of the Provisional Government of the State of Jammu & Kashmir on 24 October 1947. It resolves to struggle for the restoration of Azad Jammu & Kashmir as the base camp of the Freedom Movement, so that the future of the State of Jammu & Kashmir may be decided through the free will of its people.

University of Kashmir Campus Adopts Comprehensive Strategy to End Recurring Campus Turmoil

 Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: A landmark and decisive joint meeting was held at the University of Kashmir, Chhattar Aikhlash Campus to find permanent and sustainable solutions to the recurring law and order issues, protests, administrative irregularities and security concerns. The meeting was attended by public representatives, district administration, government officials and university authorities, who collectively agreed upon a comprehensive strategy to restore peace, strengthen administration and improve the academic environment of the campus.

The meeting was chaired by former Acting Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Raja Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, while the Acting President of the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Chaudhry Latif Akbar, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. On his arrival, he was accorded a warm and enthusiastic welcome by the participants with floral garlands.

A large number of prominent political, social and community figures participated in the meeting, reflecting strong public support and collective resolve for the stabilization and development of the campus.

By mutual consultation, a 23-member Coordination Committee was constituted to ensure effective coordination among King Abdullah University, Neelum Jhelum Hydropower Project and Cadet College Chhattar Aikhlash, and to monitor the implementation of the decisions taken in the meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants expressed strong optimism that the formation of the Coordination Committee and implementation of the 19-point agenda would lead to a permanent resolution of the issues faced by the University of Kashmir Chhattar Aikhlash Campus and would put the area on the path of educational, social and administrative stability. The meeting concluded with a collective prayer led by Sahibzada Kokab Saleem Chishti.

Secretary IT visits PID Complex, praises digital transformation efforts



 Abdul Majeed Tahir


MUZAFFARABAD: Secretary Information and Information Technology, Muhammad Rashid Hanif, visited the PID Complex today. On this occasion, Director Public Relations, Raja Amjad Hussain Minhas, gave him a detailed tour of various sections of the PID Complex and briefed him on the overall performance of the department.

The Secretary inspected the Digital Media Section, Central News Room, Digital Studio, Archives Section, Advertisement Section, and the Declaration Branch. He obtained detailed information from the concerned officers regarding the working, functions, and ongoing activities of each section.

On the occasion, Director Social and Digital Media Muhammad Bashir Mirza, Deputy Director Ms. Qurratul Ain Shabbir, Information Officers Raja Muhammad Sohail Khan, Syed Asif Hussain Naqvi, Muhammad Hanif Khawaja, Khizar Hayat, Raja Abdul Basit, Programmer Shamim Anjum Aziz, Advertising Officer Saghir Ahmed, Admin Officer Faheem Kiani, Sajid Nazir, Muhammad Jamil Awan, along with other officers and staff members, were also present.

While addressing the gathering, Secretary Information and IT Muhammad Rashid Hanif stated that the Information Department is playing a vital role as a strong bridge between the government and the public. He said that the present era is dominated by digital media and modern information technology, where the timely, authentic, and responsible dissemination of information has become indispensable.

Five killed in family shooting incident in Attock

 Raaza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Five people, including the attacker, were killed in a tragic shooting incident triggered by a domestic dispute in a village of Hassanabdal tehsil, police said on Thursday.

The incident took place in Pand Mehri village, where a man allegedly entered his in-laws' house and opened fire following a family disagreement. Those killed included his parents-in-law, a son, a daughter, and the shooter himself.

According to police, the suspect fired indiscriminately during the dispute and later turned the weapon on himself. Two of the victims were critically injured and rushed to a hospital, where they later died from their injuries.

Local police arrived at the scene shortly after the incident, cordoned off the area, and launched an initial investigation. The bodies were shifted to the hospital for medico-legal procedures.

Police officials said further investigations are underway to determine the exact circumstances and motive behind the incident.

Crisis at Women University Multan: Conflicting Orders Halt Crucial Syndicate Meeting

 Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: A serious legal and administrative impasse has emerged at the Women University Multan (WUM) after conflicting court orders, office directives and government correspondence led to the indefinite postponement of the university's 45th Syndicate meeting, despite clear instructions from the Lahore High Court (LHC) Multan Bench.

The controversy stems from an office order issued by the Vice Chancellor of WUM on November 14, 2025, suspending the payment of advance and premature increments to various university employees. The order cited

pending audit paras and severe financial constraints, invoking Sections 12(3) and 12(3-A) of the Women University Multan Act, 2010. It also directed recovery of amounts already paid, warning of compulsory recovery procedures in case of non-compliance.

Affected faculty members and officers challenged the decision before the Lahore High Court. In separate judgments — Writ Petition No. 14942/2025 dated December 9, 2025, and Writ Petition No. 15398/2025 (Sarah Shehbaz vs Women University Multan) dated December 18, 2025 — the court categorically ordered that the matter of halted increments be placed before the university's Syndicate for

decision strictly in accordance with the law and without delay.

In compliance, the university administration issued a notification on December 5, 2025, scheduling the 45th Syndicate meeting for December 11, 2025. However, on the same day, the Higher Education Department (HED), Government of Punjab, issued a letter to the Vice Chancellor, citing a June 28, 2024 notification of the Governor/Chancellor, and directed that the meeting be deferred.

The HED letter advised that no further Syndicate or Senate meetings be held during the tenure of an interim or acting Vice Chancellor, except in cases of extreme urgency

with a limited agenda, and that no long-term policy or financial decisions be taken without prior approval of the department.

Legal experts, however, argue that the proposed Syndicate meeting did not involve new policy or discretionary financial decisions, but was convened solely to comply with binding judicial orders, making it both urgent and unavoidable. They maintain that under the university's governing law, an interim Vice Chancellor enjoys the same statutory powers as a regular appointee, particularly when court directives are involved.

On January 9, 2025, the Vice Chancellor formally wrote to the HED's

Section Officer, detailing the audit objections, the contested office order, the LHC judgments and the necessity of convening the Syndicate meeting. Approval from the Governor/Chancellor was sought, but no response has been received so far.

Complicating matters further, the Higher Education Department had earlier issued a notification dated July 25, 2025, stating that the Governor/Chancellor had allowed Prof Dr Kulsoom Paracha, Pro Vice Chancellor, to perform day-to-day administrative functions of WUM under Section 11(9) of the Women University Multan Act, 2010, with effect from June 22, 2025. Observers question

how objections can now be raised over administrative authority granted under the same statutory framework.

Academic and legal circles have expressed concern that continued administrative silence and procedural hurdles are not only undermining the spirit of the High Court's orders but are also causing severe financial and psychological distress to university staff. They have urged the Higher Education Department to take an immediate, clear and constitutionally sound position to ensure prompt compliance with judicial directives and to prevent prolonged administrative paralysis at Women University Multan.

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SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr5:43 am
Zohr12:19 pm
Asr3:51 pm
Maghrib5:29 pm
Isha6:56 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police 9266044
Motorway Police 9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo 9280979
Railway Inquiry117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi5555489
CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH561111
MH561116
MH561116
Cantt Hospital9270907-11
DHQ5556311-4
RGH9290301-7
Holy Family9290322-7
PIMS9261170-79
Polyclinic9218300-09
Shifa International4603666

DEPARTMENTS

CDA 9221334-43
CDA 9208301-04
Met Office 9250360-6
RDA 5555864
TMA 5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan
Corporation 9209224
Potohar Town 9209224
Rawal Town 5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service
E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8 9203883

Meeting of District Price Control Committee Attack

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: A meeting of the District Price Control Committee Attack was held at the Deputy Commissioner Office Attock under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Attock, Anil Saeed. Members of the Price Control Committee, representatives of traders' associations, consumer organizations, and civil society also attended the meeting.

Prices of sugar and wheat flour will be applicable as fixed by the Provincial Government, while prices of banaspati ghee may be charged according to the printed price on the pack.

The Deputy Commissioner Attock has further directed that no shopkeeper is allowed to charge more than the notified rates. Strict legal action will be taken against profiteers under the Price Control Act, 2024.

All shopkeepers are strictly directed to display the rate list prominently and to regularly declare their stock. In case of hoarding, the concerned dealer/shopkeeper will face strict legal action.

