



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
پیارے محمد صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا تم میں کوئی  
سے تھے اسے اس سے زیادہ اپنے وارث کا مال  
پیارا ہو۔ صحابہ سے عرض کیا یا رسول اللہ! ہم  
میں کوئی ایسا شخص ہے جس کا زیادہ وارث ہو۔ نبی  
کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا ہر اس کا مال  
وہ ہے جو اس سے (موت سے) پہلے (اللہ کے  
راست میں خرچ) کیا اور اس کے وارث کا مال وہ  
ہے جو وہ چھوڑ کر مرے۔  
(بخاری ص 442)

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## Pezeshkian says Iran will not bow to pressure amid US nuclear talks

"World powers are lining up to force us to bow our heads... but we will not bow our heads despite all the problems that they are creating for us," Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said in a speech carried live by state TV.



## Tessori rejects division narrative, vows inclusive Governor House

Speaking at an Iftar dinner at the Governor House, Tessori said a narrative had been spread portraying him as a source of division, calling it "completely false." He added that people had now started taking his initiatives for the province seriously.

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## M-Tag installation

ISLAMABAD: Motorcyclists wait in a queue for M-Tag installation at Kachnar Park after the Islamabad administration made M-Tag registration mandatory for all motorcycles from February 20, 2026, under the second phase of the capital's vehicle tagging drive.



Photo: APP

## President, PM condemn Bannu terror attack

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned a terrorist attack of Fitna al Khwarij on security forces' convoy in District Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The president and the prime minister expressed their deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of Lieutenant Colonel Shahzada Gul Faraz and Sepoy Karamat Shah.

The president and the prime minister conveyed their heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs and prayed for the elevation of their ranks in Jannah and for grant of patience and strength to the bereaved families.

The prime minister commended the security forces for foiling the nefarious designs of Fitna al-Khwarij



by eliminating five terrorists during the operation, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He further observed that act of terrorism carried out by Fitna al-Khwarij, during the blessed month of Ramazan, was proof that terrorists had no religion.

The prime minister said that the security forces acted swiftly, saving the city from major destruction, adding that under the vision of Azm-e-Istehkam, the security forces were achieving major successes in the fight against terrorism.

## Mohsin Naqvi briefs ministers on law and order in KP, Balochistan

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal ministers belonging to the MQM-P, PML-Q and BAP on Saturday met with Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi in Islamabad and had a detailed discussion with him on matters of internal security as well as the country's overall situation.

Chaudhry Salik Hussain of the PML-Q, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui of the MQM-P and Khalid Magsi of BAP were among the ministers with whom Mohsin Naqvi held detailed meeting.

The interior minister briefed the federal ministers about the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

He also informed them about the steps taken to restore law and order situation in these two provinces.

The ministers praised the role of Field Marshal Asim Munir in ensuring peace in



the country. They also hailed the sacrifices given by the personnel of security forces in war against militancy, especially those who laid down their lives for the purpose.

They said that their political parties stood by security forces and would continue to stand by them in future also.

## Colonel martyred, five Indian-backed terrorists killed in deadly Bannu tackle

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A senior Pakistan Army officer and a soldier were martyred when security forces thwarted Indian-sponsored terrorists' attempt to create havoc in Bannu City, killing five Khwarij on Saturday.

Lieutenant-Colonel Shahzada Gul Faraz was martyred when terrorists rammed an explosives-laden car into security forces' vehicle after troops blocked a suicide-bomber from entering city.

According to a statement released by the ISPR in Rawal-



21-02-2026  
LT COL SHAHZADA GUL FARAZ SHAHEED



21-02-2026  
SEPOY KARAMAT SHAHEED

on reported presence of Khwarij including a suicide-bomber.

A vehicle-borne suicide-bomber was intercepted by the leading group, foiling his nefarious design to target innocent civilians and law-enforcement personnel in Bannu City, averting major catastrophe.

During the conduct of the operation, Khwarij were located and after intense fire exchange, five Khwarij were sent to hell by the security forces. However, in desperation, Khwarij bomber rammed the explosives-laden vehicle into one of the vehicles of

the leading group. Resultantly, Lt-Colonel Shahzada Gul Faraz (age: 43 years, resident of District Mansehra), a brave commanding officer renowned for his daring actions, who was leading his troops from the front embraced shahadat along with Sepoy Karamat Shah (age: 28 years, resident of District Peshawar).

Khwarij are continuing with their terrorist activities inside Pakistan using Afghan soil, violating the sanctity of the holy month of Ramadan. This clearly indicates that they have no link with Islam, the ISPR statement said.

## Trump's recognition signifies a major milestone in strengthening Pak's diplomatic standing: Chaudhry says

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry Saturday applauded President Trump's recognition of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, underlining that it sends a strong signal to India and the international community about Pakistan's rising influence and its solid, unshakable position in global diplomacy.

In an exclusive conversation

with a local news channel, the minister stated that President Trump's acknowledgment reflects a key step in elevating Pakistan's global diplomatic influence.

He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Pakistan is effectively representing the Muslim Ummah on global forums.

He emphasized that Pakistan's role in advocating for the rights and interests of the Muslim community worldwide has been strengthened, further solidifying



its diplomatic influence. He emphasized that this recognition strengthens Pakistan's posi-

tion in international relations, showcasing the country's growing stature on the world stage.

Minister Chaudhry also praised Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, calling him "the best general and the best soldier."

He highlighted Munir's exceptional leadership and invaluable contributions to Pakistan's defense, emphasizing his role in enhancing the country's strategic importance both regionally and globally.

He admired the strong relationship between Pakistan and the United States, particularly under President Trump's leadership.

## Hafiz Gul Bahadur-led Khawarij group involved in Bannu attack from Afghan soil: Security sources

News Desk

The conspiracy behind the suicide attack on a Pak army vehicle in Bannu was traced to Hafiz Gul Bahadur, a Khawarij outfit hiding in Afghanistan, reported 24NewsHD TV Channel.

Security sources said that Ittehad-ul-Mujahideen, a sub-group of Fitna al-Khwarij, claimed responsibility for the Bannu suicide attack. Ittehad-e-Mujahideen is affiliated with the Hafiz Gul Bahadur group of Fitna al-Khwarij. The ring leader of this group, Gul Bahadur, and its key commanders were hiding in Afghanistan.

Security sources said that Hafiz Gul Bahadur group was involved in terror activities in Pakistan using Afghan

soil. The same terror group had attacked Bannu Cantt last year on March 4, 2025, during Ramadan, which was planned from Afghan soil.

Major Adnan Shaheed was martyred while fighting bravely during the Fitna-ul-Khwarij attack on Federal Constabulary Bannu on September 2, 2025.

The terror group had claimed responsibility for several attacks in North and South Waziristan, including Mir Ali.

It was later proved that these attacks were also planned and facilitated from Afghanistan. The presence of Hafiz Gul Bahadur and other key leaders of Fitna al-Khwarij in Afghanistan is proof that Afghan soil is being used for terrorism.

## Female suicide bomber arrested from Dera Ismael Khan

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Foiling a plot to commit terrorism, the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on Saturday, in an intelli-

gence-based operation, arrested a female would-be suicide bomber from Dera Ismael Khan.

The would-be suicide bomber, arrested from Sheikh Yousaf camp, belongs to Waziristan, and had

received training from Shah Wali alias Tariq Kochi, a militant, who was also her close associate.

In her confessional statement, the woman said that the material for the suicide attack was to

be supplied by another militant named Asim. "And he was the person who had also to select the target of the attack," she told interrogators. A 30-bore pistol, cell-phones and a tablet were recovered

from the woman. When her cell-phones were checked, it emerged that the would-be suicide bomber had links with the TTP and that she had given her consent that she would blow herself up.

# AJK Prime Minister vows transparent, fast-track Zakat fund distribution

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has said that providing financial support to the weaker sections of the society was among his government's foremost priorities.

The Prime Minister, Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, made these remarks during a meeting with a delegation of Chairmen of the District Zakat and Ushr Committees who called on him here today.

He said that a transparent, fair and fast-track Zakat Fund distribution system would be introduced so that the deserving people are provided assistance with dignity and honour.

The Prime Minister sought simplification of the Zakat distribution procedure on urgent basis and updating of the lists of deserving persons across all districts to make sure that assistance reaches every deserving people.

The prime minister also highlighted the District Zakat Committees' crucial role in making social welfare programs more effective.

The delegation apprised the Prime Minister of certain legal hurdles, which



they said have been preventing the timely disbursement of assistance to the poor during Ramzan.

The Prime Minister assured the delegation that such legal obstacles would be removed soon to ensure timely assistance

to the deserving people.

Of those who were present in the meeting included Chairman District Zakat and Ushr Poonch Sardar Afaq, Chairman District Zakat and Ushr Kotli Raja Zafarullah Khan, Chairman

District Zakat and Ushr Mirpur Khan Zafar, Chairman District Zakat and Ushr Sidhanuti Asad Iqbal, Chairman District Zakat and Ushr Haveli Tariq Mir and Chairman District Jhelum Valley Hanif Khan.

## AJK PM: Kashmiri Refugees Are PPP's Greatest Political Asset



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, while terming Kashmiri refugees as the Pakistan Peoples Party's greatest political asset, has said that the party attaches special importance to the community, settled in different parts of Pakistan. He expressed these views while speaking to PPP Punjab President Chaudhry Fakhar-uz-Zaman who called on him here today. He said that the PPP, under the leadership of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, would achieve resounding victory on the Kashmiri refugee seats in the upcoming elections. The Prime Minister said that practical steps would be taken to solve the problems of the refugees and protect their rights. Chaudhry Fakhar-uz-Zaman, on the occasion, invited the Prime Minister to visit the refugee constituencies across Punjab.

