



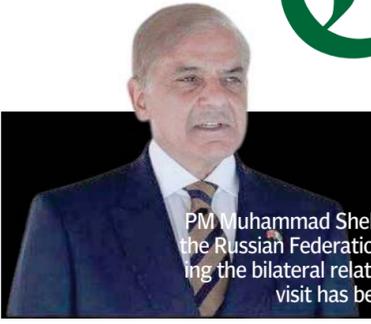
Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے ابوالوید نے بیان کیا، کہا ہم سے
شعبہ نے بیان کیا، ان سے عدی نے، ان
سے ابوہریرہ نے اور ان سے ابوہریرہ نے
اللہ عزوجل نے کہ نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم
نے فرمایا جس نے مال چھوڑا (یعنی موت کے
بعد) وہ اس کے وارثوں کا ہے اور جس نے
قرض چھوڑا ہے وہ اس کے ذمہ ہے۔
(صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 6763)

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PM's visit to Russian Federation postponed due to regional, internal situation

PM Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, after consultation, has decided to postpone his official visit to the Russian Federation. "The Prime Minister's visit to Russia is of great significance for advancing the bilateral relations between the two countries; however, given the current situation, the visit has been postponed," PM Office Media Wing, Sunday, said in a press statement.



Khamenei's death: Naqvi urges protesters to remain peaceful

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has said that today is a day of mourning for the Muslim Ummah, as well as for the people of Iran and Pakistan. In a statement, Naqvi expressed deep sorrow over the martyrdom of Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, saying that every Pakistani shares the grief of the Iranian people. "It is a day of mourning indeed. We stand with Iran in this difficult time," Naqvi said.

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Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raji'un (إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ)

Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei greets the crowd as he attends a program held in the capital Tehran, Iran on Jan. 17.



Photo: Iranian Leader Press Office/Anadolu via Getty Images

Govt, people of Pakistan condole martyrdom of Ayatollah Khamenei

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Sunday, said the government and the people of Pakistan join the people of Iran in their hour of grief and sorrow and extend the most sincere condolences on the martyrdom of His Eminence Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.



In a post on X, he said Pakistan also expresses concern over the violation of the norms of international law.

It is an age-old convention that the Heads of State/Government should not be

targeted, he stated. He said, "We pray for the departed soul. May Allah Almighty grant patience and strength to the Iranian people to bear this irreparable loss."

PM, King of Jordan discuss regional situation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Sunday, held a telephone conversation with King of Jordan Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein to discuss the evolving regional situation.



The two leaders exchanged views on the serious regional developments following the recent escalation from the Israeli attack on Iran, which was followed by attacks on Jordan and other regional countries.

The Prime Minister expressed Pakistan's deep concern over the situation and emphasized the urgent need for restraint, de-escalation, and dialogue to preserve regional peace and stability.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's solidarity with the Kingdom of Jordan as well as other brotherly countries of the region, during this challenging time, and reiterated Pakistan's readiness to support all efforts aimed at restoring calm and promoting stability.

Both leaders agreed to maintain close coordination on regional developments.

Iran begins 40-day mourning after Khamenei martyred in US-Israeli attack

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Iran has begun 40 days of mourning after Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was martyred in ongoing attacks by the United States and Israel, according to Iranian state media.

Top security officials were also martyred in Saturday's strikes, along with Khamenei's daughter,

son-in-law and grandson. The killings mark one of the most significant blows to Iran's leadership since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

President Masoud Pezeshkian condemned the killing as "a great crime," according to a statement from his office. He also declared seven days of public holidays in addition to the 40-day mourning

period.

The people were pouring into the streets of the capital following the news of Khamenei's Martyr.

"There will be expected ceremonies," he said, noting they would likely take place amid continuing bombardment across the country.

Footage aired by Iranian state media showed supporters mourning at the shrine of Imam Reza in Mashhad, with several

elsewhere, including Shiraz, Yasuj and Lorestan.

"There will be expected ceremonies," he said, noting they would likely take place amid continuing bombardment across the country.

Footage aired by Iranian state media showed supporters mourning at the shrine of Imam Reza in Mashhad, with several

people seen crying and collapsing in grief.

The Martyred also led to protests in neighbouring Iraq, which declared three days of public mourning. In Baghdad, protesters confronted security forces in the heavily fortified Green Zone, which houses Iraqi government buildings and foreign embassies.

PM reviews regional, security situation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Sunday, chaired a high-level meeting to review the regional and Pakistan's security situation.

The meeting reviewed the regional situation in detail.

The meeting discussed the role of Pakistan and various measures to establish peace in

the region.

The meeting also reviewed the situation in Afghanistan. The meeting was also briefed on the country's internal situation and security arrangements.

On the instructions of the Prime Minister, steps were also reviewed to evacuate Pakistani citizens from Iran. A detailed briefing was given by the Foreign Office on the safe

return of citizens.

The evacuation of Pakistani citizens from Iran is being made possible through Azerbaijan.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, Federal Ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Mohsin Naqvi, Azam Nazir



Tarar, Ahad Khan Cheema, Fatemi and high-ranking civil and military officials attended the meeting.

Pakistan stands firmly with Bahrain: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a telephonic conversation with King of Bahrain Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to discuss the ongoing crisis in the Middle East in the aftermath of the recent hostilities between Israel and Iran, and Iran's subsequent retaliatory attacks on several Gulf countries, including the Kingdom of Bahrain.



The Prime Minister said that such unprovoked acts of aggression only escalate the situation and threaten the peace and stability of the entire region.

He assured the leadership of Bahrain that Pakistan stood firmly with Bahrain and other brotherly Gulf countries

and underscored the need for maximum restraint in this difficult time.

He emphasized the need to preserve the primacy of international law and reiterated that Pakistan would always remain committed to supporting peace efforts and urged all parties to engage in diplomacy and seek a negotiated solution to the crisis.

Nine killed in at US consulate in Karachi as pro-Iran protests erupt across Pakistan

Bureau Report

KARACHI: At least nine people were killed during pro-Iran protests at the United States consulate in the Pakistan megacity of Karachi on Sunday, after protesters clashed with law enforcement personnel near the US Consulate on Mai Kolachi Road, as protests erupted countrywide against the US-Israeli attacks on Iran.



Minister Mohsin Naqvi to issue an appeal, urging people to remain peaceful. "Today is a sorrowful day for the entire Muslim ummah, Pakistan's public and Iran's public," he said in a video statement.

Stating that every Pakistani citizen was as aggrieved as Iranians, Naqvi said, "My only request is that we all stand with you, but please do not take the law into your hands. You may protest but peacefully."

Section 144 ignored as protests near embassy turn violent, police use shelling

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Multiple casualties occurred as protesters clashed with law enforcement personnel near the Diplomatic Enclave, where people had gathered to protest the attacks on Iran.

The clashes came after the district administration had banned all kinds of gatherings under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

Eight injured protesters were brought to PIMS while nine injured were shifted to Polytechnic hospital where they are being treated for their injuries.

Police resorted to heavy shelling near the Foreign Office building in an effort to stop the protesters from entering the Diplomatic Enclave. The police, backed by Rangers, succeeded in pushing the protesters



back and out of the Red Zone.

In the late afternoon, thousands of people reached Aabpara Chowk to march towards the US Embassy for protests over Supreme Leader Khamenei's assassination.

However, the march was stopped by the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) at Serena Chowk, where shelling was employed, resulting in multiple injuries.

The protesters burnt a police checkpoint at Serena Chowk.

Protesters also manhandled mediapersons, including cameramen and photographers, snatching their cameras and phones and deleting the pictures and videos.

However, in the evening, the police successfully dispersed all the protesters and resumed the traffic.

Earlier in the day, interior minister Naqvi also visited various areas of Islamabad and reviewed the law and order situation in the Red Zone, Diplomatic Enclave, and other areas.

He inspected security arrangements and issued orders to ensure foolproof arrangements in the Diplomatic Enclave.

While noting that peaceful protest was everyone's right, Naqvi said, "Mischievous under the guise of protest cannot be allowed under any circumstances."

415 Afghan combatants killed, 182 check posts destroyed: Atta Tarar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Sunday that the security forces have killed 415 combatants of the Afghan Taliban regime, destroyed their 182 posts, and captured 31 others during Operation Ghazab lil-Haq (Righteous Fury).

Around 185 tanks, armed vehicles, and artillery have also been destroyed during the operation, he added.

The minister noted that around 46 locations across Afghanistan were also targeted by air, effectively.

AJK PM opens doors for massive tourism investment

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, has said the his government has opened wide avenues for investment in the region's tourism sector.

He made these remarks during a meeting with the CEO of Pakistan Travel Mart, Syed Muhammad Ali Hamdani, who called on him here today.

The region's natural beauty, he said, gives it strong potential to become a major tourist destination.

He added that the government's tourism policy offers great opportunities to both local as well as international investors.

On the occasion, Prime Minister was briefed on the vision, impact, and growth of Pakistan Travel Mart.

The CEO of Pakistan Travel Mart, Syed Muhammad Ali Hamdani



said his platform promotes tourism nationwide, strengthens provincial representation, and builds links with international markets.

He invited the Prime Minister to attend Pakistan Travel Mart 2026 as Chief Guest, which was delightfully accepted by the premier.

Pertinently, the Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore will inaugurate Pakistan Travel Mart 2026 on April 3, 2026.