Slaughtering of animals outside approved slaughterhouses is prohibited, and meat from slaughtered animals must bear the official stamp of the concerned authority.

The above orders shall come into force with immediate effect within the limits of District Attock and shall remain effective until further orders.

Sadia Rashid hails Hakim Mohammed Said as paragon of simplicity and service at Hamdard Assembly

Bureau Report

KARACHI: President of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, Ms. Sadia Rashid, has said that Shaheed-e-Pakistan Hakim Mohammed Said (RA) is a shining example of knowledge, research, humanitarian service and high moral character in the history of Pakistan. Despite being a great physician, renowned scholar and holding prestigious positions such as Federal Minister for Health and Governor of Sindh, he always lived a life of simplicity and humility.

She expressed these views while addressing the Hamdard Naunehal Assembly organized by Hamdard Foundation Pakistan on January 22, 2026, at Bait-ul-Hikmah Auditorium, Madinat-al-Hikmah.

The theme of the assembly was "Simplicity, Contentment and Frugality — Lessons from the Life of Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said."

Ms. Sadia Rashid said that although Allah Almighty blessed Hakim Mohammed Said with honor, fame



and resources, he never adopted extravagance or show. His simple lifestyle reflected his belief that simplicity elevates a person, while display and wastefulness lead to stress and dissatisfaction. She advised children to practice contentment, gratitude and patience,

emphasizing that simplicity does not mean giving up hard work but attaining inner peace along with effort.

The chief guest, Mr. Salman Ahmed Siddiqui, Deputy General Manager (Media and PR) Sui Southern Gas Company Ltd. said that Hakim

Mohammed Said was a universal personality of the subcontinent who devoted his life to medicine, knowledge, research and service to humanity.

The event featured speeches by young students including Maryam Fatima, Jaisha Ahmer and Ayesha Fawad.

The session began with the recitation of the Holy Qur'an by Muhammad Maaz Ali and Na'at by Muhammad Hadi. Students also presented tableaux, skits and national songs. A large number of students, teachers, parents and distinguished guests attended the ceremony.

Traffic jam

ISLAMABAD: Motorists are on their way at Expressway during rainfall in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Business community demands release of Yasin Malik and all innocent Kashmiri prisoners

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Under the auspices of the Rawalpindi Restaurants, Caterers, Sweets and Bakers Association, a peaceful protest was held to demand the release of prominent Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik and to express solidarity with his wife Mashaal Malik and the people of Occupied Kashmir. A large number of traders, organizational representatives, and citizens participated. Association President Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry and Mumtaz Ahmed warmly welcomed Mashaal Malik, her sister Sabeen Malik, and Yasin Malik's daughter Razia Sultana. Addressing the gathering, Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry said that Yasin Malik devoted his entire life to the Kashmir cause and that the business community and the people of Pakistan stand firmly with Mashaal Malik. Chairman Mumtaz Ahmed paid tribute to Mashaal Malik's sacrifices and resilience, expressing complete solidarity with the Kashmiri people, particularly Razia Sultana. Malik Sohail Awan, President of



Commercial Market Rawalpindi, stated that the struggle of Yasin Malik, Mashaal Malik, and the Kashmiri people will never be forgotten. Usman Shooqat President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, urged international organizations to ensure the release of Yasin Malik and all Kashmiri prisoners and to pursue a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue.

In her address, Mashaal Malik thanked the business community and emphasized national unity, calling for a strong and clear policy on Kashmir and collective efforts at the global level. She conveyed a message from Yasin Malik from Bihar Jail, stating that he salutes the spirit of the Kashmiri and Pakistani people and warned that his martyrdom would spark wider resistance.

City School and the University of Strathclyde Sign MoU



News Desk

LAHORE: The City School has formally signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Strathclyde, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to academic excellence, professional development, and global collaboration in education.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Farzana, Group Chairperson of The City School, said "This collaboration with the University of Strathclyde represents an important step in strengthening our academic framework through global partnerships. By working closely with an internationally renowned institution, we aim to enrich teaching practices and create meaningful learning experiences for our educators and students alike."

Representing the University of Strathclyde, Dr David Roxburgh, the Deputy Head of the Strathclyde Institute of Education (SIOE), highlighted the value of the collaboration, stating:

The signing of this MoU reinforces The City School's ongoing efforts to build meaningful international partnerships that support its mission of delivering progressive education aligned with the best global standards.

Business has come to a standstill in eight markets of Faisalabad: Khawaja Shahid

Abdul Majid

FAISAL-
ABAD: President of Anjuman Tajran City Registered Faisalabad and Patron-in-Chief of Central Organization of Traders Pakistan Khawaja Shahid Razzak Sikka has said



that more than 100 textile units have closed in the country during the last two years. Faisalabad's textile industry has reached the brink of collapse. According to another estimate, a total of 187 textile mills have closed, due to which at least two lakh people have become unemployed. Government business and industry policies are not being made in favor of the Pakistani economy at all. If we look at the eight markets of Faisalabad, all businesses have come to a standstill in the name of beautification. While Asia's largest silk market is also on the verge of collapse. The government should come to its senses and sit down with businessmen and industrialists to discuss all these sectors so that the Pakistani economy and businessmen and industrialists can be strengthened.

SM Group Chairman Lauds Leadership of Multan High Court Bar Association

Special Correspondent

MULTAN: Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum, Chairman of SM Group of Industries and member of the National Export Development and Board of Investment, met with Muhammad Azhar Khan Mughal, President of the Multan High Court Bar Association, and former president Malik Sajjad Haider Metla, in a meeting aimed at discussing the development and welfare of the Multan Bar.

The meeting was also attended by Executive Members Bilal Abrar Arain, Imtiaz Marali,

Shehzad Metla, and Hamza Khan. During the discussion, the delegation focused on mutual collaboration, the growth of the Bar, and addressing issues faced by lawyers in Multan.

Following a visit to the Bar, Zulfiqar Ali Anjum praised President Muhammad Azhar Khan Mughal and former President Malik Sajjad Haider Metla for their efforts in making the Multan Bar one of the most exemplary bars in Pakistan and for prioritizing the resolution of lawyers' issues.

He emphasized that leadership like theirs is needed across all bars in the country and

assured full support for initiatives promoting the welfare and development of the Multan High Court Bar and its members.

Speaking on the occasion, President Muhammad Azhar Khan Mughal and former President Malik Sajjad Haider Metla expressed gratitude for the trust placed in them by the lawyers who elected them.

They said that despite the challenges of Bar funding, they successfully mobilized resources to ensure the welfare and facilities of the lawyers, working tirelessly day and night to achieve these goals.



Group Chairman/Chief Editor: Almass Ayoub Sabir
Vice Chairman: Asim Nazir Ahmad
Editor: Naveed Ahmad Khan
Head Editorial Advisory Board: Amjad Mehmood
Bureau Chief Karachi: Khurram Jaffrani
(jaffrani@adpluse.pk)
Syed Afraz Ali Nazish
(afrazalishah@gmail.com)
Bureau Chief Lahore: AIMS Building, Street No. 4, H-8/1, Islamabad.
spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
Phone: +92 51 2227123,
WhatsApp +92 346 5008408
Karachi office: A111, Block C, Gulsha-e-Jamal, PRECHS,
Karachi Phone:021-33399390
Email: spokesmankarachi@gmail.com
Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.
spokesmanlahore@gmail.com
Daily The Spokesman available only on annual subscription

January: A Month of Tragedy for Kashmir

January should have been a month of hope for the people of Kashmir. It was in January 5, 1949 when the United Nations established that the final status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir shall be determined in accordance with the will of the people, expressed through a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the United Nations.

And again in January 24, 1957 the United Nations Security Council reaffirmed that any action that (Kashmir) assembly may have taken or might attempt to take to determine the future shape and affiliation of the entire State or any part thereof, or action by the parties concerned in support of any such action by the assembly, would not constitute a disposition of the State in accordance with the above principle.”