## Women Commission demands transparent probe into Dr. Fareeha Afraheem's death

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Chairperson of the Women Commission, Ms. Rehana Khan, has demanded a transparent and impartial investigation into the death of Dr. Malik Fareeha Afraheem, a resident of Malot, who reportedly passed away at Fatima Jinnah Medical University.

In her statement, Ms. Rehana Khan urged the Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, to ensure a thorough inquiry into the circumstances surrounding Dr. Fareeha Afraheem's death. She emphasized that all CCTV footage from the university premises should be made public to eliminate doubts and suspicions regarding the incident. She further stressed that if any individual is found involved, those responsible must be identified and held accountable in accordance with the law.

Expressing heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, Ms. Rehana Khan stated that the circulating reports and rumors have raised serious concerns. She underscored the need to bring the entire matter to light in line with the demands of justice and transparency.

The Women Commission has formally called upon the Punjab government to conduct a comprehensive investigation, including questioning all relevant staff members and officials of the university, to ensure that justice is served and the family of Dr. Fareeha Afraheem receives due justice.



## Principled Stance on Gaza Elevates Pakistan's Diplomatic Standing, says Khan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Masood Khan, former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States and the United Nations, has stated that Pakistan's principled participation in the Gaza Peace Board has not only reaffirmed its unwavering support for Palestinian statehood but has also elevated Pakistan's strategic standing in and strengthened Pakistan-United States relations at the highest level.

In a televised interview, Ambassador Khan underscored that Pakistan's engagement in the Board is firmly anchored in its longstanding commitment to the establishment of a sovereign, contiguous Palestinian state based on pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. He emphasized that Pakistan's presence in Washington was not symbolic but substantive, aimed at securing a durable ceasefire, ensuring humanitarian access, and advancing reconstruction in Gaza.

Referring to the inaugural session of the Board of Peace held on February 19, 2026, in Washington, D. C., Ambassador Khan noted that the initiative operates within the framework endorsed by the United Nations Security Council through Resolution 2803. He described the mechanism as a practical diplomatic avenue to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people and to move toward a structured and time-bound peace process.



## Polio campaign performance reviewed in D. I. Khan

Syed Tauqeer Zaidi

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: A comprehensive review meeting on the performance of the recent anti-polio campaign was held, with Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Division, Daud Khan, participating via video link alongside the National EOC Coordinator. The meeting was chaired by the Chief Secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

During the session, officials were briefed on the targets achieved during the campaign, identification of missed children, security arrangements, and the monitoring mechanisms put in place to ensure effective implementation.

Addressing the meeting, Commissioner Daud Khan emphasized that all relevant departments must work under a coordinated strategy to achieve complete eradication of polio, ensuring that no child is left unvaccinated.

The meeting was attended by the Regional Police Officer D. I. Khan Region, the Area Coordinator of World Health Organization (WHO) D. I. Khan Division, Assistant to Commissioner (Political and Development) Sajjad Baloch, and other concerned officials.

The Chief Secretary directed concerned officers to immediately reach out to missed children and further strengthen micro-planning efforts. Commissioner Daud Khan reaffirmed his commitment to utilizing all available resources to make the anti-polio drive more effective and successful across the division.

At the conclusion of the meeting, it was agreed that preparations for the upcoming campaign would be further improved and a coordinated strategy would be devised to address field-level challenges.

## Lassi

RAWALPINDI: A vendor is preparing traditional beverage "Lassi" at his shop during pre-dawn timings as his shop is decorated just like a bridal in City.

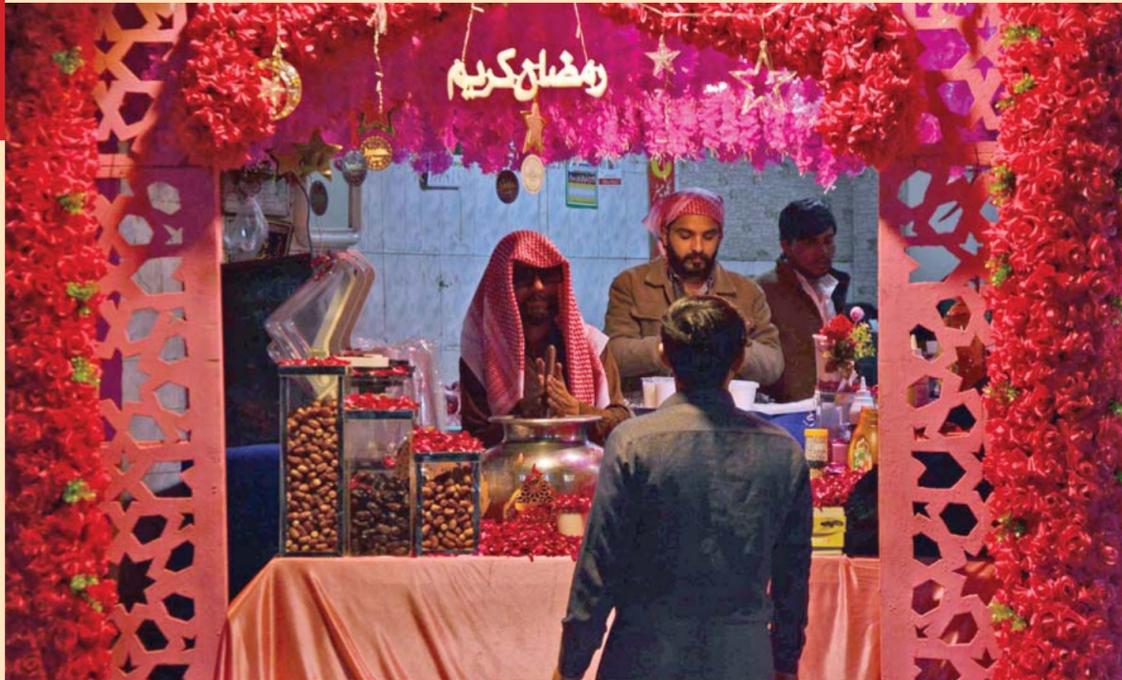


Photo: Online

# A big breakthrough for AJK Glass Train Project extended to Muzaffarabad

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MURREE: In a high-level meeting chaired by Pakistan Muslim League (N) President Nawaz Sharif and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif at Government House Murree, a landmark decision was reached to extend the proposed Glass Train project all the way to Muzaffarabad.

Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb briefed the session on a multi-billion rupee development package for Murree and its surrounding areas, describing it as the largest uplift program in the region's history. Key highlights of the session include:

The area is set to be developed into Punjab's most modern tourism hub, with 14 distinct tourism schemes approved.



Plans include the establishment of an eco-friendly glamping pod village, a resort, and Punjab's first modern paragliding center.

A new "Sky Glass Bridge" and chairlift project will be launched for tour-

ists, while the existing Patriata Chairlift will undergo extensive repairs and upgrades.

The meeting focused heavily on the 40-kilometer Glass Train project. Route: Initially planned to run from

Lake View Park to the Murree Bus Stand, the leadership has now agreed to extend the line from Islamabad Airport to Muzaffarabad.

The provincial government also addressed public services and heritage preservation:

A 50-bed hospital will be constructed in Bhurban, and a water supply scheme near the bus stand has already been completed.

A dedicated department will be established to protect Murree's cultural heritage. Work is underway to restore historic buildings to their original designs; renovation of 23 buildings and 76 shops on Mall Road has already been finalized.

A premium hotel complex will be developed under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model to accommodate the growing influx of tourists.

# PPP Azad Kashmir withdraws no-confidence motion amid internal strife

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Azad Kashmir has decided to withdraw its no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore. On the one hand, the Kanbah of Bhan Mati is speaking the dialects of Bhan Bhan, while on the other hand, the dispersion and grouping in their ranks is at its peak. PML-N leader former Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has postponed the visit to Azad Kashmir. However, there is no truth in it except to scare the hearts and scare the people. Those who declare this no-con-



fidence motion and the people themselves know that the united opposition will not take PPP members and

must have consensus in the Assembly. Therefore, the opposition is not united but dispersed. The defense of no-confi-

dence is also strong and the candidate nominated by the party leadership for the presidency of the state will continue to succeed. Expression of Views Pakistan People's Party Azad Kashmir Central Deputy Secretary Information and Candidate Assembly Constituency 7 Shaikat Javed Mir said that the media has responded to the ongoing protests against the government. He said that PPP is based on covenant democracy in Pakistan and in Azad Kashmir, PML-N voted for the PPP leadership in the House. Yes, but his goal is not to be a political attack on the Lao Lashkar Laker government and we will not leave them open. It is not possible to condemn the PPP.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	5:23 am
Zohr	12:22 pm
Asr	4:18 pm
Maghrib	5:57 pm
Isha	7:21 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224

*Prof. Kashif Saeed appointed as New DD College TT Singh*



Zafar Chishti

**TOBA TEK SINGH:** Deputy Director Colleges Toba Tek Singh Haq Nawaz has been transferred and renowned educationist Professor Kashif Saeed has been appointed as the new Deputy Director Colleges in the district. Professor Kashif Saeed has formally assumed charge of his office and started performing his official duties. On his arrival at the office, he was warmly welcomed by the staff, friends, teachers and individuals from various walks of life, who congratulated him and presented bouquets. On this occasion, the participants expressed their best wishes and hoped that under his leadership, the standard of education in colleges across the district would further improve and administrative affairs would become more efficient. Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Director Colleges Prof. Kashif Saeed thanked the higher authorities for reposing confidence in him and reaffirmed his commitment to utilizing all his abilities to enhance the education system and ensure a bright future for students in the district.