Inner Wheel Club District 343 Distributed Ration to the Deserving Peoples



Iram Asim

MULTAN: Inner Wheel District 343 distributed ration to the deserving people at the Electrical Center. On this occasion, Chairman Mrs. Jena Ijaz said that we should also take care of the poor people in this holy month and receive maximum prayers from these people. Due to our little attention, their Sehar and Iftar will improve a little. Only by spending the money given by Allah Almighty, there is improvement in our world and the hereafter. On this occasion, District Secretary Sadia Kirmani said that the purpose of life is to serve the suffering humanity and Inner Wheel District 343 is doing this work or virtue and all our clubs are at the forefront of welfare works and serving the suffering humanity under the leadership of Chairman Mrs. Jena Ijaz. Former Chairman Mrs. Shaheen Moazzam Khakwani, Dr. Maya of the Electrical Center and other doctors and staff and a large number of deserving people were present on this occasion. Finally, a wonderful Iftar dinner was organized in which all the blind children of Muhammad Bin Qasim Blind Center also participated.

Waiting for customers

ISLAMABAD: An elderly vendor is selling traditional sweet items for kids as wait for customers alongside a road in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Ramadan protesters in Muzaffarabad demand UN action against Indian atrocities in Kashmir

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: In the holy month of Ramadan and the scorching sun, fasting people held a protest demonstration in the capital against the worst atrocities of the Indian military siege in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, including the killing and destruction of unarmed freedom-loving peaceful Kashmiris, organized by the Hurriyat Guard in the capital, demanding immediate intervention from the United Nations.

The protesters were holding banners, placards, Pina Flax and Green Crescent flags in their hands, on which were written slogans in support of Pakistan and the Kashmir Freedom Movement and against India.

The atmosphere of the capital echoed with the emotional slogans of the participants in the rally in favor of the Pakistani forces. The rally was led by the Spokesperson of the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Shaukat Javed Mir and Chairman Hurriyat



Guard Uzair Ahmed Ghazali. The protest was addressed by Chairman Pasban-e-Hurriyat Uzair Ahmed Ghazali, Spokespersons of

the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Shaukat Javed Mir and Usman Ali Hashim, leaders of the Muhajirin Working Committee Naeem Sajjad,

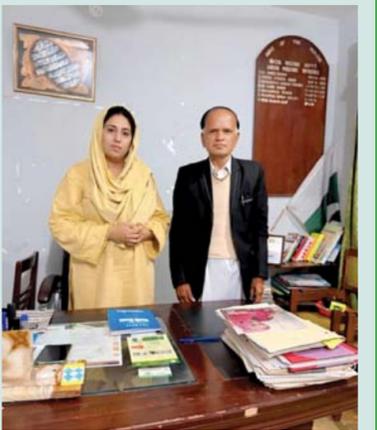
Muhammad Yunus Mir, Muhammad Aslam Inqilabi, Sarandaaz Mir, Faisal Farooq, Muhammad Fayyaz Khan and others.

Major Crackdown Against Begging in Kharian

Bureau Report

KHARIAN: A major joint operation was carried out in Kharian by the district administration to eliminate professional begging. As a result, 27 men, women, and children were taken into custody, while 17 minor children were rescued and placed under protective care.

The operation was conducted under the directions of Deputy Commissioner



Gujrat Noor-ul-Ain Qureshi and Assistant Commissioner Kharian Ahmad Gondal. The team from Child Protection Bureau Gujranwala, led by Dr. Khurram, participated in the operation. Officials and staff from the Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal Department, Tehsil Kharian, including Assistant Director Social Welfare Ms. Saman Ejaz, along with Para Force Kharian, Punjab Police, Rescue 1122, and the Labour Department also took part in the action.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Saman Ejaz stated that begging is a social evil, and the district administration is taking serious measures to eliminate it. She emphasized that the Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal Department is actively working on various programs for the welfare of the poor, deserving individuals, widows, orphans, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable segments of society to help them escape professional begging and secure dignified livelihood opportunities.

Ms. Saman Ejaz shared these views during an informal meeting with the Secretary General of Pasban Welfare Foundation, Muhammad Anwar Chohan. During the meeting, discussions were held regarding mutual cooperation, identification of deserving individuals, and devising a joint strategy to eliminate social evils.

Leader Chaudhry Zafar decries US-Israel attacks on Iran, demands ceasefire

City Desk



RAWALPINDI: Political and social leader Chaudhry Inaam Zafar expressed deep sorrow over the attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel, stating that the ongoing bloodshed poses a serious threat to regional peace. He called for an immediate ceasefire and strongly urged all parties to engage in diplomatic dialogue. He also condemned Iran's retaliatory actions against Arab countries, warning that further escalation would only deepen instability in the Middle East.

In his statement, Chaudhry Inaam Zafar said that according to the current situation, 201 Iranian civilians have been martyred and more than 747 injured in the attacks, leaving the entire Muslim Ummah grieved. He termed Iran's retaliatory operations in the Middle East as equally condemnable, emphasizing that war is never a permanent solution to any conflict; rather, it fuels hatred, instability, and destruction. He stressed that targeting educational institutions and seminaries is completely unacceptable, as it results in the loss of innocent lives and promotes unrest in the region.

Protest Rally Against USA and Israel and Sit-in on the Martyrdom of Iran Supreme Leader Ayatollah Syed Ali Khamenei

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: An emergency meeting of the Mourning Affairs of the Shia Miani Multan was held under the chairmanship of Allama Syed Muhammad Taqi Naqvi at the Madrasa Makhzan-ul-Uloom Ja'fariya, Shia Middle Multan. The meeting expressed deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of the Leader of the Oppressed and the Leader of the Islamic Revolution of the Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, as a result of the sudden attacks by America and Israel.

The speakers said that the Muslim Ummah is mourning this tragedy and the services of the martyred leader will always be remembered. After the meeting, a protest rally started from the Madrasa Makhzan-ul-Uloom Ja'fariya, Shia Middle Multan, which reached Hussaini Chowk, Shia Middle Multan and turned into a sit-in. The participants raised slogans against America and Israel and strongly condemned the incident. On this occasion, Maulana Syed Ali Sajjad Naqvi and Chairman of Mourning Affairs Shia Miani Multan Syed Zahoor Hussain

Shamsi also addressed the protest rally and said that raising voice against oppression and aggression is the need of the hour. The protest rally was attended by Tanveer-ul-Kazim Gilani, Maulana Muhammad Baqir Naqvi, Maulana Kazim Ali Haideri, Maulana Muhammad Raza Naqvi, Maulana Muhammad Askari, Maulana Muhammad Hasnain Askari, Maulana Muhammad Afzal Jafri, Maulana Shayed Nazir Bhatti, Maulana Qalb Abid, Maulana Hussain Bakhsh, Sarwaria Aftab Sarwaria, Haji Shahid Raza Siddiqui, Professor Ahmed Abbas Jafri,

Malik Mazhar Abbas Khakhi, Hakeem Muhammad Sabtain Siddiqui, Haji Muhammad Raza Jafri, Mazhar Abbas Khudam, Makhdoom Syed Mushahid Abbas Shamsi, Rajab Ali Siddiqui, Malik Moazzam Siddiqui, Muhammad Kamil Siddiqui, Ashiq Hussain, Syed Mujahid Shah Shamsi, Syed Samar Abbas Shah Shamsi, Manzoor Hussain Baloch, Mujahid Hussain Siddiqui, Muhammad Baqir Baloch and others. At the end of the protest rally, special prayers were offered for the elevation of the ranks of the martyrs and the unity of the Muslim Ummah.





SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:14 am
Zohr	12:20 pm
Asr	4:24 pm
Maghrib	6:04 pm
Isha	7:27 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
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
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8	9266316
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249

AC Kamalia Chairs Meeting with Religious Scholars, Tajers and Peace Committee Members

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Assistant Commissioner Kamalia Erum Shahzadi presided over an important meeting with religious scholars, representatives of the Anjuman-e-Tajran (Traders Association) and members of the local Peace Committee to review the prevailing law and order situation in light of recent national developments.

Addressing the participants, the Assistant Commissioner emphasized the need for heightened vigilance in their respective areas and urged community leaders to keep a close watch on their surroundings. She stressed that any suspicious activity should be reported immediately to the relevant authorities to ensure timely action and maintain public safety. She particularly called upon religious scholars to promote messages of peace, tolerance and brotherhood during Friday sermons and other religious gatherings. She highlighted that fostering harmony and unity among different segments of society is essential to maintaining stability and preventing misunderstandings.

Over 1.1 million register for CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif's 'Maryam Ko Batain' programme in 10 days

Bureau Report

LAHORE: More than 1.1 million people have registered within 10 days for Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif's new relief initiative, "Maryam Ko Batain" (MKB), launched to ensure direct financial assistance to deserving families not included in the initial list of four million beneficiaries.

According to details shared by Chairperson 1000 Helpline and Chief Minister's Complaint Cell Saima Farooq, thousands of eligible citizens have already received Rs10,000 directly into their JazzCash mobile wallets against their CNIC records after due scrutiny and wealth filtering.

Of the total registrations, 910,000 were completed through the mobile application available on the Play Store under the name "Maryam Ko Batain", 140,000 through the dedicated helpline 1000, and 50,000 via the official web portal (<https://mkb.punjab.gov.pk>). On average, more than 100,000 individuals are registering daily.

The briefing stated that the helpline recorded an unprecedented volume of call attempts, with 1.8 million calls in a single hour — peaking at 30,000 calls per minute and 500 calls per second — reflecting public confidence in the programme and the chief minister's leadership. The Punjab government's call centre can handle 800 calls simultaneously; callers beyond that limit receive a busy response due to telecom capacity constraints.