Yet, for Kashmiris, January has instead become a month of mourning—a recurring reminder of unfulfilled promises and unpunished crimes. which establishes that the final status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir shall be determined in accordance with the will of the people, expressed through a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the United Nations,

The most catastrophic of these tragedies occurred on January 21, 1990, at Gawkadal Bridge in Srinagar. On that day, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) opened fire on peaceful demonstrators protesting the imposition of Governor’s Rule under Jagmohan—widely remembered by Kashmiris as the “Butcher of Kashmir.” Hundreds of unarmed protesters were trapped on the bridge as security forces cordoned it off from both sides and fired indiscriminately. With no avenue of escape, many people jumped into the icy waters of the Jhelum River.

Women, children, students, and passersby were among the dead. At least 50 civilians were killed, though eye-witnesses and survivors believe the actual toll was much higher. No independent judicial inquiry was ever conducted. No official was held criminally accountable. The case was quietly closed, records were destroyed, and justice was denied to the victims. This is the lived reality of Kashmir.

The Daily Kashmir Times quoted Manohar Lal, a Kashmiri Pandit residing near the Gawkadal area, who recalled: “Everyone was wailing, and blood was all around.” He added that many of those who sustained bullet injuries cried out in agony, and some even died in boats while being transported to hospitals. “I participated in the demonstration,” he said, “to register my silent protest against what happened before my eyes.”

The Hollow Case for “Genocide” and the Dangerous Drive for Partition: How New Delhi Is Balkanising Kashmir

For nearly four decades the tragedy of 1990 has been repeatedly reframed as a singular, sanitized story: the “genocide” of Kashmiri Pandits and their forever-exile. That narrative—now amplified by some Pandit organisations and useful to political actors in New Delhi—has obfuscated a far more complicated reality. What unfolded in the Valley was political collapse, communal and political violence, and the securitisation of an unresolved international dispute. To treat the 1990 exodus as a standalone moral cudgel is to ignore how state action and strategic administration have since reshaped Kashmir’s political geography.

Dr Ajay Charango’s demand for a “Hindu Kashmir” union territory is not an isolated rhetorical flourish; it sits inside a pattern of policy choices that together indicate a deliberate project of territorial and demographic redesign. Since August 2019, New Delhi has used abrogation of Article 370, bifurcation into Union Territories, new domicile rules, and delimitation to change who votes, who works, and who owns land in occupied Jammu & Kashmir. These administrative levers are not neutral reforms: they are instruments that make communal engineering practicable.

Moreover, the disputed nature of Kashmir matters. The princely accession of 1947, the ensuing hostilities, and the UN Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) and United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions framed Kashmir as an international dispute and envisaged a plebiscite to determine its future.

Those resolutions remain part of the legal and political context that India repeatedly refuses to acknowledge in practice. International law and the unfinished UN processes cannot be wished away by unilateral administrative redesign. If New Delhi persists in converting international dispute into domestic administrative fiat, it will only deepen grievance and delegitimise any claim to democratic normalisation.

What is required is a different politics: one that refuses both communal partition and securitised paternalism. First, any discussion about state reorganisation must begin with transparent, independent audits—of land transfers, domicile lists, recruitment patterns and development spending—subject to public scrutiny and judicial review. Second, domicile and land laws should be recalibrated to protect long-term residents of all communities and to prevent speculative or politically motivated settlement. Third, restoration of meaningful statehood must come with enforceable guarantees: demilitarisation timelines, independent human-rights oversight, guarantees against demographic engineering, robust minority protections and the right to return to Kashmir Muslims.

Crucially, the process must be internationally witnessed and UNSC-backed. A credible, durable settlement cannot be negotiated behind closed doors while nearly a million troops and an altered institutional architecture determine outcomes. A UNSC-supported framework would prioritise phased demilitarisation, an impartial truth-and-reconciliation mechanism to investi-

gate all atrocities, interim autonomy with inclusive power-sharing, and a final-status mechanism that respects the right of self-determination envisaged in UNCIP and UNSC resolutions. This is not a call for external imposition; it is a plea for international guarantees that can make local reconciliation possible.

Healing, not partition, must be the guiding principle. Pandits should be able to return to their ancestral homes as equal citizens, not as occupants of fortified enclaves. Muslims, Sikhs, Dogras and others must see their rights protected and their ancestral agency restored. The international character of the dispute is inconvenient for those who prefer administrative fixes; yet it remains the only realistic bulwark against the slow institutionalisation of segregation.

New Delhi must either choose democratic inclusion or continue down the road of partition by policy. The former requires courage: to admit past mistakes, to invite impartial scrutiny, to dismantle the structures that encourage communal engineering. The latter promises only instability, international reproach, and a fractured polity where peace is always provisional.

Kashmir’s future should not be written in the language of fear, grievance-shopping and demographic tactics. It deserves a democratic, UNSC-backed process that honours legal obligations, protects plural citizenship, and returns agency to its people. Anything less risks turning a region of shared histories into a map of permanent divisions.

Altaj Hussain Wani is Chairman, Kashmir Institute of International Relations. He can be reached at chairman@kiir.org and saleemwani@hotmail.com. X: @sultan1913

Trump’s Bid for Greenland at Davos

Davos, the frostbitten alpine enclave carved into Switzerland’s high mountains, has long been more than a resort town. Each winter, it becomes a political and economic marketplace where presidents, CEOs, scholars, and strategists trade contracts, alliances, and narratives of power. Temperatures plunge far below freezing, yet inside the halls of the World Economic Forum, the climate of international relations often burns far hotter than the Alpine air outside.

This year, the world’s attention did not rest on climate pledges or investment forecasts. It centered on the arrival of U. S. President Donald Trump, whose speech was anticipated less as an economic update and more as a declaration of how Washington now intends to shape the global order.

Trump opened with triumph. He portrayed the United States as an economy in resurgence—investment surging, jobs expanding, inflation easing, and industrial capacity returning home. These claims are broadly aligned with recent U.S. data showing strong capital inflows into technology, defense, and energy sectors, alongside continued labor market resilience. But the applause quickly faded as Trump pivoted from domestic success to global power.

Denmark’s government has long and consistently rejected any notion of transferring Greenland. Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has publicly called the idea “absurd,” emphasizing that Greenland is not an object of transaction but a self-governing territory whose future lies in the hands of its people. Greenland’s own leadership has echoed this position, welcoming cooperation and investment, but insisting that sovereignty is non-negotiable.

French President Emmanuel Macron

has framed the Arctic question as part of a wider European responsibility. He has warned against turning the polar region into a theater of militarization and great-power rivalry, arguing that Europe must defend both its territory and its principles through collective security, not through the logic of dominance.

Germany’s chancellor has taken a similar stance, stressing that the stability of the international system depends on respect for borders, multilateral institutions, and the rule-based order that emerged from the wreckage of the twentieth century. Berlin’s Arctic policy, like much of Europe’s, emphasizes environmental protection, scientific cooperation, and governance through international frameworks rather than unilateral security architecture.

Canada, placed directly under Trump’s proposed “dome,” found itself in an especially delicate position. Ottawa has repeatedly affirmed that Arctic defense must be managed through NATO, NORAD, and international law, not through territorial realignment. Canadian officials have consistently stated that security in the North is a shared responsibility among circumpolar nations, not a justification for redrawing sovereignty.

Even Russia, often cast as the primary strategic rival in the polar north, has responded with measured caution. While Moscow continues to expand its Arctic military and infrastructure footprint, its official statements warn against turning the region into a flashpoint for confrontation, arguing instead for stability through treaties and regional cooperation.

Trump’s response to this resistance was neither conciliatory nor ambiguous. He described American military power

in sweeping terms, emphasizing precision, reach, and technological dominance. He portrayed the U. S. defense system as unmatched—capable of neutralizing adversaries’ air defenses, striking targets across continents, and shaping the battlefield before rivals can respond. The tone was not diplomatic. It was declarative.

Security, in this vision, does not flow from international law or collective institutions. It flows from capability. His criticism extended to the very architecture of global governance. He questioned the effectiveness of the United Nations, arguing that it has failed to prevent wars or enforce peace, and suggested that Washington would increasingly disengage from international bodies that do not align with U. S. strategic priorities. This echoed earlier American withdrawals from multilateral agreements and institutions, reinforcing the image of a superpower stepping away from the system it once helped build.

Inside Davos, the contrast could not have been sharper. European leaders spoke of interdependence, shared security, and the dangers of a world governed by raw power rather than negotiated norms. Policy analysts warned that transforming sovereignty into a strategic variable—something to be adjusted for defense planning—could unravel decades of diplomatic precedent.