# Mother tongue education positively impacts children's mental development: Maryam Nawaz Sharif

**Bureau Report**

**LAHORE:** Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, in her message on International Mother Language Day, said that language is not only a mean of expression but also the primary marker of a nation's identity. She said that the importance of mother tongues cannot be denied even in the digital age, as they represent the most valuable symbol of a nation's culture, heritage and traditions. The chief minister stated that education imparted in the mother tongue has a positive impact on children's mental growth and learning abilities. She observed that mother languages hold an established status as a source of national identity and precious civilisational and cultural heritage. She added that language is a social asset passed from one generation to another over time and plays a vital role in promoting awareness about cultural, historical and social traditions across

the world. Maryam Nawaz Sharif emphasised that the protection of mother tongues is, in fact, a guarantee of cultural autonomy and intellectual freedom. She said the Punjab government has made the Punjab Institute of Language, Art and Culture more active to safeguard and promote mother languages. The chief minister further said the government is committed to the development and promotion of mother tongues, as they form an essential part of our identity. She noted that efforts are underway to connect the younger generation with their mother languages so they remain aware of their culture and history. She added that various measures are being taken to support the growth, research and promotion of languages through the educational curriculum, and the government will continue to play its full role in protecting and promoting mother languages.



## Traffic Jam before Iftar

**RAWALPINDI:** A large number of vehicles are stuck in the massive traffic jam at Hamilton Road before Iftari during the holy month of Ramadan in City.



Photo: Online

## CM's Aide inspects Ramadan Bazaars, assures support for needy in Chiniot

**Bureau Report**

**CHINIOT:** On the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Punjab Salma Butt visited Chiniot district. Special Assistant Salma Butt, along with Deputy Commissioner Chiniot Ayesha Rizwan, reviewed the arrangements of the Ramadan Sahulat Bazaar in detail. She inspected the availability, quality and sale of essential items at the Sahulat Bazaar at the fixed rates.



The Special Assistant directly talked to the citizens present at the Sahulat Bazaar and inquired about the facilities and prices. She went to the sugar stall and checked the

weight of the packets on the hook. She talked to children in the play area set up in the Sahulat Bazaar. The children raised slogans of Chief Minister Punjab

Maryam Nawaz Zindabad. Salmi Butt said that patronage of the deserving is the top priority of the government, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif will not leave the

deserving alone, Salmi Butt also visited the guest of Ramadan Nigahban Dastarkhwan Maryam, appreciated the efforts of the district administration for the best arrangements.

## KEC and Zaareen Khidmat Committee express condolences on passing of Khalifa Ali Gul Laghari

**News Desk**



**KARACHI:** The Karachi Editors Club and the Zaareen Khidmat Committee, Agham Kot, have expressed deep sorrow and heartfelt condolences over the passing of Khalifa Ali Gul Laghari, a devoted employee of the Sindh Auqaf Department and a humble caretaker of the revered shrine of Roza-e-Athar Masooma-e-Sindh Bibi Maham Khadija (SA) Binte Imam Musa Kazim (AS).

In a joint condolence message, President of the Karachi Editors Club Mubasher Mir, Secretary General Syed Manzar Naqvi, along with leaders of the Zaareen Khidmat Committee including Zawar Abdul Sattar Dars, Niaz Hussain Laghari and others, paid tribute to the late Khalifa Ali Gul Laghari's lifelong dedication and sincere services at the Roza-e-Masooma-e-Sindh.

They stated that passing away while faithfully performing duties at the sacred threshold of Aal-e-Rasool (peace be upon them) is itself a great honor and spiritual blessing granted only to the fortunate. They described the late Khalifa Ali Gul Laghari as one of those blessed individuals who remained devoted to the service of Ahl-e-Bait (peace be upon them) until his last breath.

## Flour and sugar are being sold on subsidy rates in sahulat bazaars: DFC Shumaila Bano



Zafar Chishti

**TOBA TEK SINGH:** District Food Controller (DFC) Toba Tek Singh Shumaila Bano stated that, following the directives of the Punjab Government, essential commodities are being provided at fixed government rates across the district's Ramadan Sahulat Bazaars to offer relief to the public. She informed that during the holy month of Ramadan, a 10 kg bag of flour is available at Rs. 850 in the Sahulat Bazaar, which is Rs. 55 less than the open market price. Similarly, sugar is being offered at Rs. 140 per kilogram, which is Rs. 10 to 15 lower than the market rate. Shumaila Bano emphasized that ensuring the supply of quality and affordable food items during Ramadan is a top priority for the government. To achieve this, Price Control Magistrates and teams from the Food Department are regularly monitoring the Sahulat Bazaars to ensure compliance with the fixed rates.

She urged citizens to take advantage of the Ramadan Sahulat Bazaars and report any complaints to the relevant authorities promptly so that timely action can be taken.

## Capital Hospital takes digital leap with AI diagnostic system

**Amjad Mehmood**

**ISLAMABAD:** Capital Hospital has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Alibaba Medical AI to introduce artificial intelligence (AI)-based screening solutions in imaging radiology.

The signing ceremony was held at Capital Hospital and attended by Executive Director Dr. Muhammad Naem Taj, senior doctors of the hospital, and representatives of Alibaba Medical AI. The initiative is part of the vision of CDA Chairman and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa and is being implemented under the guidance of CDA Member Administration Talat Mahmood to modernize public healthcare facilities. Under the partnership, advanced AI technologies will be integrated into

the Radiology Department of Capital Hospital to enhance image interpretation and screening processes. The initiative aims to improve diagnostic accuracy, enable early disease detection, increase workflow efficiency, and raise the overall standard of patient care. AI-based radiology solutions will assist medical professionals by providing precise analysis of medical images, thereby strengthening clinical decision-making. The introduction of these systems is also expected to reduce reporting time and improve departmental performance. The project reflects CDA's commitment to promoting digital innovation and improving service delivery in public health institutions. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Naem Taj said that, on the directions of the CDA chairman, the collaboration repre-

sents a forward-looking step towards improving public healthcare services at Capital Hospital. He added that patients would benefit from the latest medical technologies, while doctors would gain access to reliable diagnostic tools. He further stated that the MoU with Alibaba Medical AI demonstrates Capital Hospital's alignment with CDA leadership's strategic vision of adopting modern digital healthcare practices and continuously improving patient outcomes through innovation. The use of advanced technology and artificial intelligence, he said, is a welcome development for providing better medical facilities to citizens. Dr. Taj expressed confidence that with the inclusion of this technology, Capital Hospital would soon be counted among the country's leading healthcare institutions.



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# Trump Tariffs Ruled Unlawful

**O**n February 20, 2026, the United States Supreme Court delivered a historic rebuke to presidential power, striking down the sweeping tariffs imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). By a 6-3 vote, the Court ruled that the 1977 law—designed to address extraordinary foreign threats during national emergencies—does not authorize a president to impose broad, open-ended tariffs. Chief Justice John Roberts wrote that while the president may “regulate” commerce under IEEPA, the statute contains no explicit reference to tariffs or duties. To read such vast taxing authority into two scattered words would, the Court concluded, represent a transformative expansion of executive power.

The decision did not touch tariffs imposed under other statutes, but it invalidated the most sweeping component of President Donald Trump’s tariff regime. Importantly, the Court declined to rule on whether or how the federal government must refund the enormous sums already collected. That question now looms as the most explosive consequence of the ruling.

Consider the arithmetic: if \$160 billion were distributed across even 200,000 importing firms, the average recovery would approach \$800,000 per business. For many small manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers operating on thin margins, such sums could mean rehiring workers, paying down debt, restoring inventory levels, or reinvesting in domestic operations.

Consumers, too, stand to benefit—though less directly. If even half of the tariff burden was passed on through price increases, households may have

absorbed tens of billions of dollars in higher costs across groceries, appliances, auto parts, clothing, and everyday goods. The removal of unlawful tariffs could reduce price pressures and contribute to a modest easing of inflationary strain. While not a silver bullet, it would remove a structural cost layer embedded in supply chains.

Internationally, the ruling has complex implications. Countries such as Canada, Mexico, China, and members of the European Union were among the largest trading partners affected by the IEEPA tariffs. While they will not receive refund checks—because tariffs were paid by U.S. importers—the decision reduces friction in trade relationships. Canada, whose political relationship with Washington had grown tense over tariff disputes, may see this as an opportunity to recalibrate economic ties. European officials have already emphasized stability and predictability as priorities.

China, the largest source of targeted tariff revenue, will interpret the ruling as a constraint on unilateral American economic pressure. However, the decision does not eliminate other statutory tools such as Section 232 or Section 301, which remain available for targeted trade actions. Thus, the global message is not that America is retreating from trade leverage, but that its use must operate within clearer legal boundaries.

Domestically, the political impact is profound. Trump’s tariffs symbolized strength to his supporters and disruption to his critics. Now, the Supreme Court has reframed the issue from policy

preference to constitutional authority. Democrats are likely to argue that the president imposed an unlawful tax on American businesses and consumers. Republicans may counter that the Court has weakened the executive’s ability to defend national economic interests.

Midterm elections will test which narrative prevails. If businesses begin receiving refunds and consumer prices ease, opponents of the tariff strategy may gain momentum. If, however, the administration pivots successfully to alternative statutory authorities and reestablishes elements of its trade framework, Trump may argue that the Court merely required procedural adjustments rather than policy abandonment.

Financial markets reacted swiftly and positively to the ruling, with equities rising on expectations of reduced trade uncertainty. Investors interpreted the decision as a move toward stability. Markets favor predictability, and the invalidation of sweeping emergency tariffs reduces the risk of abrupt cost shocks.

The ruling may also ripple through broader geopolitical calculations. In disputes involving Iran, Ukraine, NATO commitments, and trade alignments, allies and adversaries alike will note that American executive power is subject to judicial limits. The image of unrestrained economic unilateralism has been tempered. That could encourage diplomatic recalibration on multiple fronts.