Officials emphasised that the system ensures transparency, tracking and accountability, and is entirely based on PSER data and PMT scoring. Direct cash transfers are made without intermediary involvement, while continuous digital verification mechanisms are in place to prevent fraud and duplicate registrations.

Individuals already benefiting from Ramazan Nigehban, Rashan Card, the Benazir Income Support Programme or the Prime Minister's Ramazan Relief Programme are not eligible for assistance under "Maryam Ko Batain". The



chairperson advised those already receiving government aid not to seek registration under the new scheme.

Information

Mr. Muhammad Muddasir Tipu, Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Tehran has said the Pakistani students in Iran and the expatriates are being evacuated by land routes.



Photo: PID

Uncle and Maternal Uncle Arrested on Charges of Sexual Assault on 22-Year-Old Woman

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: A 22-year-old woman, a resident of Pinyari Police Station limits, approached the SSP Office Hyderabad and lodged a complaint alleging that her maternal uncle Ali Raza and her aunt's husband Rizwan alias Raju sexually assaulted her.

Taking immediate notice of the complaint, SSP Hyderabad Shahzaib Chachar directed the Incharge of the Women and Child Protec-



tion Cell, Maria Sario, to conduct further inquiry. Following the inquiry, an FIR bearing Crime No. 34/2026 was registered under Section 376(II) of the Pakistan Penal Code at Pinyari Police Station. According to police, the victim was medically examined promptly and, after completing legal formalities, raids were conducted for the arrest of the accused. Both

nominated suspects were subsequently arrested.

The SSP Hyderabad issued strict instructions stating that no leniency would be shown towards individuals involved in crimes against women and children.

He further stated that the victim would be provided full legal protection and support, and that the challan would be submitted to the court with strong evidence to ensure punishment of the accused in accordance with the law.

AJK PM Congratulates New Rawalpindi High Court Bar Leadership

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, has congratulated the newly elected President of the High Court Bar Association Rawalpindi, Advocate Saeed Yousaf Khan, the General Secretary Qasim Mahmood Malik, and other office-bearers.

In his congratulatory message, the Prime Minister highlighted the legal community's crucial role in upholding the rule of law, the supremacy of the Constitution, and the provision of justice in society.

"Bar associations serve as a strong pillar for the strengthening of democratic values and the protection of fundamental rights of the public", he added. The Prime Minister also expressed the hope that the newly elected office bearers would fulfill their responsibilities effectively and playing a constructive role in addressing the issues faced by the legal community.

PTI MPA Ijaz Bukhari Attock expresses deep grief over martyrdom of Khamenei

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Member of the Provincial Assembly from Attock, Syed Ijaz Hussain Bukhari Advocate, stated that the news of the martyrdom of the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Syed Ali Khamenei is deeply saddening, and that sacrifices made in the path of truth keep nations alive. He said history shows that the struggle of truth against falsehood continues, and the blood of martyrs never goes in vain.

Referring to Karbala, he said that the great martyrdom of the grandson of the Prophet (PBUH), Imam Hussain ibn Ali, is a symbol of truth and righteousness, and that Islam will remain until the Day of Judgment.

Syed Ijaz Hussain Bukhari strongly condemned the firing on protesters in Karachi and demanded immediate and strict action against those responsible. He said the government must bring the perpetrators to justice and provide justice to the affected families.

Rawalpindi Traders Vow Unwavering Support for Pakistan Armed Forces

News Desk

RAWALPINDI: Anjuman Tajran Commercial Market Rawalpindi Expresses Solidarity with Pakistan Armed Forces, Reaffirms Unwavering Support for National Security*

The Anjuman Tajran Commercial Market Rawalpindi has expressed strong solidarity with the Pakistan Armed Forces, reaffirming its commitment to continue supporting national security and defense at every level.

In a joint statement, President Malik Sohail Awan, General Secretary Raja Zafar Yousaf, Joint Secretary Tahir Ismail, Patron-in-Chief Raja Asad Hameed, Group Leader Naqi Shah, Chairman Mushtaq Mughal, Vice Chairman Hammad Qureshi, Vice President Raja Rashid Mahmood, along with Ifrikhar Ali, Owais Butt, Chaudhry Imran Gujjar, Malik Ahsan, Waqar Abbasi, Zubair Abbasi, Arshad Mughal, Sheikh Raheel, Raja Mateen, Mehfooz Khan and other office-bearers stated that the Pakistan Armed Forces are the guarantors of the country's security, sovereignty, and stability. President Malik Sohail Awan said that in the current circumstances, the entire nation and the trader community stand shoulder to shoulder with their brave armed forces and will not allow any external or internal conspiracy to succeed.

DPO Akhlaq says provision of impartial justice to the public is his top priority

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: District Police Officer (DPO) Toba Tek Singh Akhlaq Ullah Tarar said after assuming charge of his office that the prompt and impartial provision of justice to the public is his top priority. He stated that he considers himself a servant of the people and regards resolving citizens' issues as his fundamental responsibility.



According to details, DPO Akhlaq Ullah Tarar, in his statement said that the police would take all possible measures to safeguard the lives and property of the citizens and ensure the maintenance of law and order throughout the district. He emphasized that effective steps are being taken to ensure the immediate redressal of public complaints. The DPO further directed police officers to treat citizens with courtesy and professionalism and to address their concerns on a priority basis. He made it clear that indiscriminate action against criminal elements would continue and that the writ of the law would be enforced at all costs. He added that the elimination of crime is only possible through mutual cooperation between the public and the police. Therefore, he urged citizens to extend full cooperation to the police in maintaining peace and stability in the district.

Punjab Govt Reaffirms Commitment to Preservation and Development of Data Darbar

LAHORE: Declaring Data Darbar a beacon of spiritual enlightenment and a timeless symbol of Punjab's Sufi heritage, Senior Member Board of Revenue Punjab Nabeel Javed reaffirmed the Punjab Govt's unwavering commitment to preserving the sanctity of the shrine while further improving facilities for devotees through carefully planned development initiatives. He expressed these views while chairing a high-level meeting to review the ongoing uplift works at the shrine of Ali Hijveri (RA).

Secretary/Chief Administrator Auqaf Punjab Dr. Ehsan Bhutta presented a comprehensive briefing on infrastructure improvements, beautification measures, and enhanced public amenities, stating that the designs of



calligraphy comprising Qur'anic Ayats, Hadiths, and selected poetic verses to be inscribed at the shrine were also reviewed in detail to ensure authenticity, aesthetic excellence, and spiritual reverence.

Ramzan Sialvi, Principal Hajveria Madrasa Muhammad Razaq, Director Madina Foundation Aslam Tareen, NESPAK Representative Adil Nazeer, Director Projects Auqaf Rafiq Wattoo, Calligrapher Irfan Qureshi and other concerned officials. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Ehsan Bhutta highlighted that Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh (RA) is not only a revered Sufi saint but also a great scholar and author whose teachings of love, tolerance, and unity continue to inspire generations.

He emphasized that all development works are being undertaken with utmost respect to the shrine's historical, religious, and architectural significance so that its spiritual legacy remains preserved for future generations.

The meeting was attended by Director General Religious Affairs Auqaf Shahid Kalyani, Khateeb Mosque Data Ganj Bakhsh Maulana

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Operation Epic Fury: America's Strategic Gamble

The past twenty-four hours have altered the geopolitical landscape in ways few anticipated, yet many feared. After weeks of military buildup in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea, the United States and Israel launched what officials described as a coordinated offensive targeting Iranian leadership and military infrastructure. The reported confirmation by Iranian state media of the death of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei marks a turning point not only for Iran but for the broader Middle East.

For months, negotiations over Iran's nuclear program had fluctuated between tension and cautious optimism. Technical discussions were reportedly scheduled to continue in Vienna. Yet amid those diplomatic channels, Washington and Tel Aviv appear to have concluded that the risks of waiting outweighed the risks of acting. Official statements emphasize preventing nuclear weaponization, degrading missile capabilities, and neutralizing what they call imminent threats. Critics, however, argue that the abrupt transition from negotiation to bombardment raises doubts about whether diplomacy was ever given sufficient space to succeed.

Underneath the surface of nuclear rhetoric lies a deeper strategic reality: energy leverage and global power competition. Iran sits at the crossroads of one of the most vital arteries of global commerce—the Strait of Hormuz. Roughly one-fifth of the world's oil and gas supply transits this narrow corridor. Any serious disruption there sends immediate shockwaves through global markets. Energy prices spike, supply chains tighten, shipping insurance costs rise, and inflationary pressures intensify worldwide.

China, in particular, relies heavily on Gulf energy flows. Even as Beijing invests aggressively in renewable energy and alternative supply chains, oil remains central to industrial continuity and economic growth. If the United States and its allies consolidate influence over major energy producers across the Gulf, they acquire a powerful instrument of geopolitical leverage. In an era defined by U.S.–China rivalry, control over energy corridors is not merely economic—it is strategic.

This broader context helps explain why Iran's position extends beyond its borders. The confrontation is not solely about enrichment levels or centrifuge counts; it intersects with global power balances, trade routes, and long-term strategic containment. At the same time, regime decapitation does not automatically produce stability. History offers multiple examples where eliminating leadership structures created power vacuums that fueled prolonged instability rather than swift transition. Within hours of the reported strike, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) reintroduced its 10-point democratic plan, led by president-elect Maryam Rajavi. The proposal calls for universal suffrage, separation of religion and state, abolition of the death penalty, gender equality, dismantling of the IRGC, and a non-nuclear Iran aligned with international norms.