Beyond the speeches and symbolism, the implications run deep. If security becomes transactional—granted in exchange for alignment rather than guaranteed by law—then smaller and middle powers face a narrowing set of choices. They can align themselves with a dominant power’s strategic architecture, or they

can seek protection through alternative coalitions, regional defense pacts, and diversified economic networks.

This shift is already visible. Countries across Europe, Asia, and the Global South are exploring ways to reduce reliance on single markets, single currencies, and single security patrons. New trade corridors, regional financial arrangements, and defense dialogues reflect a world quietly preparing for a future where power is more fragmented and competition more explicit.

Trump’s Davos address suggested that the post-Cold War era of institutional globalism may be giving way to a new age of fortified blocs—where defense systems, trade networks, and political alliances align along hard lines of strategic interest rather than shared ideals.

The world now stands at a crossroads. One path leads toward renewed commitment to multilateralism, where power is constrained by law and cooperation tempers rivalry. The other points toward a landscape of competing spheres of influence, where technological dominance and military reach define who sets the terms of global order.

Davos, once a forum for consensus, has become a stage for confrontation. And as snow continues to fall on the Alpine peaks, the chill spreading across international relations may prove far more enduring than the winter cold. The question now confronting the world is no longer whether a new order is emerging—but whether it will be shaped by dialogue, or by the silent geometry of missile shields drawn across the sky.

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



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

Tariff Wars and Territorial Fantasies: How Economic Coercion Is Replacing American Diplomacy

For generations, American leadership rested on a simple but powerful idea: strength gains legitimacy when it is exercised with restraint. The United States did not merely dominate the postwar world—it helped organize it. Alliances, trade systems, and security guarantees were built not as favors to others, but as pillars of American prosperity and global stability.

That tradition is now under stress.

Donald Trump’s foreign policy instincts—particularly his rhetoric about Greenland and his repeated use of tariffs against allies—signal a profound shift in how power is understood and applied. To many of America’s closest partners, these moves suggest that diplomacy is being replaced by coercion, and cooperation by pressure.

But Greenland was not an isolated incident. It was part of a broader pattern.

That same mindset has shaped Trump’s approach to trade, particularly his reliance on tariffs as a primary diplomatic tool. Tariffs, in theory, are economic instruments. In practice, when deployed aggressively against allies, they function as a form of economic warfare—meant not to negotiate mutual benefit, but to compel submission.

This is a dangerous message. Economic pressure has consequences beyond balance sheets. It reshapes political behavior. Faced with uncertainty about American reliability, allies begin to hedge. They diversify supply chains, pursue alternative markets, and explore security arrangements that reduce dependence on Washington. Over time, this weakens not just transatlantic ties, but America’s strategic influence itself. Supporters of aggressive tariff policies often

argue that toughness restores respect. History suggests the opposite. Power used without predictability breeds caution, not loyalty. Respect earned through partnership endures longer than compliance extracted through fear.

For American voters, this should not be a distant concern.

The international system that Trump disparages was not imposed on the United States—it was shaped by it. Open trade, stable alliances, and shared norms created decades of economic growth and relative peace. Undermining these structures in pursuit of short-term leverage risks long-term strategic loss.

Tariff wars do not occur in isolation. They escalate. Retaliation invites counter-retaliation. Markets react, investment slows, and political trust erodes. What begins as a negotiation tactic can easily become a cycle of economic hostility that damages all sides, including American workers and consumers.

The choice facing the United States is not between strength and weakness. It is between leadership and dominance. Leadership listens, negotiates, and persuades. Dominance demands, threatens, and punishes.

America has always been strongest when it chose the former.

Europe’s message is not anti-American. It is cautionary. Allies are signaling that the language of pressure—whether through tariffs or territorial insinuations—pushes the world toward fragmentation and instability. In an era already marked by rising authoritarianism and global uncertainty, that is a risk no responsible power should welcome.

The question is whether Americans will hear that warning in time.

ISSI hosts delegation of Pakistan Academy of Letters’ Writers Residency Program

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a delegation from the Pakistan Academy of Letters under its ‘Writers Residency Program’ on 22 January 2026. The visit brought together writers, poets, and scholars from across Pakistan for an exchange of views aimed at promoting intellectual dialogue on key national, regional, and global issues. The delegation was led by Dr. Bibi Ameena, Deputy Director, Pakistan Academy of Letters. The interaction reflected a shared commitment to strengthening engagement between research and literary communities to deepen understanding of Pakistan’s evolving internal and external challenges.

Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC), ISSI, welcomed the delegation and briefed them on ISSI’s mandate, organizational structure, and major research areas. He highlighted the ISSI’s pivotal role in producing policy-oriented research on strategic affairs, foreign policy, political economy and non-traditional security challenges. Dr. Talat Shabbir also shared perspectives on contemporary international developments, including the transition towards a



multipolar global order and its implications for regional stability and Pakistan’s foreign policy. The discussion, followed by an interactive exchange of ideas, underscored the importance

of inclusive development, informed policymaking and sustained research collaboration, while also emphasizing the potential for future cooperation between ISSI and the Pakistan

Academy of Letters.

The event concluded with the presentation of ISSI memento and Institute’s recent publications to Dr. Bibi Ameena and a group photograph.

Mobilink Bank achieves ISO 27001 certification for its robust Information Security System

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan’s leading digital microfinance bank, Mobilink Bank, has achieved ISO/IEC 27001:2022 certification, which is a globally recognized standard for Information Security Management Systems (ISMS) awarded to organizations that meet international standards for data security. The achievement demonstrates the strength of Mobilink Bank’s information security governance, its systematic approach to managing cyber risks, and protecting customer data through internationally recognized best practices.

tices.

Globally, the ISO/IEC 27001:2022 is widely regarded as the gold standard for establishing, implementing, maintaining, and continually improving an ISMS. The certification provides a structured, risk-based framework to safeguard information assets against evolving threats and ensures the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of data while enabling secure and resilient operations. Mobilink Bank’s certification demonstrates a robust, independently validated approach to information security across its digital banking ecosystem.

This milestone aligns with Mobilink Bank’s customer-first focus and commitment to service innovation by embedding global standards into core operations. It continues to enhance the security and reliability of its platforms to reinforce customer confidence and support wider adoption of digital banking services.

Commenting on the achievement, Mustapha Lotia, Chief Information Security Officer at Mobilink Bank said, “This certification strengthens our commitment to safeguarding customer information, strengthening cyber resilience, and embedding global

best practices in information security across our operations. Our customers place immense trust in us with their data, and this certification reinforces our responsibility to protect that trust while continuing to deliver innovative, secure, and reliable digital banking services across Pakistan.”

The ISO/IEC 27001:2022 certification supports Mobilink Bank’s objective to establish, implement, and continually improve a robust ISMS through effective governance, risk management, and security controls to safeguard information assets and enable secure, resilient, and trusted banking services.

Group Photo with ASEAN Ambassadors

Islamabad: Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif in a group photo with ASEAN Ambassadors on Thursday.



Photo: PID

NLC Dry Port Sost Ensures Uninterrupted Trade for 2nd Consecutive Year

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: As a shining example of national service and professional excellence, the National Logistics Corporation (NLC) is ensuring all-weather trade operations through the Khunjerab Pass for the 2nd consecutive year reaffirming its commitment to uninterrupted trade with China and Central Asia.

Despite extreme weather conditions and intermittent spells of snowfall, NLC Dry Port Sost has remained fully functional ensuring continuous flow of trade between Pakistan China and the Central Asian region. The achievement demonstrates NLC’s operational resilience in one of the world’s most challenging terrains.

For the smooth flow of trade, NLC has made significant investments in



modern infrastructure including installation of modern scanners, weighbridge, expanded warehousing and other facilities.

These facilities have translated into a marked increase in trade volumes

even during peak winter months. In December alone, Dry Port Sost handled 12,000 MT of import and export cargo. Meanwhile, during the first two weeks of January 2026, around 11,000 MT of import / export cargo was handled

in addition to processing of 132 empty containers from China.

Further strengthening regional trade integration, NLC in collaboration with Chinese freight operators has set up joint logistics company aimed at facilitating forward transit trade with China and Central Asian states. This initiative has streamlined cross-border logistics and improved supply chain efficiency across the region.