Yet this is far from the end of tariff politics. Several federal statutes still

grant the president authority to impose tariffs under defined conditions. Congress itself could legislate new trade measures. Justice Brett Kavanaugh’s dissent emphasized that the ruling might not significantly constrain future tariff actions if grounded in other statutory frameworks. In other words, the strategy may evolve rather than disappear.

The broader lesson extends beyond trade. The Court’s decision underscores a foundational principle of the American constitutional system: Congress holds the power to tax, and any delegation of that power must be explicit and limited. Emergency authority cannot become a blank check for transformative economic policy.

This moment may serve as a wake-up call. For the presidency, it is a reminder that campaign mandates must operate within constitutional boundaries. For Congress, it is a challenge to reclaim and exercise its Article I powers responsibly. For the United States globally, it signals that even in matters of economic warfare, the rule-based system still functions.

Trade disputes, geopolitical tensions, and domestic political battles will continue. But the Supreme Court’s ruling has drawn a bright line: power, however forcefully claimed, must rest on lawful authority. In doing so, the Court has not merely reshaped a tariff regime. It has reaffirmed the principle that in the United States, economic strategy—no matter how popular—cannot outrun the Constitution.

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Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Second National Judicial Educators Conference

**T**he Federal Judicial Academy (FJA), through funding provided by the European Union and in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under the Deliver Justice Project, convened the second annual National Judicial Educators Conference in Islamabad, bringing together 45 judicial educators from across the country.

The two-day conference focused on accelerating the implementation of the Islamabad Declaration on the Future of Judicial Excellence, unanimously adopted at last year’s conference in October. The Declaration set out a shared vision for strengthening judicial education, emphasized the need for a National Judicial Education Framework, and proposed the establishment of a National Judicial Educators Forum to encourage collaboration and continuous learning.

In the closing ceremony, Mr. Hayat Ali Shah, Director General, Federal Judicial Academy, expressed appreciation for the active engagement and insightful contributions of all participants. He remarked, “This Conference has not only reinforced our shared commitment to judicial excellence but has also provided a dynamic platform for knowledge exchange and collaboration among judicial educators from across Pakistan. The discussions and action plans developed over these two days will be pivotal in developing a unified curriculum and advancing the Islamabad Declaration on the Future of Judicial Excellence. I am confident that the establishment of the National Judicial Educators Forum will sustain this momentum and ensure that judicial education continues to meet the highest standards of quality, inclusivity, and relevance.”

Throughout the conference, provincial and national judicial educators participated in interactive group exercises aimed at improving the training of judges and court staff. The discussions emphasized reforms in curriculum design and pedagogical approaches within judicial academies nationwide, with a focus on improving the justice sector’s responsiveness to the evolving needs of communities.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Kelly, First Secretary, Rule of Law, European Union Delegation to Pakistan, highlighted, “Judicial academies are a key part of a stable, modern and informed judiciary. Through the capacity building of judges and their legal staff, the academies lead the way in sharing case and procedural knowledge and best practice. The Federal and Provincial Judicial Academies of Pakistan, therefore, are a core part and partners of our justice sector support to Pakistan now and for the future.”

The two-day conference concluded with the development of a comprehensive action plan to implement the Islamabad Declaration on the Future of Judicial Excellence, aimed at modernizing judicial training practices and strengthening institutions responsible for delivering justice.

Ms. Shahzada Ahmad, Programme Manager, Rule of Law Programme, UNDP Pakistan, emphasized, “We have made



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Ashraf Al-Awsat)

## Pakistan’s defense importance, Pak-Saudi defense agreement

**P**akistan, being the defense, military and nuclear power of the Muslim world, has a very promising brotherly country in terms of security.

Pakistan’s political and military leadership has always had good, better and Muslim-based feelings for the Muslim world. That is why world powers have this attitude towards Pakistan. It has always been seen that whenever there is a clash of world powers or a turmoil in their global policies, Pakistan has been affected on a regional and state basis. That is why Pakistan has not only suffered a lot of losses instead of benefits, but has also made sacrifices. Pakistan’s political, government and military leaderships have continued their policies with a great defense strategy in harmony with each other, and have also handled matters of state defense, economic stability, institutional protection and security. In this situation, some time ago the government representatives signed a Saudi defense agreement, which is called the Pak-Saudi Defense Agreement. This agreement has also been given the name of a broad background. The purpose of the broad background is that this defense agreement can expand not only between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia but also with other Muslim countries. In this regard, Pakistan’s military and government representatives are also in contact with the Muslim world. Leaderships from Turkey, Iran, the United Arab Emirates to the Muslim world are also present. Pakistan has always demonstrated Pakistan’s active foreign policy in talks on security, maritime security, joint counter-terrorism strategies and new geopolitical alliances. Therefore, the current visit of the Field Marshal to the UAE is of great

importance. As an introduction, if we look at the state history of Pakistan, it will be found that the great support for the survival of this country has been its defense strategy, diplomatic balance and understanding of regional sensitivities. Pakistan, located at the crossroads of South Asia, the Middle East and Central Asia, is not only geographically important, but also serves as a strategic pivot for global powers. In this context, the recent defense agreement with Saudi Arabia and the subsequent visit of Asim Munir to the United Arab Emirates should be considered part of a larger regional strategy. The relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are not only diplomatic or economic in nature, but are based on religious respect, historical trust and defense cooperation. The role of Pakistan’s military experts, trainers and advisors has played an important role in the Saudi defense structure. In the current era, when the Middle East has become an arena of changing alliances, Iran-Saudi rapprochement, the situation in Yemen, the Gaza conflict and the competition between major powers, the Pak-Saudi defense agreement is being seen as a new hope for collective security in the Muslim world.

Pakistan’s importance is also evident in the context of the non-Muslim world. Economic corridor projects with China, security ties with the United States, increased energy and defense dialogue with Russia, and economic cooperation with the Gulf countries give Pakistan a balanced diplomatic position. World powers consider Pakistan important in terms of the situation in Afghanistan, the fight against terrorism, nuclear responsibility, and the balance in South Asia. Since its establish-

ment, Pakistan has faced several wars, waves of terrorism, political chaos, and economic crises, but has managed to maintain the continuity of state institutions, which is a testament to its defense and institutional strength.

The Muslim world’s expectations from Pakistan are multifaceted.

On the one hand, the desire for Islamic unity and a common defense strategy, on the other hand, the hope for diplomatic moderation and peace. The biggest test for Pakistan is to protect its national interests without becoming a tool of any global bloc politics. If the Pak-Saudi defense agreement is used for regional stability, elimination of terrorism and common security, it can become an ideal model for the Muslim world.

At the same time, it is important to remember that defense power is effective only when it is accompanied by economic and political stability. Pakistan’s internal political harmony, economic recovery, energy self-sufficiency and institutional transparency are necessary conditions for the effective implementation of foreign policy. If the internal front is strong, Pakistan will be able to play a more dignified and effective role in the external world.

Analytically, the Pak-Saudi defense agreement and Field Marshal Asim Munir’s visit to the United Arab Emirates are a reflection of Pakistan’s changing, but balanced and independent foreign strategy. These steps are not limited to military cooperation, but are part of a larger regional strategy aimed at balance, shared security, and diplomatic coherence. Pakistan’s history shows that this country has the ability to emerge from crises and chart a new course. Today, there is still a need to combine defense strength with diplomatic wisdom, economic reforms, and national unity to move forward into the future.



Analysis

Rehmatullah Burio

## IAEA DG Affirms Pakistan as a Well-Placed, Responsible Nuclear State

Hira Bashir

**T**he recent visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to the headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna marked a defining moment in Pakistan’s nuclear diplomacy. His engagement with Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi was not ceremonial; it reaffirmed Pakistan’s commitment to the safe, secure, and responsible use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

During the visit, Grossi emphasized that Pakistan is “well placed” to assist other member states in the peaceful applications of nuclear technology. As head of the world’s principal nuclear watchdog, his statement reflects confidence in Pakistan’s regulatory maturity, operational experience, and growing civilian nuclear expertise.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recognizes nuclear power as critical for limiting global warming to 1.5°C. Nuclear energy thus contributes directly to SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 13 (Climate Action), while supporting other goals such as health and food security.

Pakistan’s nuclear program has consistently earned high appraisal from the IAEA and other international bodies for compliance with safety protocols and regulatory standards. Even as a non-member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Pakistan is considered a responsible partner in nuclear cooperation. The IAEA chief’s visit to Pakistan in September 2025, recognized the country’s “peaceful nuclear program progressing at a good pace” under strong regulatory oversight.

The timing of the Prime Minister’s Vienna

visit is significant. Globally, nuclear technology is re-emerging as a key pillar in climate and energy strategies. For Pakistan, expanding nuclear power is critical to diversifying energy production, meeting growing demand.

Yet political obstacles remain. The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which regulates nuclear trade and prevents proliferation continues to exclude Pakistan despite its safeguarded civilian facilities and strengthened export controls. The NSG’s credibility was questioned in 2008 when India received a country-specific waiver for civil nuclear cooperation despite its non-NPT status. Selective exceptions affect technological access, economic opportunities, and regional strategic balance. Pakistan advocates for a non-discriminatory, criteria-based NSG membership for all non-NPT states, guided by objective safeguards rather than political convenience.

Grossi’s recognition that Pakistan is “well placed” to support other states in peaceful nuclear applications highlights that technical competence and responsible conduct are visible on the global stage. The challenge remains in aligning political frameworks with this technical reality.

The Prime Minister’s Vienna visit consolidated Pakistan’s position as a responsible nuclear state committed to development-oriented cooperation. By linking nuclear capability with energy security, climate mitigation, healthcare, agriculture, and water management, Pakistan demonstrates the tangible human and environmental benefits of nuclear science. Even without NSG membership, this integrated model strengthens international partnerships and stresses the potential for inclusiveness.