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

On paper, the plan outlines a comprehensive democratic transformation. In practice, implementing such reforms requires security guarantees, institutional continuity, and broad domestic consensus—conditions rarely present amid aerial bombardment and political shock. International reactions have reflected caution rather than celebration. European leaders have urged restraint and a return to negotiations. Russia

denounced the strikes as destabilizing. China expressed concern and called for de-escalation. Gulf states fear maritime disruption and regional spillover. The United Nations has warned that continued escalation risks undermining international peace and security. Perhaps the most immediate economic concern remains the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's parliament reportedly approved a motion to close the corridor, though final authority rests with its Supreme National Security Council. Analysts note that a full blockade would also harm Iran's own economy and risk military confrontation with U.S. naval forces. Nonetheless, even partial interference could disrupt approximately 20 million barrels of oil per day—an amount sufficient to destabilize markets globally.

Markets have already responded with volatility. Aviation disruptions across the region have stranded travelers. Shipping routes are being recalculated. Energy futures have fluctuated sharply. For import-dependent nations in Asia, the stakes are profound. Inside Iran, public sentiment appears complex and layered. Years of economic hardship, political repression, and protest crackdowns have eroded confidence in the clerical establishment for many citizens. Yet external military strikes can rapidly transform internal grievances into nationalist solidarity. Civilian casualties, if confirmed and sustained, may intensify anti-foreign sentiment rather than facilitate internal reform.

Israel, for its part, calculates that neutralizing Iran's senior command reduces long-term threats from missile arsenals and proxy networks. The United States frames the action as defensive and

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Images from inside Iran reflect a nation divided and shaken. Smoke rose above Tehran as airstrikes struck command centers and security compounds. Civilians were seen fleeing neighborhoods, rescuers searching through rubble, and families heading north from the capital amid uncertainty. In contrast, some pockets of the country witnessed celebrations following reports of Khamenei's death—evidence of deep internal fractures that have long existed beneath the surface of the Islamic Republic.

Israeli officials have described the operation as one of the largest regime-decapitation strikes in modern warfare, claiming dozens of senior security and military figures were eliminated. Among those reported killed were high-ranking officials within the Revolutionary Guard, defense establishment, and intelligence apparatus. Whether every detail withstands independent verification remains to be seen, but the scale of the strike signals a deliberate attempt to dismantle the core of Iran's command structure.

The central question is not simply what has happened—but why now.

Attacks on Iran & retaliatory strikes erode regional security, Pakistan warns, stresses diplomacy

Pakistan has warned the UN Security Council that the US-Israeli attacks would undermine the security of the entire region "with far reaching consequences." "We are deeply alarmed at the risk of regional conflagration," Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told the 15-member Council which met in emergency, at the request of France, China, Russia, Bahrain and Colombia on Saturday evening.

Ambassador James Kariuki of the United Kingdom, the Council President for February, presided. The Pakistani envoy regretted that the joint attacks, which were in violation of international law, took place when renewed diplomatic efforts were underway to reach a peaceful and negotiated solution. At the same time, Ambassador Asim Ahmad condemned Iran's attacks against Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, stressing Pakistan stands in solidarity with them, and underscored the need to exercise maximum restraint.

He said it was especially unfortunate that some of those countries had been supporting the effort to find a diplomatic solution between the US and Iran. "We particularly laud Oman's role in facilitating and mediating dialogue between Iran and the United States."

He also condemns the unfortunate death of a Pakistani national in the UAE during this dastardly attack.

"We urge all sides to refrain from any further actions that may undermine the security and territorial integrity of other regional countries."

Ambassador Asim Ahmad said diplomacy had once again been "derailed" right in the middle of efforts to reach a diplomatic solution, further eroding trust that was already in short supply."

He calls on all sides to immediately halt escalation, and urgently resume diplomacy with a view to achieving a peaceful, negotiated resolution to the crisis. Expressing condolences to civilians caught in the middle of these violent acts, the Pakistani envoy said, "Our thoughts go out to school children in Iran and many civilians elsewhere, and the family of the Pakistani national who was killed during attacks on the UAE earlier today."

"The purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter are inviolable and sacrosanct," he pointed out, which prohibits threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of states.

Pakistan, he added, calls for full respect for International Law, including the UN Charter, as well as International Humanitarian Law.

"We are deeply alarmed at the risk of regional conflagration," Ambassador Asim Ahmad said, adding that the safety of millions of people in the countries of the region was also our top priority.

Pakistan, he said, is maintaining close contact and coordination with brotherly neighboring countries, including at the leadership level. "We are ready to extend our support towards the peaceful resolution of outstanding issues."



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

UNSC Endorsement that Bolstered Pak Army's Operation Ghazab-lil-Haqq

The thirty-seventh report of the United Nations Security Council's Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, released on 4 February, presents a stark assessment of Afghanistan's deteriorating security environment and its destabilizing regional spillover, particularly for Pakistan. Drawing on intelligence from multiple member states, it documents the continued presence and activity of designated terrorist groups on Afghan soil, linking them to cross-border attacks and challenging Afghan interim authorities' claims that their territory is not used against other states. The report highlights the growing operational strength of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), based in Afghanistan, which has intensified attacks inside Pakistan, causing heavy casualties, economic disruption, and diplomatic strain. While Afghan authorities have taken action against Islamic State Khorasan Province, the TTP appears to have operated in a comparatively permissive environment, benefiting from greater freedom of movement and rebuilding its leadership, recruitment, training, and cross-border coordination capabilities.

Beyond the TTP, the report underscores the resilience of Al-Qaida affiliates and the continued threat posed by Islamic State Khorasan Province, which retains both intent and capacity for external operations despite tactical setbacks. It notes that no member state supported Kabul's assertion that no terrorist groups operate in Afghanistan, exposing a significant credibility gap and providing diplomatic validation to Pakistan's longstanding concerns about cross-border sanctuaries. The Monitoring Team also observes uneven counterterrorism enforcement by Afghan authorities, with stricter action against some groups than others, exacerbating tensions between Kabul and Islamabad. Although Pakistan's sustained military and intelligence operations have disrupted TTP networks and eliminated senior commanders, the persistence of safe havens across the border leaves Pakistan facing an enduring asymmetrical threat that complicates both security management and prospects for regional normalization.

The temporal positioning of this report amplifies its policy relevance considerably, as its release coincides with a fresh and particularly virulent wave of violence sweeping across substantial portions of Pakistani territory. Security incidents have escalated not only in numerical frequency but also in tactical sophistication and destructive impact, generating palpable public anxiety and provoking renewed demands from civil society, political parties, and security analysts for a more coherent and regionally integrated approach to counterterrorism. The UN findings substantiate the argument that militancy in contemporary South Asia cannot be understood as a collection of isolated national insurgencies but must instead be recognized as an interconnected transnational phenomenon sustained by overlapping ideological affinities, operational synergies, and the persistent availability of ungoverned or under-governed spaces where militants can rest, resupply, and regenerate. This resurgence simultaneously threatens ambitious regional initiatives oriented toward economic connectivity, trade integration, and infrastructure development, projects whose viability depends fundamentally upon the existence of a stable

and predictable security environment that currently appears increasingly elusive. Examined through a diplomatic lens, the report constitutes a notably favorable development for Pakistan's longstanding efforts to internationalize its security concerns regarding cross-border terrorism. The formal acknowledgment by a United Nations Security Council monitoring mechanism that Afghanistan-based militants are actively launching attacks against Pakistan represents a form of international legitimization for positions that Pakistan has articulated bilaterally and multilaterally for many years without always securing corresponding acknowledgment. The Security Council, through this monitoring report, has effectively endorsed the proposition that regional peace cannot be secured through bilateral dialogue alone while militant sanctuaries remain operational across international boundaries. For Pakistani policymakers and for a Pakistani public long wearied by the human and material costs of militancy, this represents a diplomatic achievement, tangible evidence that the global community is increasingly attentive to the security burdens Pakistan carries and decreasingly inclined to dismiss its concerns as exaggerated or as mere artifacts of bilateral friction.

Yet the report's significance radiates well beyond the Pakistan-Afghanistan dyad. Central Asian republics, historically vulnerable to militant spillover effects emanating from Afghanistan, have registered their own apprehensions regarding the regional security trajectory, apprehensions that the Monitoring Team's assessment validates and amplifies. The conclusion that terrorist presence in Afghanistan constitutes a continuing concern for both Central Asia and South Asia underscores the fundamental interconnectedness of regional

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Modern Reforms in Social Security: Establishment of the SESSI Help Desk

Marking the beginning of a new era of modernization and transparency in the provision of facilities for workers and employers across Sindh, the Sindh Employees Social Security Institution (SESSI) has recently formally established the SESSI Help Desk. This initiative is not only practical proof of the institution's commitment to raising service standards but also demonstrates that public institutions are serious about modernizing their systems in accordance with contemporary demands and public expectations.