Beyond trade facilitation, NLC Dry Port Sost has emerged as a sustainable source of employment for the people of Gilgit-Baltistan contributing to local livelihoods and stimulating socio-economic development. The port’s uninterrupted operations have not only strengthened Pakistan-China trade ties but have also triggered a new phase of economic activities in the region.

Islamabad International Airport First ever greenfield airport of Pakistan

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Advancing Pakistan’s journey towards a cashless economy, Zindigi -powered by JS Bank in collaboration with the Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) have completely digitized Islamabad International Airport, with Zindigi Raast QR establishing it as Pakistan’s first fully digital and cashless Smart Airport.

Smart Airport Initiative by Zindigi will digitize the entire airport ecosystem. Key Features of the Smart Airport Initiative Include: Passengers at Islamabad International Airport will be able to make digital payments at all outlets using any mobile banking application via interoperable Zindigi Raast QR codes.

This milestone directly aligns with the Prime Minister’s vision of a Cashless Islamabad and Digital Pakistan, focused on modernizing critical public infrastructure through citizen-centric technology.

Commenting on the initiative, Noman Azhar, CO Zindigi, stated, “Once fully implemented, Islamabad International Airport will serve as a national model for smart public infrastructure, reducing cash dependency, minimizing revenue leakages, and significantly enhancing the passenger journey.”

This milestone was made possible through the dedicated efforts and collaboration of key stakeholders, including Mr. Sadiq ur Rehman Khan, Deputy Director General (PAA); Ms. Rabia Salma, Director Commissioner & Estate; Syed Aftab Gillani, Airport Manager, Islamabad International Airport; Mr. Amjad Mukhtar Malik, Senior Joint Director Commercial; and Mr. Mohsin Khan, Head of Merchant Channels & Retail at Zindigi, whose collective support has been instrumental in bringing Islamabad International Airport’s full digital and cashless transformation to life.

It further underscores Zindigi’s role as a national digital transformation partner, working hand-in-hand with federal and city authorities to modernize the country’s economic and civic infrastructure.

AlHuda CIBE Unveils Its Global Islamic Finance Calendar 2026

News Desk



DUBAI, UAE: AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking & Economics (CIBE), a leading global institution in Islamic finance education, advisory, and capacity building, has officially launched its International Training & Events Calendar for 2026.

The 2026 calendar outlines a comprehensive schedule of international conferences, executive trainings, specialized workshops, exposure visits, and professional development programs designed for financial institutions, regulators, academicians, and industry professionals across the globe. The calendar reflects AlHuda CIBE’s continued commitment to strengthening human capital and institutional capacity within the Islamic finance ecosystem.

The programs will be delivered through in-person, online, and hybrid formats, ensuring broad accessibility while responding to evolving market needs. Key focus areas include Islamic banking, takaful, sukuk and capital markets, Islamic fintech, Shariah governance, regulatory frameworks, risk management, and product structuring.

The 2026 calendar reflects AlHuda CIBE commitment to advancing global knowledge and practical expertise in the Islamic finance industry by offering a blend of in-person, virtual and hybrid events and training programs tailored to meet evolving market needs. The programs cover key segments including Islamic banking, takaful, sukuk and capital markets, fintech applications, regulatory frameworks, Shariah governance and product innovation.

Mr. Muhammad Zubair, CEO of AlHuda CIBE, said, The Annual Calendar 2026 represents a strategic roadmap for developing skilled professionals and supporting institutions in navigating the rapidly evolving Islamic finance landscape. Our emphasis remains on practical, industry-driven knowledge delivered in collaboration with regulators, financial institutions, scholars, and global experts.

The calendar also features flagship global forums and summits, regional training programs across Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia, as well as specialized exposure visits that provide participants with hands-on insight into leading Islamic finance markets.

The International Training & Events Calendar 2026 is now available for download through AlHuda CIBE’s official platform.

Pakistan’s Space Future: CASS Talk Stresses Youth Mobilization and Innovation

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (titled ‘Space and Pakistan’s Future: Mobilising the Youth and Fostering Innovation’ as part of its ‘Tech Talk series on 21 January 2026. The session brought together experts and researchers to examine the evolving significance of space and the role of youth in Pakistan’s national space ecosystem.


In his opening remarks, Air Marshal (Retd) Javaid Ahmed, President CASS, stated that space was one of CASS’ niche areas of research with significant strategic and developmental potential. He noted that CASS had played a consultative role during the formulation of Pakistan’s Space Policy by providing policy-oriented inputs, and highlighted the lack of sufficient awareness within academia, where space studies remained largely confined to disciplines such as physics, while remaining under-explored in other academic fields.

The talk was delivered by Mr Muhammad Iftikhar Yezdani, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Raheqamar. He argued that with nearly 64 per cent of Pakistan’s population under the age of 30, the country possessed immense demographic potential to build a vibrant space ecosystem. He highlighted how the digital age had transformed attention into a commodity and called for a shift from an ‘attention economy’ to an ‘aspiration economy’ by making space science engaging, accessible, and culturally relevant.

Mr Yezdani further proposed a four-pillar framework, i.e., Cultivate, Educate, Activate, and Amplify, to promote space awareness and innovation. His recommendations included supporting local science content creators, integrating real-time satellite data into education, launching national space challenges and CubeSat programmes, strengthening incubators, and using digital platforms to build communities around space learning. He emphasised the importance of modern science communication tools such as short-form video, immersive platforms, storytelling, and gamification to cultivate interest in space among youth. He also stressed that Pakistan’s next major leap in space would be driven not by a single technological breakthrough, but by the collective imagination, skills, and creativity of its youth.

In his concluding remarks, President CASS appreciated the speaker for an insightful presentation, particularly for highlighting the importance of a bottom-up approach to space sector innovation, and reiterated the need for sustained policy focus and institutional support for Pakistan’s space development. He also stated that Pakistan’s entry into the space domain was commendable and highlighted the National Aerospace Science & Technology Park (NASTP) as a positive initiative for strengthening the national technological ecosystem.



**Bull & Bears**

PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
187,688.16	187,033.26
Day's High	Day's Low
188,106.82	186,825.61
Index Value	Change
33,745,158,847	+ 654.90
Percentage	Time
+0.35%	22 Jan, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,150.05	+ 11.96
Percentage	Time
+0.12%	22 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
49,546.33	+ 469.10
Percentage	Time
+0.96%	22 Jan, 12:09 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
53,688.89	+ 914.25
Percentage	Time
+1.73%	22 Jan, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	189.51	194.59
Bahrain Dinar	743.90	753.89
Canadian Dollar	201.77	205.25
China Yuan	38.00	42.5
Danish Krone	43.27	43.67
Euro	327.67	331.68
Hong Kong Dollar	35.50	36.38
Indian Rupee	2.8	3.31
Japanese Yen	1.7549	1.8530
Kuwaiti Dinar	908.00	917.97
Malaysian Ringgit	66.55	70
NewZealand \$	162.80	167.60
Norwegians Krone	27.56	27.86
Omani Riyal	728.65	738.64
Qatari Riyal	76	78.5
Saudi Riyal	74.90	75.35
Singapore Dollar	216.97	221.85
Swedish Korona	30.16	30.46
Swiss Franc	350.92	355.94
Thai Bhat	8.5	9.7
U.A.E Dirham	76.55	77.35
UK Pound Sterling	376.44	380.79
US Dollar	280.75	282.55

Pak-Qatar General Takaful IPO receives historic response as IPO



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pak-Qatar General Takaful Limited's (PQGTL) IPO book-building has concluded with an historic over-subscription of [21x] times, marking the first-ever IPO of a dedicated General Takaful company at PSX.

Investors responded strongly, with the strike price closing at Rs [14.] per share, compared to the floor price of Rs 10. Total demand reached Rs [4.74] billion.

Successful bidders will be provisionally allotted 22,500,000 shares. The remaining 7,500,000 shares will be offered to retail investors on 28-29 January.

Shahid Ali Habib, CEO of Arif Habib Ltd., the lead manager for the IPO said that country's first-ever IPO of any dedicated General Takaful Company has made a historic debut at PSX reflects investor confidence in Pakistan's fast-growing Takaful sector and PQGTL's strong market position.