*The writer is Associate Research Officer at Center for International Strategic Studies Azad Jammu and Kashmir.*

# 33rd International Holy Quran Exhibition kicks off in Tehran

IRNA

TEHRAN: The 33rd International Holy Quran Exhibition officially opened on Saturday at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla, with Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Saleh Shariati attending the inauguration ceremony.

Although the exhibition doors opened to the public a day earlier, the formal launch marks the start of the country's largest annual Quranic event, featuring 11 exhibition sections and three sales halls with 70 specialized booths.

This year's exhibition covers a wide range of themes, including the Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), social hope and vitality, national unity, Islamic Revolution values, contemporary sciences, mosque-centered



culture, ethical consumption, modesty and hijab, enjoining good and forbidding wrong, and the lives of prophets and imams.

According to exhibition organizers, special emphasis has been placed on new technologies, artificial intelligence, creative industries, media produc-

tions, children and youth activities, and Quran-based research and education. A section also highlights martyred commanders and scientists, presenting a blend of art and modern technology.

Nightly Quran recitation gatherings featuring leading Iranian reciters will be held throughout the event. Organizers have also arranged services for donating and restoring damaged Qurans, including copies with historical value.

The international section hosts participants from 20 countries, with activities spanning artistic, scientific and cultural products, alongside 20 specialized international panels. Two prominent foreign Quranic figures will also be honored.

The exhibition, held under the slogan "Iran Under the Protection of the Quran," runs until Mar

## Israel allocates 244 million shekels for land registration projects in Area C



RAMALLAH: A report issued by the National Bureau for Defending the Land and Resisting Settlement revealed that the Israeli government continues to implement large-scale settlement projects in the occupied West Bank under the designation of "land settlement and registration," in violation of international law and threatening the Palestinians' land rights.

In its weekly settlement report, the Bureau affirmed that the Israeli government has allocated 244.1 million shekels to establish a mechanism for land registration and settlement procedures in Area C.

The move, the Bureau added, could lead to the displacement of Palestinians from approximately 83% of the area if the lands are registered under state ownership when Palestinian landowners are unable to prove their ownership under the stringent conditions imposed by Israeli authorities.

The report pointed out that the decisions were issued by sovereign ministries—the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Defense—in a move that formalizes the colonial annexation process, amid at seizing Palestinian land and expanding settlements, most notably the Adam settlement (Geva Binyamin) northeast of Jerusalem, which includes plans to construct approximately 6,000 new housing units, in addition infrastructure and public facilities development.

According to the report, the ongoing settlement expansion, land confiscation and demolition activities across the West Bank governorates, including Jerusalem, Hebron, Salfit, Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem and the Jordan Valley, where the violations included, the demolition of homes and agricultural and commercial facilities, land confiscation, preventing Palestinians from cultivating their lands, livestock theft, and the establishment of new outposts.

## Two Palestinians killed in Israeli drone strike in southern Gaza Strip



GAZA: Two Palestinians were killed on Saturday in an Israeli drone strike in the northern and southern Gaza Strip.

Medical sources pointed out that the drone strike targeted Jabalia refugee camp in the north and the Qizan Al-Najjar area south of Khan Yunis, in the north and the Qizan Al-Najjar area south of Khan Yunis, resulting in the killing of two Palestinians.

# Vice President Al-Sheikh tells Mladenov liaison office ready to assume full duties in Gaza

RAMALLAH: Vice President of the State of Palestine Hussein Al-Sheikh said today the Palestinian Authority has established a liaison office headed by Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa, affirming that it is fully prepared to assume its duties in the Gaza Strip.

In a letter addressed to the High Representative of the Gaza Board of Peace, Nikolay Mladenov, Al-Sheikh explained that recent communications with him, as well as ongoing consultations with US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner and other partners, were all aimed at supporting efforts led by President Donald Trump and advancing a political path aimed at achieving stability and peace.

Below is the text of the letter that the Vice President sent to Mladenov:

H. E. Mr. Nikolay Mladenov High Representative for Gaza Board of Peace

Dear Nickoloy,  
I am pleased to express our welcome of the statement issued by your Office on 20 February 2026 regarding the establishment of a Liaison Office by the Palestinian Authority, and your affirmation of the importance of this institutional framework for commu-



nication and coordination.

In this context, we wish to reaffirm that the contacts held with you, as well as the ongoing consultations with Mr. Steve Witkoff, Mr. Jared Kushner, and a number of partners, have all taken place within the framework of ensuring the success of the efforts led by President Donald Trump and supporting the political track aimed

at achieving stability and peace.

We have welcomed President Trump's 20-Point Peace Plan, as well as United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803 (2025), the establishment of the Office of the High Representative, and the formation of the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza. These constitute practical transitional steps that

contribute to alleviating the suffering of our people and providing administrative and security services, without creating administrative, legal, or security duality among our people in Gaza and the West Bank, and while reinforcing the principle of one system, one law, and one legitimate authority over arms.

In this regard, we hereby formally inform you that the Palestinian Authority has established the Liaison Office under the leadership of H. E. Dr. Mohammad Mustafa, Prime Minister of Palestine. The Office is fully prepared to assume its responsibilities, ensuring a clear and organized channel for coordination and communication with your Office.

This comes within the framework of our commitment to implementing President Trump's 20-Point Peace Plan, in a manner that contributes to building a brighter future for the Palestinian people and advancing their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent State of Palestine in accordance with international legitimacy, and as stated in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803 (2025).

# Speakers Mark International Mother Language Day Stressing Sindhi Survival and Local Language Protection

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: On the occasion of the International Mother Language Day, the Sindhi Language Authority organized a conference on the theme "Use of Technology for Multilingual Education: Challenges and Opportunities." The conference was presided over by renowned Sindhi writer and short story author Madad Ali Sindhi, while Provincial Minister Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah attended as the chief guest.

While addressing the conference, Madad Ali Sindhi said that this day carries great historical importance, as it commemorates the sacrifices made by students in 1952 for the Bengali language.

Later, in 1997, the United Nations declared it as International Mother Language Day. He said that even when there were no formal institutions, the Sindhi language remained alive. Despite countless attacks on Sindh, Sindhi, its people, and its language have survived. With heritage sites like Mohenjo-daro and figures such as Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, the Sindhi language will continue to thrive. He stressed the need for strict implementation of Sindhi language teaching in private institutions.

Chief guest Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah said that more than 7,000 languages are spoken around the world, and the responsibility of the language authority is to safeguard

the Sindhi language. He said the world must be told that Sindhis are peaceful people. Referring to recent discussions about dividing Sindh, he said that conspiracies against Sindh and the Sindhi language would be defeated. He also suggested that Sindhi language conferences should be held in Islamabad, Dubai, and other countries.

Chairman of the Sindhi Language Authority Dr. Sher Mehrai explained the objectives of the conference, stating that while the United Nations encourages learning multiple languages, priority must be given to one's mother tongue. He said that languages are preserved by common people, not just institu-

tions, and that Sindhis are fortunate to inherit a 5,000-year-old language. Renowned intellectual Inam Sheikh said that the biggest threat to the Sindhi language is the growing use of unnatural and irrelevant words.

Scholar Jami Chandio said that all other languages of the world are fundamentally equal. Differences among languages arise due to class systems, power, beliefs, and ignorance.

Director of Abdul Majid Bhurgri Institute of Language Engineering Amar Fayaz Buriro said that his institute is committed to providing machines with Sindhi language data so they can communicate the way a Sindhi mother speaks to her child.

Faculty member of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Nawabshah, Dr. Phulo Menghwar cited a UNESCO report, saying that besides Sindhi, other indigenous languages in Sindh are also endangered. He emphasized that the death of a language is the death of a nation's collective wisdom, and all local languages in Sindh must be granted legal protection to ensure their survival. Secretary of the Authority Dr. Raaz Shahani welcomed the participants and said that the day demands self-reflection on what service has been rendered for one's mother tongue.

During the conference, Dr. Makhmoor Bukhari, Dr. Bakhtawar Jalil Abro, and Professor Husamuddin Mirani presented



their research papers, while Aamir Zia Charan briefed participants on the performance of Sindhi Salamats on the internet.

The conference also featured the launching ceremony of three books published by the Authority and the unveiling of the SLA Font.

# Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir Broke Indian supremacy claims in the region

Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, COAS and CDF has emerged as a defining figure in Pakistan's contemporary history — a leader whose courage, principled stance, and strategic foresight reshaped regional perceptions and reinforced Pakistan's sovereign strength. His elevation to the rank of Field Marshal and Chief of Defense Forces symbolized not merely personal distinction, but a moment of restored national confidence and institutional resolve.

For years, South Asia's strategic discourse was influenced by the misperception created by India as regional counterweight to China. With an annual defense budget estimated near 80 billion US dollars, nearly ten times higher than Pakistan's annual defense budget, India was pursuing a misleading plan to cultivate the image

of being super powerful in the South Asia. But, the bold response of 10 May 2025 by Pakistan to India shattered this false narrative. Under the leadership of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Pakistan responded firmly to Indian attack and aggression of May 2025. Bunyan un Marsoos, meaning a solid and unbreakable structure and Marka i Haq was immediate and firm response to Indian aggression. It is a clear and strong reminder that peace is best preserved through strength, discipline and trust in Allah.

The Pakistani defensive response was swift and calculated, demonstrating technical sophistication, operational readiness, technological coordination, and strategic discipline. Several Indian Air Force aircraft, including Rafale fighter jets and many other including S400 were shot down and destroyed by Pakistan during the

escalation. These facts were strongly asserted and acknowledged by international Military magazines and making Pakistani supremacy remarkable and notable. This was possible by utter faith in Almighty Allah and bold and pious leadership of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir.