In today's world, where access to civic facilities and the protection of workers' rights have become sensitive and critical issues, the SESSI Help Desk has emerged as an effective and transparent platform. Its primary objective is to ensure the timely provision of medical and financial benefits to workers, introduce an easy complaint-registration system, and provide immediate guidance. Registered workers and employers will no longer need to make unnecessary visits to offices; instead, they can resolve their issues from home. This initiative not only enhances convenience but also strengthens institutional transparency and accountability. The most significant aspect of the Help Desk is that it provides a centralized point of contact where workers can register complaints, obtain information, and receive prompt assistance. This will reduce delays in service delivery and enable quicker resolution of workers' problems. Moreover, the information provided through the Help Desk will be authentic and reliable,

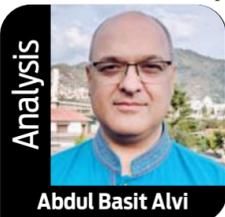
minimizing misunderstandings and uncertainty.

According to the Commissioner of SESSI, Mr. Hadi Bakhsh Kalhoro the institution remains firmly committed to providing essential medical and financial facilities to workers. He stated, "The establishment of the Help Desk will not only make the grievance-redressal system more effective but will also ensure the timely provision of information. We are taking practical steps to align the institution with modern requirements and further improve service delivery." This statement reflects that the institution is not limited to symbolic measures but aims to modernize operational efficiency at every level.

At a time when institutions worldwide are moving toward digitalization and online services, the SESSI Help Desk represents an important step forward. Through toll-free numbers 0800-33772 and 111-173-774, as well as the email address helpdesk@sessi.gov.pk, workers and employers can submit requests, raise concerns, and ask questions without discrimination. This will not only simplify communication but also strengthen internal monitoring within the institution, as every registration and request will be properly recorded.

According to Director Public Relations Waseem Jamal, the institution is utilizing all available resources to ensure the timely provision of public services and the prompt resolution of problems. His perspective reflects SESSI's commitment to functioning not merely

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Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi



Analysis

Dr. Muhammad Tayyab Khan Singhanvi

Gilani calls for service to humanity at Ramadan Iftar hosted by Monal Group



Naveed Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate of Pakistan and former prime minister said that Ramzan is a month of mercy, blessings, sacrifice and forgiveness, urging people to come forward to serve humanity.

He expressed these views in an exclusive conversation with during an Iftar dinner hosted by Founder and Chairman of Luqman Ali Afzal, at the newly inaugurated Monal restaurant.

The Chairman Senate said that Muslims are bound together in a bond of brotherhood and that the month of Ramzan teaches patience and consideration for others. Mutual harmony and unity, he observed, are among its core principles. He further emphasized that Muslims follow one religion, Islam, along with shared faith and culture. Fasting, he added, instills discipline and serves as training that should be carried throughout the year.

Earlier, Mr and Mrs Luqman Ali Afzal warmly welcomed the guests, exemplifying traditional hospitality with grace and cordiality. Mr Afzal, widely known in business and diplomatic circles for his hospitality, is regarded as a host whose invitations are seldom declined.

The Iftar dinner was attended by a large number of distinguished guests, including Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, former



Federal Ombudsman Ms. Kashmala Tariq, as well as provincial ministers, diplomats, prominent members of the business community, civil society representatives and leading media personalities.

Their presence underscored the importance of the occasion in promoting unity and goodwill during the holy month. Guests enjoyed a rich selection of traditional Pakistani dishes alongside continental

cuisine, prepared to Monal's renowned standards. The gathering was further enhanced by the elegant décor, meticulous arrangements and the breathtaking panoramic rooftop environment, one of the largest in the capital, offering sweeping views of the city.

The Iftar also served as a soft launch of Monal's latest branch at IMARAT Downtown, following the brand's reopening in 2025-26 after its relocation



and revival in partnership with the. The new venue revives the celebrated Monal legacy with modern elegance, signature cuisine and unmatched views, positioning it as a premier dining destination along the Islamabad Expressway.

Welcoming the guests, Luqman Ali Afzal reiterated Monal's commitment to excellence and community spirit during Ramadan, noting that the brand aims to blend tradition with contemporary luxury.

The evening reflected the true spirit of Ramadan by fostering friendship, goodwill and meaningful exchange in a serene and cordial atmosphere. With its promise of fine dining, family gatherings and special events, the new Monal rooftop at IMARAT Downtown is poised to become a landmark destination, symbolizing both culinary excellence and the shared values of unity and compassion central to the holy month.

Photo by Sultan Bashir



Spokesman Report

The respected Comrade Kim Jong Un made a closing address at the Ninth Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea. The full text of his closing address is as follows: Dear comrade delegates, The Ninth Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea is about to conclude its work, having conducted responsible discussions of and reached decisions on all the agenda items. The current Congress, the ninth in the history of our Party, has drawn great interest at home and abroad as it was convened in a period when our socialist construction is being pushed ahead with vigorously and the global political situation is experiencing a serious and rapid change.

The millions of our Party members and all other people across the country have extended their loyal and patriotic minds to the Congress, which has made a sacred review of our past arduous yet grand five-year struggle, and their absolute support to its work through a more intense struggle for creation, a labour struggle.

The world's attention has also been focused on the revolutionary strategies and struggle policies the WPK would set forth and on the new level it would reach in advancing its cause.

Deeply mindful of the expectations of the Party and the people, all the delegates have displayed a high level of prudence and responsibility in performing

their missions, so this Congress has achieved its set aim.

All in all, it can be said that all the work and schedules of the current Congress have achieved the desired results.

This Congress means a great review of the really arduous struggle and the start of a new journey.

I once again express my gratitude to all the delegates who, on behalf of all the organizations of the Party and all its members, have devoted, as one, sincere, proactive and responsible efforts to conducting successful discussions of the agenda items.

And availing myself of this opportunity, I extend my warm thanks to all the Party members, the people across the country and all the service personnel of our army, who have injected great encouragement and strength into the Congress and guaranteed its successful work by dint of their unique disposition of supporting the Party with single-hearted loyalty and steadfastness.

Comrade delegates, The Ninth Congress of the WPK has served as a momentous occasion in turning the current phase of our Party and revolution into a more favourable one and putting onto a new stage our struggle for achieving gradual and stable progress in all spheres of the tate activities and promoting the well-being of our people.

At the current Congress we have made a correct analysis and review of the achievements

and experience we gained during the period under review. Through this, we have once again verified the validity of our ideology and cause and the righteousness of the direction of our work, and we have also got firmly convinced that we can attain greater successes in what we plan to do in the coming years.

What is of particular importance is that we have set clear tasks and goals we have to attain in the political, economic, military, cultural and all other fields, and specified the ways for their accomplishment. Now we are in a position to augment the overall strength of our state and push ahead with our efforts to open the era of comprehensive development of socialism with greater self-confidence.

We have acquired a guarantee for further enhancing our Party's leadership ability and fighting efficiency to meet the requirements of the line of building the Party in the new era and the innovative requirements of our ever-intensifying struggle stage. This is of really enormous importance.

The successful Congress which has set a new goal on the road ahead of the Korean revolution serves as a demonstration of our absolute sense of mission regarding the destiny and future

of our country and people as well as of our own strength and self-confidence which are growing greater in the trials.

For all these merits, the Ninth Congress of the WPK will be recorded as a political event that has set another landmark in the history of our sacred struggle for the development of our Party and for the victorious advance of our socialist construction.

Comrade delegates, We are now faced again with a serious remoulding struggle, a struggle for achieving transformation, which we must surely undergo in the course of advance towards an ideal society in which the independence of the masses of the people has been fully realized.

It is an indispensable struggle for carrying out more formidable tasks and gigantic projects than those we have done up to now.

However, clear is the road ahead of us and definite is our success. It is a source of great self-confidence and pride for our Party and people today that we are able to advance more confidently towards the comprehensive development of socialism in line with the right strategy for state building and along the correct road of the revolution without any slightest vacillation in the unprecedentedly complicated

and ever-changing present world. The long-term plans and struggle tasks put forward at the Ninth Congress of the WPK will be an inspiring banner instilling into our Party members and other people confidence, optimism, patriotic enthusiasm and stamina to bring about fresh miracles and innovations on all fronts of the revolution and construction.

Comrades, The main idea and main spirit of the Ninth Congress of the WPK is, in a word, to consolidate the successes of the struggle for pioneering the era of comprehensive development and continue to lead them to a greater result.

The current Congress is run through with the idea and spirit that we should further cement the successes achieved during the period under review as a treasure of the country, the revolution and the people and bring about a more substantial improvement and development in all fields.

We should usher in a new heyday of strengthening the whole Party and make a big stride forward in the economy, national defence, culture and all other fields by holding aloft the idea and spirit of the Ninth Party Congress as the banner of struggle and advance and consistently applying them to the revo-

Closing Address at Ninth WPK Congress



lutionary practice. In particular, we should carry out the new five-year plan without fail on an annual basis and, in the course of this, produce substantial, inspiring, significant and proud results.

The new five-year plan, which has been formulated at the current Congress, is a plan aimed at further expanding and intensifying the struggle for the comprehensive development of socialism, and it is raising the demand as to what ideological viewpoint and attitude we should work with and what practical successes we should achieve for the Party and the people in the future.

The heavy duty for fulfilling such an important and responsible task rests with all the delegates and our newly-elected central leadership of the Party. Taking the lead in the new

historic struggle should be the delegates, who are more familiar with the idea and spirit of the Congress than anyone else and who have adopted in person its decisions while enjoying the trust and expectations of all the Party members and other people by participating in the current Congress.

All the delegates should regard this moment as a new starting point of more courageous struggle and endeavour and, from now on, work hard in the vanguard of the struggle to implement the decisions of the Ninth Party Congress and play the core role at their workplaces and posts.