The proceeds from the IPO will be utilized to fund strategic initiatives, including investments in software and other intangible assets, hardware & infrastructure, marketing & brand development, human resource enhancement, and the establishment of new branches, as well as the transformation of existing branches to improve operational efficiency and customer experience.

Reduction in Taxes and Affordable Electricity are crucial for national economic growth: Ahsan Bakhtawari

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Bakhtawari, member of the Central Core Committee of United Business Group (UBG), said that the economic vision and policy proposals of UBG's Patron-in-Chief S. M. Tanveer are extremely important for the improvement of the national economy, as his thinking is grounded in reality and accurately reflects the genuine challenges faced by industry and trade.

He made these remarks during a meeting with a delegation of traders at his office.

Ahsan Bakhtawari emphasized that economic growth is only possible through a strong industrial base, increased exports, job creation, and a real reduction in business costs. Expressing deep concern over the serious situation facing the textile industry, he noted that more than 150 factories have already closed, with many more at risk—a dangerous alarm for the national economy.

He stated that if the government truly wants



to boost exports and revive industry, it is imperative to immediately reduce electricity and gas prices, provide the textile industry with electricity at a minimum of 9 cents per unit in line with regional competitiveness, eliminate cross subsidies, replace packer rates with flat rates, and reduce the interest rate to a single digit, between 7-8%.

Ahsan Bakhtawari pointed out that exports have declined from \$16.5 billion in October to \$15 billion, clearly showing that current industrial policies are not producing the desired results. He stressed that the textile industry is the backbone of the national economy, and without immediate and substantial measures to save it, economic recovery will not be possible.

He urged the government to implement industry-friendly policies, abolish unnecessary taxes, make electricity and gas affordable, and reduce interest rates below 10% to restore business confidence, thereby enabling employment growth, increased exports, and economic stability.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Ali Pervaiz Malik held a meeting with the Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Chandra Warsenanto Sukotjo on Thursday.



Photo: Online

SNGPL Multan Region is Continuing Operations in Different Areas Against Gas Theft

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The Sui Northern Gas Pipeline UFG Control Task Force of Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited is continuing operation in Different Areas against gas theft, illegal use and technical violations on the instructions of General Manager Jawad Khan Khakwani. During the recent operations, 55 locations were checked in different areas of Multan, as a result of which 05 gas meters were disconnected.

According to the details, one meter that was being used by a commercial user was disconnected, four meters were found to be in violation of the rules due to using a compressor, on which the relevant meters were disconnected.

On this occasion, General Manager Sui Gas Multan said that the safety of life and property of consumers is of special importance to the organization. He directed the consumers to make sure that before using gas, there is no smell of gas anywhere.

CCP and SDPI sign MoU



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen collaboration in research, policy analysis, and evidence-based recommendations aimed at promoting competitive and inclusive markets.

The signing ceremony was attended by Dr Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, Chairman CCP, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, and senior officials from both organizations were present at the ceremony. The MoU was signed by Salman Amin, Member CCP, and Dr Sajid Amin Javed, Deputy Executive Director SDPI.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Kabir Ahmed Sidhu said the partnership would allow both institutions to jointly review legal and regulatory frameworks and update them

in line with changing market realities. He said the collaboration would help produce quality research, reports, and data to support better policy solutions. He emphasized that markets should benefit consumers and businesses at large, not a few, and must remain free from monopolistic and oligopolistic practices.

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri said that collaboration between SDPI and CCP would generate strong analytical inputs to support government policymaking. He added that joint research would offer practical pathways to address existing challenges across sectors and promote competition-friendly policies.

The MoU provides a framework for cooperation in research, knowledge sharing, and capacity building to strengthen competition policy and promote fair, transparent, and efficient markets in Pakistan.

DPS WORLD PAKISTAN 2026 inaugurated in Karachi

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's digital printing and signage industry reached an important milestone today with the inauguration of DPS WORLD PAKISTAN 2026, the three-day International Digital Printing and Signage Exhibition organized by Fakt Exhibitions (Pvt.) Ltd, at the Karachi Expo Centre. The inaugural ceremony was attended by the Consuls General of Iran and Oman, Members of various Diplomatic Missions, Government officials, CEO Fakt Exhibitions (Pvt.) Ltd. Saleem Khan Tanoli, along with industry leaders, exhibitors, and key stakeholders from across the sector.

DPS WORLD PAKISTAN 2026 aims to bring together professionals from digital printing and signage industry to share the latest research, modern business strategies, technological innovations, and



next-generation products.

Speaking at the ceremony, Saleem Khan Tanoli, CEO, Fakt Exhibitions (Pvt.) Ltd, described DPS WORLD PAKISTAN 2026 as a timely

and much-needed platform for Pakistan's rapidly evolving digital printing and signage sector. He noted that platforms like this play a vital role in connecting local stakeholders

with global trends, technologies, and business opportunities, adding that the exhibition is helping introduce cutting-edge international solutions to the local market.

ABHI Microfinance Bank, Finleap to broaden access to digital credit in Pakistan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: ABHI Microfinance Bank and Finleap Financial Services (Private) Limited have entered into a strategic partnership aimed at expanding access to digital loans and Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) solutions, a move that reflects a growing effort to address financial disparity and improve access to formal credit across Pakistan.

For many individuals and small households, limited access to timely and affordable financing continues to be a barrier to participation in the formal economy.

This collaboration seeks to respond to that gap by exploring technology-enabled credit solutions that are simple, transparent, and aligned with the everyday financial realities of consumers.

Through Finleap's digital platform, Daira, the partnership aims to make short-tenure credit more accessible to those who have traditionally been underserved by conventional banking channels.

The collaboration brings together ABHI Microfinance Bank's digital-first banking capabilities with Finleap's technology-led lending model, with a shared emphasis on



responsible innovation and customer protection. By widening access to structured digital credit, the partnership is expected to support

greater financial resilience at the individual level, while also contributing to broader economic activity and inclusion.

T20 World Cup: Bangladesh refuses to play matches in India despite ICC decision

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has announced that it will not change its decision and has refused to play its T20 World Cup matches in India.

During a news conference in Dhaka on Thursday, the President of the Bangladesh Cricket Board, Aminul Islam Bulbul, informed the media of the board's decision following a meeting with the Advisor for Sports, Asif Nazrul.

It is noteworthy that on Wednesday, the International Cricket Council (ICC), during its board meeting, had given Bangladesh 24 hours to make a final decision regarding playing the World Cup in India; however, the Bangladesh Cricket Board announced its decision before the deadline.

Yesterday, the ICC had declined the request to relocate Bangladesh's scheduled matches in India to another venue. Sports Advisor Asif Nazrul told journalists on Thursday that the government's decision is clear: the Bangladesh team will not play in India.

He stated, "We have not received justice from the ICC. We hope the ICC will consider our security concerns and accept our request to play in Sri Lanka."

Asif Nazrul further added



that the consequences of bowing down to anyone and putting the safety of their players at risk must be seriously considered. He also mentioned that he had personally spoken to the cricketers regarding this matter.

In a statement on Wednesday, the ICC said, "For the past several weeks, the ICC has been engaged in constructive dialogue with the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) with the aim of ensuring Bangladesh's participation in the tournament."

The ICC stated that during this period, it shared independent security assessments and formal security assurances from Indian

authorities with the BCB, which "conclude that there is no credible or verified threat to the safety and security of the Bangladesh team in India."

The ICC further noted that despite all its efforts, the BCB is standing by its position and is "linking participation in the tournament to a single, isolated incident involving one of its players in a domestic league."

While relations between Bangladesh and India have been strained since the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government, the killing of a Hindu man during violent protests in Bangladesh last month further deteriorated the already

tense ties between the two countries.

Now, both neighboring countries are frequently accusing each other of damaging relations, summoning each other's diplomatic staff to record protests, and issuing public statements.

In its latest statement, the ICC clarified that it cannot relocate matches in the "absence of an independent security assessment."

Bangladesh's decision not to send its team to India was made at a time when the Indian Cricket Board (BCCI) had released Bangladeshi fast bowler Mustafizur Rahman from the Indian Premier League following public opposi-



tion and criticism.

However, the ICC clarified in its latest statement that it cannot move matches elsewhere without an independent security assessment.