It is clear that Military strength is not determined by budget size alone; but ultimate faith in Allah, fearless and honest leadership, doctrine, morale, and preparedness are decisive elements. The 10 May response was framed as a demonstration of credible deterrence — firm yet controlled.

Field Marshal Munir's boldness lies not in aggression, but in clarity of principle. He has consistently articulated

that Pakistan seeks peace and promotes peace international and regional, but peace anchored in dignity and sovereignty.

Pakistani political leadership under PM Shahbaz Sharief and military leadership under Field Marshal Syed Asim had effectively curbed the foreign sponsored unrest and terrorist acts. Security institutions expanded intelligence coordination and internal stabilization measures aimed at dismantling militant networks. As internal security improved, economic stabilization efforts gained space to operate. Investor confidence and governance coordination strengthened when national security appeared steady and predictable.



Syed Faiz Naqshbandi

When enemies like India and Israel are upset and disturbed by strong political and military leadership and due to steadfast and effective security measures combined with full attention to economic stability, it is ample proof that Pakistan is moving in the right direction.

Pakistan has experienced a period marked by security consolidation, institutional recalibration, and efforts toward national stabilization. During this period, intelligence-based operations were intensified, and coordination among security institutions was strengthened. Emphasis was placed on dismantling militant networks, improving intelligence sharing, and enhancing rapid-response capabilities. These measures aimed public confidence and ensure a more predictable security environment. Collaboration between the armed forces and

the civilian government under PM Shehbaz Sharif focused on maintaining economic, diplomatic and political stability of Pakistan. The armed forces continued their traditional role in disaster response and humanitarian assistance. Relief operations during natural calamities, logistical support, and rehabilitation efforts reflected the military's broader contribution to national resilience.

Peace is not born of weakness; it is secured through responsible faith, resolve and strength. Pakistan is rapidly moving towards Peace, progress and Prosperity. Every Pakistani is under obligation to contribute for this eternal and noble destiny.

The author is senior leader of All Parties Hurriyet Conference (APHC) and legal expert of international law. He can be reached at faiz.naqshbandi@gmail.com

**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
173,169.71	172,170.29
Day's High	Day's Low
174,148.32	169,592.52
Index Value	Change
17,898,540,478	+999.42
Percentage	Time
+0.58%	20 Feb, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,686.89	+59.85
Percentage	Time
+0.56%	20 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
49,520.39	+125.23
Percentage	Time
+0.25%	20 Feb, 11:48 am GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
56,825.70	-642.13
Percentage	Time
-1.12%	20 Feb, 3:45 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	195.37	200.11
Bahrain Dinar	742.02	751.52
Canadian Dollar	203.35	206.87
China Yuan	38	39.50
Danish Krone	43.32	43.72
Euro	328.97	332.69
Hong Kong Dollar	35.29	36.16
Indian Rupee	2.85	3.30
Japanese Yen	1.7908	1.8909
Kuwaiti Dinar	905.68	915.12
Malaysian Ringgit	66.60	68.35
New Zealand \$	165.05	168.75
Norwegians Krone	27.61	27.91
Omani Riyal	726.76	736.26
Qatari Riyal	76.07	79.06
Saudi Riyal	74.75	75.35
Singapore Dollar	219.03	223.96
Swedish Korona	30.1	30.4
Swiss Franc	358.78	361.78
Thai Bhat	8.5	8.65
U.A.E Dirham	76.4	77.4
UK Pound Sterling	376.29	380.51
US Dollar	280.30	282.25

# CCP holds awareness session on Competition Law at Hamdard School of Law

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), in collaboration with Hamdard School of Law, Hamdard University, Karachi, organized an awareness session on Competition Law of Pakistan, highlighting the role and functions of the Commission.

The session was held at the University premises as part of CCP's ongoing academia advocacy drive to promote awareness of Competition Law among students, faculty members, and researchers.

The CCP delegation was led by Ms. Bushra Naz Malik, Member (CCP), and included Dr. Ikram ul Haq, Director General (Market Intelligence Unit); Ms. Marryum Pervaiz, Secretary to the Commission; and Ms. Maliha Qudus, Director, Cartels & Trade Abuse. The delegation was welcomed by Mr. Anwar



Ahmad, Associate Dean, Faculty of Legal Studies; Mr. Kaleem Ahmed Ghias, Registrar; and senior faculty members of the University.

During the session, CCP officials presented case studies to illustrate various forms of cartelization in Pakistan's economy and explained how the Commission detects and

penalizes such anti-competitive conduct.

Dr. Ikram ul Haq provided an overview of CCP's mandate and core functions. Ms. Marryum Pervaiz, in her presentation, elaborated on Sections 10 and 11 of the Competition Act, 2010, covering deceptive marketing practices and mergers

& acquisitions, with examples of misleading advertisements and corporate consolidations reviewed by the Commission. Whereas, Ms. Maliha Qudus highlighted CCP's enforcement actions against abuse of dominant position and prohibited agreements, including cartels.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms.

Bushra Naz Malik emphasized the Commission's commitment to fostering a level playing field for businesses in Pakistan. She noted that raising awareness among young scholars and future legal professionals is essential for building a culture of compliance with Competition Law.

## Waiting for customers

ISLAMABAD: Vendors are busy in buying fruits and vegetables from whole sale dealers at Fruit and Vegetables Market of the Sector I-II as due to the availability of huge amount of vegetables the prices are controlled comparing to the last year Ramadan in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Transform Strong Pakistan-U. S. Diplomatic Ties into a Robust Economic Partnership: Usman Shaukat



**Commerce Desk**

RAWALPINDI: President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (RCCI), Usman Shaukat, has emphasized the need to translate the current strong diplomatic relations between Pakistan and the United States into a comprehensive economic partnership. Speaking on a private television program, he stated that structural reforms can convert existing diplomatic goodwill into tangible economic outcomes.

He noted that an RCCI trade delegation recently concluded a highly productive visit to Washington, D. C., New York City, and New Jersey, aimed at advancing practical measures to expand bilateral trade, investment, and long-term commercial cooperation between Pakistan and the United States.

Led by RCCI President Usman Shaukat, the delegation held meetings with Congressional Pakistan Caucus Co-Chairs Jack Bergman and Tom Suozzi, as well as Hank Johnson, Jon

Ossoff, and Chris Van Hollen. Key engagements with Greater New York Chamber of Commerce, Open NY, and Chamber of Industry Association New Jersey reflected strong mutual interest in deepening economic cooperation.

President Shaukat expressed appreciation for the support of Farooq Mughal for facilitating important engagements with U. S. Congressional representatives in Washington, D. C. He also acknowledged the efforts of Pak Steel CEO Hassan Farid in advocating for a transition toward an investment-driven bilateral partnership.

Highlighting the economic outlook, Shaukat noted that Pakistan-U. S. bilateral trade currently exceeds USD 10 billion, with textile exports serving as a backbone of trade. However, he emphasized that the existing volume remains far below potential and should be tripled through diversification into high-value sectors, regulatory reforms, and enhanced investor facilitation.

## Business Line Awarded SAP Partnership in Pakistan, Strengthening Regional Footprint

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Business Line, a leading SAP partner with a strong presence in the Middle East, has officially been awarded SAP Partner status in Pakistan, marking a significant milestone in the company's regional expansion and commitment to driving digital transformation across the country.

Speaking on the announcement, Nabeel Ahmed, CEO of Business Line, said "Being awarded SAP partnership in Pakistan is a strategic and exciting step for Business Line. Pakistan is a high-potential market with organizations increasingly looking to modernize and digitize their operations. Our collaboration with SAP allows us to bring global best practices, regional experience, and localized expertise to support businesses in achieving sustainable growth."

Hazik Ahmed, Country Director - Pakistan, Business Line, added "We aim to work closely with local enterprises, partners, and industry stakeholders to address real business challenges through SAP's robust tech-



nology portfolio. Our goal is to become a trusted digital transformation partner for organizations across Pakistan."

The announcement reinforces Business Line's broader vision of expanding its SAP practice across emerging markets, leveraging regional knowledge while delivering global standards of excellence.

## Punjab Waives Stamp Duty on Court/SECP-Approved Schemes of Arrangements

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Punjab, in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2017, has notified the complete waiver of stamp duty on property transfers arising from mergers and schemes of arrangement approved by the Courts or the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP).

The notification follows a judgment of the Lahore High Court (Rawalpindi Bench) reported

as 2025 CLD 587, delivered by Honourable Justice Jawad Hassan and Justice Malik Javid Iqbal Wains. The case examined whether the Punjab Government could levy stamp duty on merger schemes sanctioned by the Courts or the SECP.

During the proceedings, the SECP informed the Court that under Section 282(5) of the Companies Act, 2017, companies with registered offices in the Islamabad Capital Territory are exempt from stamp duty on property transfers arising from mergers or schemes of

arrangement approved by the Court or the SECP. However, this provision becomes applicable in provinces only after notification or legislation by the respective provincial governments.

The Court directed the Chief Secretary, Punjab, and the SECP to consult on the matter. Following a series of meetings and deliberations, the Punjab Government issued the notification granting exemption from stamp duty on property transfers arising from mergers or schemes of arrangement approved



by the Court or the SECP.

As company law is a federal subject while stamp duty falls within provincial jurisdiction, this overlap had created practical difficulties for

companies undertaking restructuring and mergers in Punjab. The exemption is expected to facilitate such transactions, reduce costs, and support corporate restructuring, investment, and business growth in the province.

The SECP has welcomed the Government of Punjab's decision, terming it a positive step toward facilitating the corporate sector. The Commission also appreciated the Court's proactive role in guiding stakeholders toward a timely resolution of the issue.