The activities of the members of the central leadership of the Party, who form the backbone of our Party and state, should always be correct, responsible and enter

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Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
168,062.16	168,893.08
Day's High	Day's Low
169,379.97	165,811.87
Index Value	Change
18,971,818,996	-830.92
Percentage	Time
-0.49%	27 Feb, 2026 4:30 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,910.55	+63.85
Percentage	Time
+0.59%	27 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
48,765.02	-734.18
Percentage	Time
-1.48%	27 Feb, 12:52 pm GMT-5
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
58,850.27	+96.88
Percentage	Time
+0.16%	27 Feb, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	197.93	201.25
Bahrain Dinar	742.12	751.62
Canadian Dollar	203.68	207
China Yuan	38	39.05
Danish Krone	43.32	43.72
Euro	330.75	335.28
Hong Kong Dollar	35.35	36.25
Indian Rupee	2.8	3.25
Japanese Yen	1.7822	1.8818
Kuwaiti Dinar	905.78	915.22
Malaysian Ringgit	66.50	68.45
New Zealand \$	166.20	169
Norwegians Krone	27.61	27.91
Omani Riyal	726.85	736.35
Qatari Riyal	76.10	77.80
Saudi Riyal	74.88	75.65
Singapore Dollar	220.05	223.30
Swedish Korona	30.15	30.45
Swiss Franc	360.07	363.85
Thai Bhat	8.52	8.67
U.A.E Dirham	76.35	77.35
UK Pound Sterling	377.90	382.16
US Dollar	280.35	282.15

AI and Minerals to Drive Future Global Economy, says Iftikhar Malik

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik Sunday predicted artificial intelligence and minerals will be new drivers of growth and sources of influence as global economic and trade landscape is changing under new world order in the making.

In a statement here today he said regionalism and bilateral trade agreements have become new normal and preferred policy choice. He said in prevailing scenarios, countries are seeking to invigorate industry to reduce reliance, protect their economies, enhance economic security and ensure job creation. He further predicted about 60 percent



of jobs in advanced economies and 40 percent globally will be either enhance, eliminate or transform. He said in an AI-dominated world, developing countries will have to fight on two fronts one to benefit from AI while protecting job market. He further hinted new

changes will have long lasting impacts. Thus Pakistan needs to adapt to new realities and find innovative solutions. He said now countries are cognizant of this reality and have started to identify new win-win opportunities, devise innovative policies, explore new avenues of cooperation, and pursue partnerships that drive diversification, he added.

Iftikhar Ali Malik said a new global economic order is emerging, with China at its centre followed by a new global order for governance, development, and security, again centered on China. The rapidly growing domestic consumption market and leadership's focus on expanding it will further strengthen China's position he concluded.

PFC demands industry status for furniture sector



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Chief Executive Officer Pakistan Furniture Council Mian Kashif Ashfaq Sunday demanded the government to grant formal industry status to the furniture sector to unlock its true export potential.

Chairing here today board of directors meeting He said he Pakistan possesses immense talent, skilled artisans, and abundant raw material, but the sector continues to struggle due to the absence of structured industrial recognition. He said granting industry status would facilitate access to bank financing, subsidized energy tariffs, modern machinery imports, and policy incentives similar

to other export-oriented industries. This step would not only enhance productivity and quality standards but also enable local manufacturers to compete effectively in international markets.

Mian Kashif Ashfaq further highlighted that the furniture sector has the capacity to significantly increase exports, generate employment opportunities, and attract foreign investment. He urged policymakers to prioritize the sector in upcoming economic reforms, stating that a vibrant furniture industry could play a pivotal role in achieving sustainable economic growth and export-led development for Pakistan.

Price hiking

ISLAMABAD: A man buying dates at G-10 Sunday weekly bazaar in the Federal Capital.

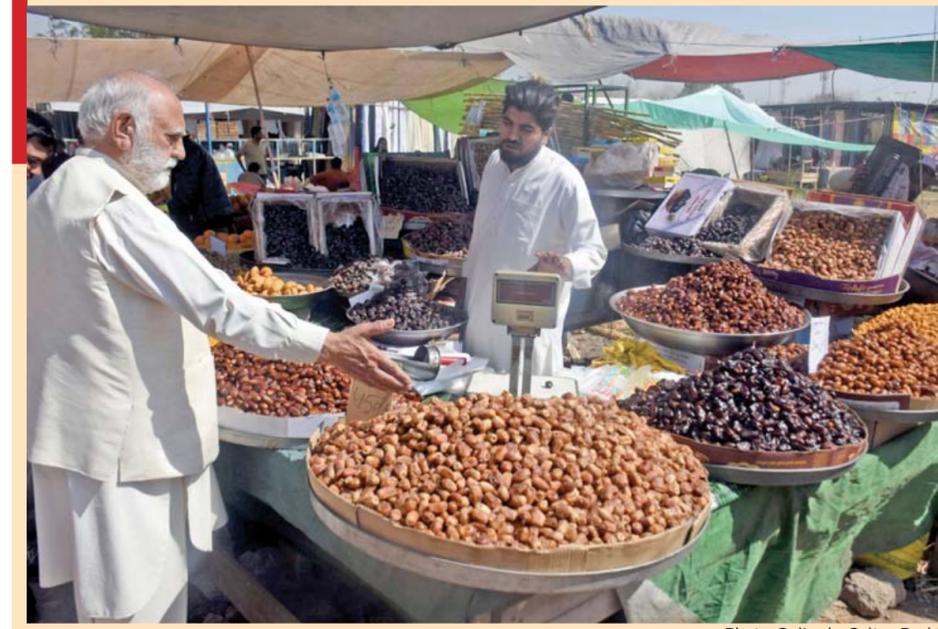


Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Pakistani food exporters see huge Saudi interest in snack sector ventures

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Pak food exporters currently visiting Jeddah has received a tremendous response from their Saudi counterparts for joint collaboration and investment in the food sector, particularly in the fast-growing snacks segment.

In a message received here today from Jeddah, the leader of delegation Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Saif Ur Rehman informed our visit has opened new avenues of cooperation, reflecting the deep-rooted brotherly ties between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He said we highlighted Pakistan's strong agricultural base, modern processing facilities, and Halal-certified production systems as key strengths. Saudi investors, on the other hand, showed willingness to explore joint ventures, technology transfer, and distribution partnerships to expand market outreach across the GCC.

He said during series of productive B2B meetings and networking sessions,



Saudi importers and investors expressed keen interest in partnering with Pakistani manufacturers known for their quality products, competitive pricing, and adherence to international food safety standards. Special focus was laid on value-added snacks, and ready-to-eat items that cater

to the evolving tastes of consumers in the Gulf region. On going successful visit will significantly boost Pakistan's food exports, enhance bilateral trade, and pave the way for long-term strategic investment in the dynamic and rapidly expanding food industry, he concluded.

Pakistani nation stands like a solid wall with Armed Forces, says Malik Bostan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Chairman of the Exchange Companies Association of Pakistan (ECAP), Malik Muhammad Bostan, has expressed full support for Pakistan's military operation "Ghazab-ul-Haq" in response to the recent tensions along the Pak-Afghan border.

Referring to the situation arising from cross-border provocations, he said the Pakistani nation stands firmly behind its armed forces "like a solid wall of lead" and takes immense pride in their courage and professionalism.



"The people of Pakistan are prepared to make every sacrifice for the defense of their homeland and will stand shoulder to shoulder with their armed forces," Bostan said. He added that any act of aggression would be met with a strong and decisive response.

The ECAP chief stressed that national interest must take precedence at this critical juncture and called for unity to ensure the country's security and stability. "The Pakistani nation is united and dignified and will not become part of any external conspiracy," he stated.

Trade Diplomacy Key to Unlocking Pakistan's Export Potential, Says FPCCI Body

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Convener Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Regional Committee on Food Shahid Imran Sunday stressed the urgent need for adopting proactive trade diplomacy to enhance Pakistan's export potential and strengthen economic growth.

Talking to a South Punjab delegation of food exporters led by Zia Ur Rehman he said that in the rapidly evolving global trade environment, Pakistan must actively engage with inter-

national partners through trade missions, bilateral agreements, and participation in global exhibitions to secure new markets for its products. Food sector holds immense export potential, particularly in processed foods, agricultural commodities, and value-added products, which can significantly increase foreign exchange earnings.

He urged policymakers to facilitate exporters by simplifying regulations, ensuring policy consistency, and providing incentives for innovation and quality improvement.

Nation Stands United with Armed Forces, Zubair Tufail

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: President of the United Business Group (UBG) and former president of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Zubair Tufail, has said that the entire Pakistani nation stands united alongside its armed forces and security institutions in the prevailing situation.

In a statement issued by UBG Central Spokesperson Gulzar Feroz, Tufail termed the recent tensions from the Afghan side as "unwise" and described Operation "Ghazab-ul-Haq" as a timely, courageous and decisive step to safeguard Pakistan's sovereignty, security and national dignity.

He said Pakistan is a sovereign and self-respecting state, fully capable of defending its borders and national interests. "Any attempt to challenge Paki-



stan's sovereignty will be met with a strong and befitting response," he added.

Tufail alleged that unprovoked aggression targeted civilian populations inside Pakistan, prompting the armed forces to respond effectively through Operation "Ghazab-ul-Haq," achieving notable successes. He maintained that while Pakistan desires peace, its commitment to peace should not be misconstrued as weakness.