The ICC added that accepting Bangladesh's demand would create logistical and scheduling issues for other teams and fans worldwide.

It is worth noting that earlier, the Advisor for Sports in the interim government of Bangla-

desh, Asif Nazrul, had told a press conference that the International Cricket Council, through a letter, had expressed "three concerns" to the BCB regarding the Bangladesh cricket team traveling to India for the World Cup.

This letter is essentially an email sent on January 8th by the ICC Security Manager to the Security Advisor of the Bangladesh Cricket Board.

The text of the email discussed the risks that could arise for the

Bangladesh cricket team and their supporters while playing cricket in India. In the email, the ICC Security Manager provided a "summary of the risk assessment."

It should be noted that the hosting rights for the T20 World Cup, starting on February 7, 2026, are held by India and Sri Lanka. Due to tense relations with India, Pakistan will also play all its World Cup matches in Sri Lanka instead of India.

Pakistan Cricket Board Announced Match Officials for Pakistan VS Australia T-20 Series

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board has announced the match officials' panel for three-match T20I series between Pakistan and Australia at the Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore from 29 January to 1 February. The games will start at 4pm PKT with the coin toss set to take place at 3.30pm PKT.

ICC International Panel Match Referee Ali Naqvi will lead the playing control team in all the three matches. The second game will be his 50th T20I as match referee as he officiated his first game in the format at the same venue in



April 2023.

Ahsan Raza, member of the ICC Elite Panel of Umpires, will be one of

the on-field umpires during the first two T20Is, while Asif Yaqoob of ICC Emerging Panel of Umpires and Rashid Riaz of the ICC International Panel of Umpires will join him on the field in the first and second T20Is, respectively.

Rashid, fourth umpire in first T20I, will join Nasir Hussain of ICC International Panel of Umpires in the third T20I to perform the on-field duties with PCB National Elite Panel of Umpires member Zulfiqar Jan being the fourth umpire.

Apart from being the fourth umpire in the second game, Nasir will begin the series as third umpire, while Asif and Tariq Rasheed of PCB National Elite

Panel of Umpires will perform the third umpire duties in the second and third T20I, respectively.

1st T20I – 29 January – Ahsan Raza and Asif Yaqoob – on-field umpires, Nasir Hussain – third umpire, Rashid Riaz – fourth umpire, Ali Naqvi – match referee

2nd T20I – 31 January – Ahsan Raza and Rashid Riaz – on-field umpires, Asif Yaqoob – third umpire, Nasir Hussain fourth Umpire, Ali Naqvi – match referee
3rd T20I – 1 February – Rashid Riaz and Nasir Hussain – on-field umpires, Tariq Rasheed – third umpire, Zulfiqar Jan – fourth umpire, Ali Naqvi – match referee.

AIOU Signs MoU with Cisco NetAcad to Promote IT and Digital Skills



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed today between Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) and the globally renowned technology company Cisco's educational platform, Cisco NetAcad to promote educational collaboration. The purpose of this agreement is to equip students with modern IT, networking, cybersecurity and digital skills so that they can effectively compete in both national and international markets.

The signing ceremony of the MoU was

held at the university's main campus where Registrar Raja Umar Younus signed the agreement on behalf of the university and Aamir Omar, Account Executive, Cisco systems International signed on behalf of the company. The ceremony was presided over by Prof. Dr. Sher Muhammad Dean of the Faculty of Sciences.

Speaking at the event, Prof. Dr. Sher Muhammad stated that in the present era, universities have a responsibility to prepare graduates who not only possess theoretical knowledge but are also equipped with practical skills in line with industry requirements. He added that

Cisco is a globally recognized institution and this educational partnership will provide students with significant opportunities in the field of modern technology.

Registrar Raja Umar Younus in his speech mentioned that Computer Science program is currently being successfully taught not only at the main campus but also in the Karachi and Lahore regions. According to the Vice Chancellor's vision it will soon be extended to other regional campuses as well. He emphasized that we live in a technological era where traditional degrees alone are no longer sufficient. Successful students will be those who

gain expertise in computer science and modern technology. He advised students to hone their technical and professional skills during their studies so that they can secure respectable employment for themselves and contribute positively to the national economy.

Chairman, Department of Computer Sciencem Dr. Aftab Khan noted that currently over 1,500 students are enrolled in the face-to-face BS Computer Science program while more than 200 applications have already been received for the newly introduced ODL-based BS Computer Science program.

Pakistan signs 'Board of Peace' charter to support Gaza peace

Continued from Page 1

"Pakistan also hopes that these efforts will lead to the realization of the right to self-determination of the people of Palestine, through a credible, time-bound political process, consistent with international legitimacy and relevant UN resolutions, resulting in the establishment of an inde-

pendent, sovereign, and contiguous State of Palestine, based on the pre-1967 borders with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital," Foreign Office earlier said in a statement.

Addressing the ceremony, President Trump said, "everybody" wants to be a part of his Board of Peace.

He said he will continue to "work with many others, including the United

Nations".

Once this board is completely formed, we can do pretty much whatever we want to do. And we'll do it in conjunction with the United Nations," Trump said, adding that the U. N. had great potential that had not been fully utilised.

There's tremendous potential with the United Nations, and I think the combi-

nation of the Board of Peace with the kind of people we have here... could be something very, very unique for the world," Trump said.

He also reiterated that his administration had helped stop eight wars within a ten-month period, specifically citing the prevention of a war between the two atomic powers, Pakistan and India.

Lahore Division athletics and boxing trials held at Punjab Stadium



Expert coaches continued to conduct the trials for the Khelta Punjab Pink Games, the biggest event of women's sports in the country, in all divisions of the province on Thursday.

On Thursday, the Lahore Division trials of athletics and boxing were held at Punjab Stadium and Body Contact Center respectively. Director General Sports Punjab Khizar Afzal Chaudhry is monitoring the whole trials process minutely. Divisional Sports Officer Lahore Tariq Khanzada and other officials witnessed the trials at both the venues.

More than 40 female athletes appeared in boxing trials in 8 weight categories – 48 kg, 51 kg, 54 kg, 57 kg, 60 kg, 65 kg, 70 kg and 75 kg under the supervision of qualified coaches Zeeshan Butt, Tariq Siddiqui, Tahira Warsi and Sajecha.

In athletics trials, more than 50 female athletes appeared in 10 disciplines such as long jump, triple jump, high jump, shot put, 100m race, 200m race, 400m race, discuss throw, javelin throw and 4x100m relay race.

The selection committee comprising Abdul Ghaffar Gujjar, M Zubair and Nabeela Noreen supervised the athletics trials to select a 12-member Lahore division athletics team for participation in upcoming Khelta Punjab Pink Games.

Two more matches Conclude in RCAK U-15 Challenge League Cricket Tournament

KARACHI: Two more matches were decided in the RCAK Under-15 Challenge League Cricket Tournament at various Cricket Grounds.

The highlights of the days play was brilliant Century 154 by Masood Ali, Deadly Bowling by Yahya Aslam 5/24 and All-round Performance by Aaish Malik 2/19 and fine 75 runs.

Scores in Brief:

RCAK Under-15 Whites beat Yellow by 197 runs at Oval Ground NBP Cricket Stadium. RCAK Under-15 Whites 289/9 in 40 overs. Masood Ali 154 17x4 7x6 retired out, Mohib Nasir 52 8x4 not out, Muhammad Asghar 34, Bilal Khan (mf) / 50.

In reply RCAK Reds 92 all-out in 22.2 overs. M. Abdur Rehman 19, Yahya Aslam (sla) 5/24, Shahmeer Khan (rls) 2/5.

In the another Match played at Jinnah College Ground Nazimabad RCAK Under-15 Blues defeated RCAK Yellow by 5 Wickets. RCAK Yellow 186/7 in 40 overs. Muhammad Azaam 56 4x4 3x6, Abdullah Ehsan 47 8x4 1x6, Muhammad Hassan 18, Aaish Malik 2/19. Umer Lal 2/24.

In reply RCAK Blues 187/5 in 34 overs. Aaish Malik 75 13x4, Asadullah 37, Sufyan Kamran 19 not out.