## MG JW Automobile Partners with Wafi Energy Pakistan

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: MG JW Automobile Pakistan Pvt. Ltd. has announced a landmark collaboration with Wafi Energy Pakistan Limited to launch MG Motor Oil in Pakistan. The signing ceremony was held at the MG CKD Plant in Lahore, attended by Mr. Shao, CEO MG Motors Pakistan, Mr. Danish Ansari, Director Lubricants Wafi Shell, and senior leadership from both companies.

This strategic partnership introduces MG Motor Oil with Advanced Synthetic Technology motor oils - 0W-20 SP C5 and 5W-30 SP C3 - specifically engineered to meet the demands of modern engines. "Designed to redefine engine performance," said Mr. Shao, CEO MG Motors Pakistan, "MG Motor Oil ensures optimal efficiency, superior protection, and reliability. It is tailored to meet the requirements of modern engines, enhancing engine life, improving fuel efficiency, and delivering consistent performance."

## Camping against price gougers is ongoing

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: Under the directive of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, a campaign against price gougers is ongoing. Deputy Commissioner Attock Rao Atif Raza is leading the initiative, with Assistant Commissioners and other Price Magistrates present in the field, conducting daily market inspections and taking action against traders overcharging customers.

In this context, Assistant Commissioner Attock Muhammad Arif Qureshi visited Peoples Colony Market, where, following complaints about excessive prices of major meat products, two shops were sealed. Additionally, a total fine of Rs. 50,000 was imposed for selling vegetables, fruits, and poultry at inflated prices.

# UAE Ambassador's Cup Ramadan Football Tournament Kicks Off in Islamabad



**Sports Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The 14th UAE Ambassador's Cup Ramadan Football Tournament 2026 kicked off in Islamabad

in the presence of a large gathering of diplomats, officials, and spectators.

The opening ceremony was attended by the Ambassador of Kuwait, Ambassador of Lebanon,

Ambassador of Zimbabwe, the Deputy Head of Mission of the United States, senior Pakistani government officials, members of the diplomatic community, and representatives of the media.

The annual tournament, hosted by the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, aims to promote sportsmanship, cultural exchange, and community engagement during the

holy month of Ramadan. The event brings together diverse communities in a spirit of friendship and mutual understanding.

A total of 10 teams will compete

in 22 matches throughout the tournament, offering competitive football and fostering people-to-people ties among participating nations and communities.

## ICC Men's T-20 Cricket World Cup 2026 Super Eight Match



**Asim Tanveer**

Pakistan and New Zealand's Super Eights match to open the second phase of the 2026 T20 World Cup was abandoned because of rain without a ball being bowled.

The rain started at Colombo's R

Premadasa Stadium as soon as Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha was the toss and chose to bat first on Saturday.

The post-toss interviews were completed, but with the forecast suggesting the game would be in doubt, there was little surprise when the teams ran for cover.

More than 60 ground staff were on hand to cover the square and the majority of the playing surface.

The persistent rain eventually led to the umpires calling the Group 2 match off at 9:05pm local time (15:35 GMT).

Not even a five-over match was

possible by the 10:16 pm (16:46 GMT) cut-off time, giving the two teams one point each.

Tournament co-host India plays South Africa in Ahmedabad in the first Group 1 match on Sunday, when co-host Sri Lanka and England meet in Group 2 in Pallekele.

## Pak, SA Women ODI series begins on Sunday

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: Pakistan will face South Africa in a three-match women's ODI series commencing from February 22 (Sunday).

The ODI matches will be played on 22, 25 February and 1 March. The first and third games will start at 1pm PKT, while the only day-night fixture at SuperSport Park, Centurion will get underway at 4pm PKT.

This is Pakistan women's second ODI series against South Africa in six months.

Pakistan's 15-member squad will be captained by Fatima Sana, while Laura Wolvaardt will lead the home side. Pakistan come on the back of a comprehensive win in the third T20I of the series, winning the game by 53 runs.

The squad features one uncapped player for Pakistan, with left-arm pacer Tasmia Rubab braced for her ODI debut.

The three-match ODI series is part of the 2025-2029 ICC Women's ODI Championship; the competition that serves as a qualification route for the 2029 Women's Cricket World Cup.

In this cycle, each side will feature in eight three-match ODI series; four home and four away, so every game carries significant value in the Championship standings.

For Pakistan, in the current squad, in



the batting department, Sidra Amin has featured in 13 ODIs against South Africa, scoring 476 runs at an average of 43.27 including two centuries and as many half-centuries.

In the bowling unit, left-arm spinner Nashra Sundhu has played 16 matches, claiming 25 wickets at an economy rate of 4.16 with her career-best figures of 6-26 coming against the Proteas in September 2025.

Wahab Riaz talking to PCB Digital ahead of the ODI series said:

"The T20I series was very competi-

tive and we will look to give South Africa a tough time in the ODI series as well. It is all about belief. We have been playing good cricket and now need to implement our plans better.

"ODI cricket is different to T20Is; one has to be more disciplined. The pitches are good for both bowling and batting. These wickets are supportive and aid anyone who plays good cricket.

"We have made a few changes, but we will play positive, attacking cricket. At the same time, we will take our time in the middle. If we execute our plans well,

we can win this series.

"Every match is important for us. We are working hard to cover loopholes in the fielding; one good catch or run-out can change the momentum of the game.

I am positive and backing this team to win the series."

15-member squad:

Fatima Sana (captain), Aliya Riaz, Ayesha Zafar, Diana Baig, Gull Feroza, Muneeba Ali (wicket-keeper), Najjia Alvi (wicket-keeper), Nashra Sundhu, Natalia Parvaiz, Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal, Sidra Amin, Syeda Aroob Shah, Tasmia Rubab and Umm-e-Hani

Player support personnel for South Africa series:

Wahab Riaz (mentor), Imran Farhat (batting coach), Umaid Asif (fast bowling coach), Abdur Rehman (spin bowling coach), Abdul Majeed (fielding coach), Moeen (strength & conditioning coach), Waleed Ahmad (performance analyst), Ayesha Ashar (Team manager), Tehreem Sumbal (physiotherapist) and Raza Rashid Kitchlew (media manager)

Pakistan Women's tour of South Africa ODI series schedule: (22 February to 1 March)

1st ODI - 22 February - Mangaung Oval, Bloemfontein (day) at 1pm PKT  
2nd ODI - 25 February - SuperSport Park, Centurion (day/night) at 4pm PKT  
3rd ODI - 1 March - Kingsmead, Durban (day) at 1pm PKT

### Brig Muhammad Kashif Hamayun Administrator DHA inaugurated the DHA RUN



**Tahir Amin Malik**

LAHORE: The Chief Guest Brig Muhammad Kashif distributed the medals to the winners Male and Female runners, along with Brig Mir Siddique Executive Director Sports, Col Shahbaz, Col Attique ur Rehman, Col Umair Najum etc. Chief Guest announced that RUN will be arranged in all other Sports Complex in the month of Ramadan. People of good crowd both Male/ Female of all age groups participated with enthusiasm for winning. Different DHA sports clubs Karate, Judo, Skating, Gym & others are also took part in this prestigious event. Praise that such events will be continued once in every 2 months. So that children will become more involved in sports activities rather losing their health busy in Mobile etc.

Kyokushin karate Club of DHA-VI capt Fasih Babar Amin Shaheed sports complex Lahore under the supervision of Shihan Atta Hussain Butt, Sensei Saima Batool, Sensei Amjad Prince & Sensei Ghaznifer Ali etc perform a demonstration before the beginning of the RUN which was very much appreciated by the people. Karatekas perform Kihon, Kata, Kumite, Nun Chucks Dynamic Kicks etc.

### Bangladesh 'A' beat Pakistan 'A' in second semifinal of Women's Asia Cup Rising Stars

**Sports Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Bangladesh 'A' prevailed over Pakistan 'A' in the second semi-final of the ACC Asia Cup Rising Stars women's by 54 runs here at the Terdthai Cricket Ground, Bangkok.



According to details, after being asked to bat first, Bangladesh 'A' posted 110-8 in 20 overs and then bowled out Pakistan 'A' for 56 in 16.4 overs.

Skipper Fahima Khatun led Bangladesh 'A' from front with her all-round performance that included 40 not out with the bat and two for six with the ball in her three overs. She walked in to bat at 39-2 in 7.5 overs after both the opening duo of Shamima Sultana (13, 13b, 2x4s) and Ishma Tanjim (12, 23b, 1x4) had departed.

Apart from the top four, no other Bangladesh 'A' batter entered the double figures. For Pakistan 'A', skipper Hafsa Khalid picked up two wickets, while Omaira Sohail, Momina Riasat, Waheeda Akhtar and Anosha Nasir dismissed one batter each.

In turn, only Shawaal Zulfiqar (14, 17b, 1x6), Hafsa (12, 15b, 1x4) and Yusra Amir (11, 18b, 2x4s) got starts for Pakistan 'A' but in vain as wickets kept falling at regular intervals.

Sanjida Akter Meghla picked up three for six apart from Fahima's two scalps and Farjana Easmin, Fatema Jahan and Fariha Trisna's one strike each. Fahima Khatun (Bangladesh 'A') was declared Player of the match. Scores in brief: Bangladesh 'A' 110-8, 20 overs (Fahima Khatun 40 not out; Hafsa Khalid 2-25).

Pakistan 'A' 56 all out, 16.4 overs (Shawaal Zulfiqar 14; Sanjida Akter Meghla 3-6, Fahima Khatun 2-6).