SITE Association Leaders Mourn Loss of Former Chairman's Mother

Commerce Desk

HYDERABAD: The Chairman of Hyderabad SITE Association of Trade & Industry, Zubair Ghangra, Patron-in-Chief Mazhar ul Haq, Senior Vice Chairman Amir Shahab, Vice Chairman Esar Kumar, Finance Secretary Aslam Bawani and Members of the Managing Committee have expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of the beloved mother of the Former

Chairman and General Secretary HSATI, Shahid Qaimkhani.

In a joint condolence statement, the office bearers said that the departure of a great personality like a mother is an irreparable loss that leaves a permanent void in one's life. They stated that the deceased was a noble, well-mannered, and prayerful lady whose upbringing and prayers were a source of strength and encouragement for her family.

PBF for reforms to promote cash-flow-based lending for SME growth

LAHORE, MAR 01 (APP): Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) Sunday urged policy-makers and financial regulators to introduce prudential regulations to encourage cash-flow-based lending and unlock the immense potential of Pakistan's small and medium enterprise (SME) sector.

PBF President Khawaja Mehboob-ur-Rehman, while talking to a traders/SMEs delegation here, stated that Pakistan's future prosperity will not come from a handful of large corporations but from hundreds of thousands of small enterprises, which produce, innovate and employ. "If we want truly inclusive and sustainable growth, empowering SMEs is not optional; it is essential," he remarked.

With over 5.2 million businesses operating across manufacturing, services and trade sector, he mentioned, the SMEs contribute nearly 40 percent to Pakistan's GDP and employ more than 80 percent of the non-agricultural labour force. Despite their dominant role in the economy, SMEs receive less than seven percent of private sector credit, one of the lowest ratios in South Asia.

According to PBF data, he said, private sector financing in Pakistan stands at approximately 6.5 percent of GDP, reflecting a structural weakness in financial intermediation. The number of SME borrowers is estimated at around 295,000, with outstanding SME financing at approximately Rs 686 billion that is far below the potential, and indicative of vast untapped opportunities.

Khawaja Mehboob highlighted that strict collateral requirements remain a major obstacle for small businesses, even those with strong market potential and viable business models. He called on banks to shift their assessment frameworks away from asset-heavy collateral models towards evaluating cash flows, revenue streams, business viability, and market positioning. "It is time for the entire banking industry to move towards expanding cash-flow-based lending, where financing decisions are tied to a business's revenue capacity rather than physical assets alone," he added.

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

India Defeated West Indies by 5 wickets to reach the semi-finals

Asim Tanveer

KOLKATA: India defeated West Indies by 5 wickets to reach the semi-finals of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026. They defeated West Indies by 5 wickets in the last virtual quarter-final type match of Group 1. Thus, an Asian team reached the knockout stage in the event. India will play England in the second semi-final.

In the crucial match played in Kolkata on Sunday, India won the toss and elected to bowl first. The West Indies team managed to score 195 runs for 4 wickets. Openers Shai Hope 32 and Roston Chase 40 provided the foundation of 68 runs. Simran Hetmyer made 27 off 12 balls. Romain Powell played an innings of 34 off 19 balls and Jason Holder played an innings of 37 runs off 22 balls. Jasprit Bumrah became the successful bowler with 2 wickets for 36 runs.

In reply, India, who had lost 2 wickets at 41, Abhishek Sharma 10 and Ishan Kishan 10, were taken care of by the second opener Sanju Samson. Captain Suryakumar Yadav went to the pavilion



Samson stood firm. Hardik Pandya joined him, during which the West Indian fielders dropped catches. India was rapidly approaching the target. India needed 17 runs off the last 12 balls. In the next over, at a score of 179, West Indies got a significant victory when Hardik Pandya scored 17 runs and was caught by Holder off Joseph's ball. Shyam Dube hit 2 fours in the same over. As a result, 7 runs were left in the last over. India completed the target for 5 wickets in 19.2 overs and

entered the semi-finals with a 5-wicket win. Sanju Samson was not out with 97 runs off 50 balls. Lotte hit 12 fours and 4 sixes. Jason Holder was the most prominent with 2 wickets for 38 runs. Shimron Joseph got 2 wickets for 42 runs.

ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 Semi-Final Schedule

First Semi-Final. 4 March. South Africa vs. New Zealand. Kolkata

Second Semi-Final. 5 March. India vs. England. Mumbai

after making 18 and Tilak Verma 27, but

Pakistan-Malaysia Ties in a Multipolar Era

In today's changing world, countries are building new partnerships to protect their interests and grow economically. In this environment, the relationship between Pakistan and Malaysia is becoming more important. Both are Muslim-majority nations with shared values, and their recent diplomatic efforts show a clear desire to work more closely together. Their growing cooperation is not just symbolic, it is practical and focused on real outcomes.

In the first week of February 2026, Pakistan's Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, visited Malaysia. This visit highlighted stronger naval cooperation between the two countries. During his visit, the discussion remained focused on "aligning strategic perspectives and enhancing operational cooperation, capacity building, and coordinated responses to maritime security challenges."

This growing relationship is part of Pakistan's broader foreign policy shift toward East Asia. Under its "Vision East Asia" approach, Pakistan is looking to strengthen ties with countries in Southeast Asia. Malaysia plays a key role here, especially as it holds an important leadership position in ASEAN. This gives Pakistan a valuable opportunity to connect more deeply with the region.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif paid a two-day visit to Malaysia in October 2025 to hold comprehensive talks on economic integration. This visit reflects a strategic shift from traditional cooperation to a multi-faceted, future-oriented partnership encompassing economic, educa-

tional, technological, and humanitarian domains. During this visit, both countries signed six important MoUs across various sectors, covering collaboration in higher education, training of diplomats, tourism promotion, Halal certification, anti-corruption efforts, and support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Defense cooperation is another area where progress is visible. Both countries have agreed to work together in fields such as aviation, cybersecurity, and healthcare. Regular diplomatic contacts, including meetings and phone calls between officials, have helped maintain momentum in the relationship. These steps are built on the foundation of the Malaysia-Pakistan Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (MPCEPA), signed in 2008.

The High Commissioner of Malaysia, Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) this month. During his visit, he said that bilateral trade with Pakistan, currently valued at USD 1.6-1.8 billion, remains below its potential and favors Malaysia. He noted that as a net food importer serving a population of 34 million, Malaysia sees strong potential to increase imports of Pakistani poultry, dairy products, halal meat, and other agricultural commodities to help rebalance trade. The High Commissioner emphasized the need to convert political goodwill into tangible business outcomes, calling

for structured, sector-focused collaboration between ICCI and Malaysian business chambers while building stronger trust between the two countries' business communities.

There are many opportunities for both countries to benefit from stronger ties.

Pakistan can learn from Malaysia's expertise in industries like palm oil production and electronics. At the same time, Pakistan can export more textiles, rice, pharmaceuticals, and agricultural products. The halal industry is especially promising. With better coordination and mutual recognition of halal standards, Pakistan could significantly increase its exports.

Strategically, Malaysia can act as a gateway for Pakistan to enter ASEAN markets. This could also connect regional projects like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with Southeast Asian economies. Cultural exchanges, tourism, and educational partnerships can further strengthen people-to-people connections. Joint projects in renewable energy and information technology can also help both countries achieve their development goals.

However, there are still several challenges. One major issue is the trade imbalance, which favors Malaysia. This is partly due to Pakistan's limited range of exports and various non-tariff barriers. Many Pakistani exporters also face difficulties due to lack of information and complex procedures.

There are also perception issues. Some Malaysian businesses may see Pakistan as economically unstable, while Pakistan may not fully understand Malaysia's market requirements. These gaps reduce trust and slow down cooperation. In addition, global challenges like supply chain disruptions and climate change make trade even more difficult.

To move forward, both countries need a clear and practical strategy. First, they should update MPCEPA to include digital trade, e-commerce, and environmental standards. Second, they should create sector-specific business forums to promote cooperation in key areas like halal products, agriculture, and technology. Third, defense cooperation should continue to grow through joint exercises and training programs.

Education and cultural exchange programs can also play a big role. Universities in both countries can start joint programs, and more scholarships can be offered to students. At the same time, both governments should invest in improving their image through media, trade fairs, and public diplomacy.

Pakistan and Malaysia have a strong foundation for a meaningful partnership. Recent developments show that both countries are serious about working together. If they address existing challenges and focus on practical solutions, this relationship can become a model for cooperation between South and Southeast Asia. In a multipolar world, partnerships like this are not just helpful; they are also necessary for long-term peace, stability, and shared prosperity.



Analysis

Asif Khurshid

Operation Epic Fury: America's Strategic Gamble

Continued from Page 4

preventive. However, military planners must now consider retaliation—whether through missile exchanges, cyber operations, or asymmetric tactics targeting U.S. assets in the region.

Russia and China, meanwhile, observe carefully. Both powers may seek to avoid direct confrontation while allowing geopolitical dynamics to weaken American influence if escalation becomes prolonged. A drawn-out conflict risks draining U.S. resources, complicating alliances, and eroding soft power credibility.

In this environment, the probability of swift resolution appears low. Decapitation strikes often initiate new phases of contestation rather than closure. Leadership succession struggles, regional retali-

ation, and diplomatic fragmentation can extend instability for months—or longer.

The humanitarian dimension must not be overlooked. Images of collapsed buildings and fleeing civilians underscore the human cost. Infrastructure damage, potential refugee flows, and economic paralysis could follow if hostilities persist.