Sydney Sixers confirm Babar Azam will miss remainder of BBL 15

Sydney Sixers have confirmed that Pakistan star batter Babar Azam will not feature in the Big Bash League (BBL) 15 Challenger against Hobart Hurricanes, scheduled to be played at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) on Friday. The Sixers made the announcement just over 24 hours before the knockout fixture, stating that Babar has been instructed to return to Pakistan to join the national team camp ahead of upcoming international commitments.

"The Sydney Sixers have today been informed that Sixers opener Babar Azam is required to return to Pakistan to join his national teammates in camp, as preparations commence for upcoming international matches," the franchise said in a statement.

"As a result, Babar will depart Australia immediately and will not be available for selection for the remainder of the BBL 15 Finals Series."

Meeting

DAVOS, Switzerland: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, met with Mr. Bill Gates on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Finance Minister meets Bill Gates to strengthen cooperation on health and institutional reforms

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, Thursday in Davos met with Bill Gates on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting.

The meeting focused on Pakistan's ongoing reform efforts, public health priorities, and avenues for strengthening cooperation with the Gates Foundation in support of

sustainable development and institutional capacity building.

During the meeting, the Finance Minister expressed appreciation for the Gates Foundation's longstanding support to Pakistan, particularly its pivotal role in polio eradication efforts, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance.

He acknowledged the Foundation's continued engagement and partnership in addressing public health

challenges and strengthening service delivery across the country.

Mr. Gates shared an overview of the Foundation's ongoing and future engagement in Pakistan and underscored the importance of sustained efforts to achieve polio eradication.

Both sides discussed the need for close coordination with relevant stakeholders and provincial authorities to ensure effective implemen-

tation of health initiatives, particularly in areas requiring focused attention.

Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb also thanked Mr. Gates for the Foundation's recent communication expressing support for the digitization of Pakistan's taxation system, noting that this initiative was a key component of the government's broader reform agenda.

Mr. Gates emphasized the critical role of efficient tax

systems in building long-term economic self-reliance and noted that digital tools could significantly enhance tax collection, governance, and service delivery.

The Finance Minister agreed, sharing that improved fiscal resilience had strengthened Pakistan's capacity to respond to economic and climate-related challenges, reinforcing the importance of reforms aimed at long-term stability.

AVM Yasir Saleem replaces AVM Nasir Khattak as additional secretary in Ministry of Defence

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Thursday announced a series of transfers and postings within the federal bureaucracy, according to official notifications issued by the Establishment Division.

Air Vice Marshal Nasir

Khattak, who was serving as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Defence, has retired. Following his retirement, Air Vice Marshal Yasir Saleem has been appointed Additional Secretary, Ministry of Defence. The appointment has been made on a secondment basis in accordance with

the prevailing rules and regulations.

Several Section Officers have been transferred across federal ministries and divisions. Section Officer Maria Gul has been transferred from the National Security Division to the Cabinet Division, while Section Officer Asadullah has

been moved from the Overseas Pakistanis Division to the Cabinet Division.

Additionally, Section Officer Maria Azhar has been transferred from the Cabinet Division to the Economic Affairs Division and Section Officer Amna Farooq has been posted from the Cabinet Division to

the Ministry of Climate Change.

In another development, Asad Ali, who was awaiting appointment, has been appointed Section Officer in the Water Resources Division.

The Establishment Division has formally issued notifications regarding all the above appointments and transfers.

US CDA inaugurates KFC and Deaf Reach School in Nowshera

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: US Acting Ambassador Natalie A. Baker inaugurated a new KFC outlet and a Deaf Reach School in Nowshera on Wednesday, highlighting the role of American businesses in promoting local community development and corporate social responsibility in Pakistan.

According to a spokesperson for the US Embassy, the visit also served to highlight the broader US commitment to expanding economic opportunities, fostering bilateral investment, and delivering tangible social impact through responsible commercial partnerships in Pakistan.

During her visit, Ambassador Baker formally inaugurated a newly established KFC restaurant in Nowshera and also toured a newly launched Deaf Reach School supported by KFC. The visit to the school drew attention to



long-standing efforts by American businesses to promote inclusive education and employment opportunities for persons with hearing impairments.

Since 2014, KFC has been actively supporting the education, vocational training and employment of hearing-impaired individuals across Paki-

stan, the embassy spokesperson said.

The Deaf Reach Schools operate under the NGO Family Educational Services Foundation and were founded by American philanthropists Richard Geary and Heidi Gostansky-Geary.

The initiative reflects a collaborative model in which American brands

work alongside Pakistani partners to generate direct local economic and social benefits.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Baker said the inauguration demonstrated how US companies contribute meaningfully to Pakistan's local economic development through responsible business practices.

She emphasized that initiatives such as KFC's support for Deaf Reach Schools illustrate how corporate responsibility can improve lives while expanding opportunity. She added that deeper economic cooperation produces concrete benefits for both Americans and Pakistanis.

Ambassador Baker noted that more than 80 US companies have invested in Pakistan to date, collectively providing direct employment to approximately 120,000 Pakistanis and indirectly supporting nearly one million additional workers.

President Zardari approves appointment, extension of high court judges



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has approved the appointment and extension of service of additional judges in the Sindh, Lahore and Peshawar High Courts. According to the channel report, the president approved the permanent appointment of ten judges of the Sindh High Court (SHC).

The president has also extended the tenure of two additional judges of the Sindh High Court for a period of six months.

President Zardari approved the confirmation of eleven additional

judges of the Lahore High Court (LHC).

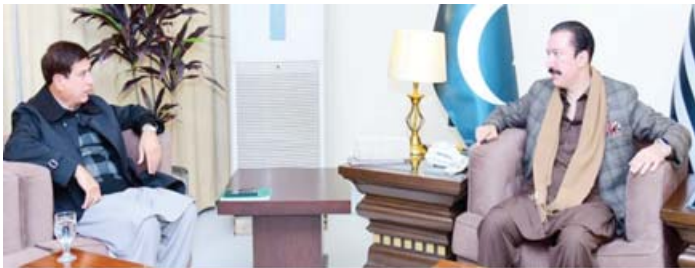
In addition, the tenure of the Lahore High Court judge, Justice Tariq Mahmood Bajwa, has also been extended for another six months.

In the case of the Peshawar High Court (PHC), approval was granted for the permanent appointment of six additional judges.

The president also extended the service of four additional judges for a further six months.

The channel reported that all these approvals were granted by the president on the advice of the prime minister.

Azad Kashmir PM mourns, orders probe into MUST University bus crash



Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has expressed deep sense of shock and sorrow over the tragic accident of a Bus carrying students of the MUST university. According to initial reports, 25 students, who received injuries, have been shifted to hospital for the treatment.

The Prime Minister prayed for the speedy recovery of the students injured in the tragic incident.

He directed the administration to provide immediate and best medical facilities to all the injured students. The Prime Minister also directed the relevant institutions to conduct an immediate investigation to find out the reasons behind the incident.

Khawaja Asif calls laptop scheme milestone for youth empowerment



Commerce Desk

SIALKOT: Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme offers young women an opportunity to achieve economic independence, enabling them to grow and guide future generations toward progress.

He expressed these views during a laptop distribution ceremony under "Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme Level Up" at Government College Women University Sialkot (GCWUS) as the chief guest, here on Thursday.

The ceremony was attended by Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Chaudhry Faisal Ikram, Deputy Commissioner Sialkot Saba Asghar Ali, President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Syed Ahtesham Mazhar, Vice Chancellor GCWUS Pro. Dr. Shazia Bashir, prominent businessman Khawaja Masood Akhtar, Faculty Members, Students and other dignitaries.

Khawaja Asif expressed confi-

dence that the scheme would be remembered for decades as a milestone in empowering Pakistani youth in the IT sector. He prayed for the success of the female students benefiting from the scheme, urging them to play an active role in strengthening Pakistan's economy. He said this was his fourth participation in a laptop distribution ceremony under the scheme in his home city.

He also recalled attending a similar event when Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif visited the university.

Vice Chancellor GCWUS Prof. Dr. Shazia Bashir said that the initiative will provide modern educational facilities to female students selected on merit.

She said that connecting youth with technology is the need of the hour adding that Prime Minister Youth Program enhances academic and research capabilities of female students.

As many as 506 laptops were distributed among the female students during the ceremony.