## 'Pandheera Pandh me' by Zahid Hussain Soomro: A Book Review

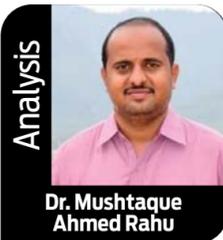
Mr. Zahid Hussain Soomro has written four books in a short period of time, i.e., 1. "Kaana Manjh Karar", 2. "Pankhryun Gulab Jun" and 3. "Pandhiyara Pandh Mein" 4. Muhammad Essa Soomro Jun Ilmi Khidmatun. As I have read the book 'Pandhiyara Pandh Mein', "Travelogue of Iran" begins with an enchanting journey that starts from Daulatpur, Pakistan. The author takes us through every detail of his preparation, setting the stage for an adventure filled with

history, culture, and the beauty of Iran. The Journey Begins: Daulatpur to Quetta: The journey begins from the border, highlighting the communication between Pakistani and Iranian officials. Despite the formalities, the warmth and cooperation between the two sides are evident, setting a positive tone for the journey ahead.

Crossing Borders: Taftan Border: As the train reaches Quetta, the next leg of the journey involves crossing the Taftan Border into Iran. The author gives a

detailed account of the procedures at the border, highlighting the communication between Pakistani and Iranian officials. Despite the formalities, the warmth and cooperation between the two sides are evident, setting a positive tone for the journey ahead.

The Beauty of Iran: Sistan and Zahidan: Entering Iran, the author



Analysis

Dr. Mushtaq Ahmed Rahu

takes us through Sistan and Zahidan, two regions rich in history and culture. The narrative paints a picture of the landscapes and the daily life of the people, showcasing their hospitality and kindness. The descriptions are so vivid that one can almost smell the spices in the market and hear the chatter of the locals.

City of Gardens and Poets: Shiraz:

Next, we are taken to the city of Shiraz, famously known as the City of Gardens and Poets. The author praises the beautiful gardens, the poetry of Hafez and Saadi, and the serene atmosphere that makes Shiraz a haven for artists and dreamers alike. The gardens, with their blooming flowers and tranquil ponds, offer a perfect escape from the hustle and bustle of daily life.

Holy Site: Ziyarat Qum: The journey then leads to Qum, a city known for its religious significance. The author describes the Ziyarat, or pilgrimage, to the holy sites with great reverence. The

spiritual ambiance of the city and the devotion of the pilgrims leave a lasting impression.

The book is comprehensive, with a preface by Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Lakho, comments from Parwano Soomro, and a back cover by Mumtaz Khadim Memon. Recently, this book was nominated for the "Adab Samaj Insaniyat Best Book Award" by Adab Samaj Insaniyat Forum Pakistan in the sixth annual Workshop and Award Ceremony 2025 held on 7 February 2025 at the Arts Council Rawalpindi.

## Shaking hands

Washington DC: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, shaking hands with US Commerce Secretary, Howard A. Lutnick after a meeting at the Department of Commerce in Washington D.C. Secretary Commerce, Government of Pakistan, and Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States of America are also seen.



Photo: PID

## Finance Minister advances economic cooperation with US Commerce Secretary

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani Delegation, led by Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, met US Commerce Secretary Howard A. Lutnick at the Department of Commerce in Washington, D. C.

The Finance Minister was accompanied by Secretary of Commerce, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States and Trade and Economic Ministers, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance here on Saturday.

Both sides expressed the desire to enhance our economic cooperation, especially in the fields of Trade and Investment besides discussing USA's

interest in investing in fields of ICT, Mining, and energy.

Finance Minister appreciated the role of US Chamber of Commerce in organizing US Pakistan Trade and Investment Forum on 31st March, 2026, which would be attended by renowned companies from both countries, besides Ministerial representation from Pakistan and USA.

The Finance Minister expressed the hope that the office of US Commerce Secretary would also participate in the same.

Both sides reiterated their commitment to further their engagements on investments in major projects in the coming months.

## Trump to raise global tariff from 10% to 15%

**Reuters**

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said on Saturday he will raise a temporary tariff from 10% to 15% on U. S. imports from all countries, the maximum level allowed under the law, after the U. S. Supreme Court struck down his previous tariff programme.

Trump had immediately announced a 10% across-the-board tariff on Friday after the court's decision, which found the president had exceeded his authority when he imposed an array of higher rates under an economic emergency law.

The new levies are

grounded in a separate but untested law, known as Section 122, that allows tariffs up to 15% but requires congressional approval to extend them after 150 days. No president has previously invoked Section 122, and its use could lead to further legal challenges.

Trade experts and congressional aides are sceptical that the Republican-majority Congress would extend the tariffs, given polls that show growing numbers of Americans blame the duties for higher prices.

In a social media post on Saturday, Trump said he would use the 150-day period



to work on issuing other

"legally permissible" tariffs. The administration intends to rely on two other statutes that permit import taxes on specific products or countries based on investigations into national security or unfair

trade practices.

"I, as President of the United States of America, will be, effective immediately, raising the 10% Worldwide Tariff on Countries, many of which have been 'ripping' the U. S. off for decades, without

retribution (until I came along!), to the fully allowed, and legally tested, 15% level," he wrote in a Truth Social post.

The Section 122 tariffs include exemptions for certain products, including critical minerals, metals and energy products, according to the White House.

Wendy Cutler, a former senior U. S. trade official and senior vice president at the Asia Society think tank, said she was surprised Trump had not gone for the maximum Section 122 rate on Friday, but that his rapid-fire change underscored the uncertainty trading partners faced.

## Govt reviews wheat procurement strategy, assures adequate stocks across provinces

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: National Wheat Oversight Committee, on Saturday, was informed that adequate wheat stocks were currently available in all provinces to meet national consumption requirements until the arrival of the new crop.

The committee, which met with Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain in chair, reiterated that there was no risk of wheat shortage in Pakistan, and coordinated measures were in place to ensure uninterrupted supply across markets.

National Wheat Oversight Committee met to review wheat procurement arrangements, stock availability, and price stability measures across the country.



The meeting was attended by senior officials of the federal and provincial governments, who presented detailed briefings on procurement preparedness, stock positions, and supply management strate-

gies ahead of the upcoming harvesting season.

During the meeting, provinces shared updates on their respective procurement strategies. The Government of Khyber Pakh-

tunkhwa has adopted a hybrid wheat procurement model comprising 75 percent public sector participation and 25 percent private sector involvement to enhance efficiency and market responsiveness.

The Government of Sindh informed the Committee that wheat procurement will be carried out through the public sector to ensure stable supply and price management.

The Committee was further informed that the illustrative wheat procurement price has been fixed at Rs 3,500 per 40 kilograms, and provinces have been sensitized to ensure smooth implementation of procurement operations.

The Federal Minister emphasized that the current procurement framework will remain applicable for one year. He stated that the Federal Government is working on a comprehensive long-term wheat policy for the period 2026-2030, aimed at strengthening national food security through modern reforms.

## Maryam Nawaz Sharif welcomes arrival of fasting citizens at Negahban Dastarkhwan



**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has welcomed the continued arrival of fasting citizens at the "Negahban Dastarkhwan" under the "Maryam ke Mehmaan" initiative.

She said those who expand their tables for others deserve appreciation, adding that the spirit of Islamic brotherhood during Ramadan is a positive and encouraging sign.

More than 500 Negahban Dastarkhwan across the province remained crowded for the third consecutive day, where thousands of people broke their fast. With the support of philanthropists and institutions, arrangements for dignified and quality iftar were ensured.

Women and children also attended in large numbers, while administrative officials welcomed citizens on behalf of the chief minister at each site. Beverages and meal boxes were served at the dastarkhwan set up at central locations in cities.

The initiative witnessed steady participation in Chiniot, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Dera Ghazi Khan and Mandi Bahauddin, while it remained a major public attraction in Murree, Kasur, Narowal, Layyah, Kot Addu, Hafizabad, Gujrat, Chakwal, Attock, Sheikhpura and Nankana Sahib.

Large gatherings and vibrant scenes were also reported from Lahore, Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Multan, Lodhran, Khanewal, Sialkot, Rajanpur and other districts across the province.

## Court issues non-bailable arrest warrants for KP CM Sohail Afridi

**Court Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: A District and Sessions Court in Islamabad on Saturday issued non-bailable arrest warrants (NBW) for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi for non-appearance in court in connection with a case.

Senior Civil Judge Abbas Shah heard the case. During the hearing, Chief Minister Sohail Afridi failed to appear in the court.

Due to his continued absence from the court, Judge Abbas Shah issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Sohail Afridi and directed relevant authorities to arrest him and produce him on the next date of hearing.

Later, the Court adjourned the hearing of the case till March 9, 2026.

The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) filed a case against the KP Chief Minister, Sohail Afridi, vide PECA Act.

## Sindh Assembly rejects 'Karachi province' move

**Bureau Report**

KARACHI: The Sindh Assembly on Saturday witnessed heated speeches as it unanimously advanced a resolution reaffirming the unity and territorial integrity of the province, rejecting any proposal to divide Sindh or carve out Karachi as a separate province.

Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah tabled the resolution, declaring Sindh not merely an administrative unit but one of the world's oldest living civilisations, with roots tracing back to the Indus Valley Civilisation and Mohenjo-daro.

The resolution stated that Sindh's identity, language and cultural continuity predate modern political boundaries.

It referenced Sindh's separation from the Bombay Presidency in 1936, the Sindh Assembly's passage of the Pakistan Resolution on March 3, 1943, and the province's role in the creation of Pakistan.

Citing Article 239 of the Constitution, the resolution noted that any change in provincial boundaries requires a two-thirds majority.

It asserted that attempts to divide Sindh or declare Karachi a separate

province would be contrary to history, the Constitution and democratic norms, and strongly condemned such moves.

Addressing the House, the chief minister said he opposed statements advocating the breakup of Sindh or the separation of Karachi.

He emphasised that Sindh played a foundational role in Pakistan's creation and continues to contribute significantly to the federation's strength.

He clarified that the resolution was not aimed at any individual or political party but intended to safeguard the province's unity.