Ultimately, this moment represents more than a bilateral confrontation. It is a strategic inflection point involving energy security, nuclear proliferation, regime legitimacy, and global power competition. The intersection of these forces makes the trajectory unpredictable and potentially prolonged.

The world must therefore prepare—not for a brief shock—but for sustained volatility. Energy markets, diplomatic channels, and regional security architec-

tures will remain under strain. Whether the coming weeks produce negotiations, containment, or escalation will depend on decisions made in Tehran, Washington, Tel Aviv, Beijing, and Moscow.

What is clear is that the consequences of this operation will extend far beyond the initial strike. The Middle East has entered a new phase of uncertainty, and the global community must brace for economic, political, and strategic reverberations that may reshape the region for years to come.

When examined through this lens, the United States' decision reflects calculated confidence in its strengths, yet it is shadowed by significant structural risks. Military superiority provides tactical advantage, but the strategic outcome will depend on political evolution inside Iran, the resilience of global markets, and

the restraint—or escalation—of regional actors.

The war is unlikely to conclude swiftly. Leadership strikes may change faces, but they rarely end confrontations overnight. Economic volatility, diplomatic recalibration, and security tensions will likely persist for an extended period.

The world must prepare for sustained turbulence. Whether this moment becomes a gateway to negotiated transformation or a prolonged cycle of retaliation depends not only on battlefield capability but on strategic wisdom in the days ahead.

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

US and Israeli Aggression Against Iran Is an Act Against Humanity, Says Syed Aman Shah

News Desk

KARACHI: Syed Aman Shah, Provincial Convener of Awaam Pakistan Party Balochistan, has strongly condemned the recent aggression by the United States and Israel against Iran, calling it an inhumane act and a blatant violation of international law. In his statement, he said that an unjustified attack on any sovereign country is not only a violation of the United Nations Charter but also pushes global peace to the brink of destruction.

He stated that the loss of innocent civilian lives as a result of the attacks on Iran is deeply tragic and condemnable. The shedding of innocent blood cannot be justified under any circumstances. Such actions will further destabilize the region and create unrest, the consequences of which will be felt across the Middle East and the wider world.

Closing Address at Ninth WPK Congress

Continued from Page 6

prising, but the demands and expectations of the country, revolution, Party members and other people for them have grown incomparably higher today.

All the members of the central leadership of the Party should shoulder the Party and state affairs in a responsible manner, always remembering the pledge they have made at the Congress and keeping a deep sense of mission, and actively lead their sectors, regions and fields to steady improvement and new development in the term of the Ninth Party Central Committee.

Party organizations, the political General Staff of the relevant sectors and units, should conduct organizational and political work in a more substantial and innovative way to implement the decisions of the Party Congress.

All the Party organizations should draw up their five-year struggle plans in detail and definitely on an annual basis by relying on the collective wisdom of the masses of the Party members and intensify Party guidance, political guidance, to give full play to the pirital and creative strength of the masses of the people, so as to attain the goals set by them with credit.

In particular, they must make a breakthrough in implementing the five-year plan by unfailingly and successfully carrying out the plan for this year, the first year of the implementation of the deci-

sions of the Party Congress, while boosting the morale and redoubling the fighting spirit.

Let us all uphold the fighting programmes set forth at the Ninth Party Congress and work hard with a single mind to vigorously pioneer an era of new massive transformations that will add another page to the chronicle of national prosperity.

The declaration that this Congress is closed will be the moment of opening a prelude to the implementation of the ambitious five-year plan and the starting signal for launching an intense struggle for this year 2026.

Comrade delegates, Let us cherish strong will and faith, firm conviction and self-confidence, and turn all out with an extraordinary determination to achieve the eternal prosperity of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, our glorious motherland, and the wellbeing of our people.

Fully convinced that, thanks to the soaring revolutionary spirit and undaunted struggle of all the delegates and other members of the Party, the people across the country and the erve personnel of the People's Army, the lines, policies and decisions put forward at this Congress will surely be carried out with credit and a new historic turn will be brought about in the development of our Party and revolution and in socialist construction, I declare the Ninth Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea closed.

Modern Reforms in Social...

Continued from Page 4

as a formal organization but as an active and responsible institution dedicated to protecting workers' rights and interests.

From an analytical standpoint, the establishment of the Help Desk highlights several important aspects. First, it increases transparency because every complaint and application will be documented, reducing the chances of mismanagement or delays. Second, it strengthens trust among workers and employers, as they now have a clear and reliable system for resolving their issues. Third, it helps improve institutional performance standards, since staff efficiency and system effectiveness can be evaluated based on the Help Desk's performance.

Furthermore, the Help Desk will have a direct positive impact on workers' lives. Previously, workers were often forced to visit multiple offices, wasting valuable time. Now, they can register requests and receive guidance through a single phone call or email. This will not only save time but also significantly improve the quality of institutional services.

This initiative also demonstrates

that SESSI is prioritizing public convenience and taking practical steps to safeguard workers' rights. Such innovation not only strengthens workers' confidence but also sets an example for other government institutions on how modern technology and transparent systems can enhance public service delivery.

In conclusion, the SESSI Help Desk is not merely a new facility but a practical manifestation of efforts to protect workers' rights, enhance transparency, and raise service standards. It proves that when institutions prioritize public convenience and adapt to modern requirements, public trust grows while institutional credibility and influence are strengthened. If the system continues to evolve and incorporate public feedback, it can become a true center of support and protection for workers across the province.

This initiative is therefore not just the launch of a new service but an important step toward improving institutional performance and the quality of public service one that is certain to leave a lasting and positive impact on workers and employers throughout Sindh.

UNSC Endorsement that Bolstered Pak Army's Operation Ghazab-lil-Haqq

Continued from Page 4

security ecosystems, an interconnectedness that militant networks have historically exploited with considerable sophistication. Groups operating from Afghan soil have maintained durable relationships with counterpart organizations in neighboring countries, and their operational methodologies, financing mechanisms, and ideological frameworks regularly transcend national boundaries in ways that render purely unilateral counterterrorism approaches inherently inadequate. The report therefore functions as a compelling argument for collaborative, regionally coordinated strategies rather than fragmented national responses.

Simultaneously, the report surfaces difficult and unresolved questions regarding Afghanistan's internal governance

trajectory and the capacity of its interim authorities to fulfill the counterterrorism commitments they have repeatedly articulated. Those authorities confront an exceptionally complex dual challenge, consolidating domestic control and establishing functional governance institutions while simultaneously attempting to satisfy international expectations regarding counterterrorism compliance and human rights protections. The credibility of their foundational pledge that Afghan territory will never again be used to threaten other states depends entirely upon the translation of verbal commitments into demonstrable, sustained, and nondiscriminatory enforcement actions against all militant groups without exception. Selective application of counterterrorism pressure, whether moti-

vated by ideological sympathy, tactical calculation, or institutional incapacity, fundamentally erodes international confidence and complicates every dimension of diplomatic engagement, from humanitarian assistance to development cooperation to potential political recognition. The Monitoring Team's findings suggest that movement toward comprehensive counterterrorism compliance, if occurring at all, remains partial and uneven.

For the broader international community, the report constitutes an authoritative evidentiary basis for continued vigilance, sustained sanctions enforcement, and calibrated engagement mechanisms designed to ensure that Afghanistan's political transition does not inadvertently facilitate terrorist resurgence. The Sanctions Monitoring Team's accumulated docu-

mentation provides the empirical foundation upon which policy decisions can responsibly rest, whether those decisions involve adjustments to sanctions listings, humanitarian exemptions to preserve civilian access to essential services, or diplomatic initiatives aimed at incentivizing behavioral change by Afghan authorities. By systematically documenting the operational realities of militant groups rather than relying upon generalized threat assessments, the report enables a more precisely targeted and strategically coherent global response, one less susceptible to political manipulation or analytical drift.

The thirty-seventh report ultimately presents an assessment that is at once meticulously detailed and sweeping in its regional implications. It affirms with documentary support

that terrorist groups continue to operate from Afghan territory, that the TTP has intensified its cross-border campaign against Pakistan from bases within Afghanistan, and that these operational realities have exacerbated regional tensions to a degree that threatens broader stability. It simultaneously recognizes the significance of Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts as having materially degraded TTP capabilities and reflects a mature international consensus that militant sanctuaries persist despite official Afghan denials. For Pakistan, this represents not merely retrospective validation of security concerns long voiced but prospective opportunity to mobilize international support for a genuinely coordinated strategy aimed at the systematic dismantlement of terrorist infrastructure

across Afghanistan. The trajectory ahead will necessarily require persistent diplomatic investment, transparent and verifiable counterterrorism action by Afghan authorities, and sustained vigilance by regional and global stakeholders united in the conviction that Afghanistan must not be permitted to remain a permissive launching pad for transnational violence and regional destabilization.

The international community has observed that Pakistan's concerns about terrorism originating from Afghanistan were not unfounded. This position was further reinforced when the Taliban-led Afghan government allegedly initiated unprovoked firing along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Instead of dismantling terrorist networks operating from its soil, Afghanistan appeared to

escalate tensions through aggressive actions against Pakistan. Following these developments, Pakistan's security forces launched Operation Ghazab-lil-Haqq in response to the Taliban regime's cross-border provocation. Several Afghan Taliban fighters were reportedly killed or injured, with additional casualties estimated at military targets in Kabul, Paktia, and Kandahar. Numerous Taliban posts were said to have been destroyed or seized, indicating a sustained effort to weaken hostile positions.

There is a growing call for the international community to recognize that terrorism emanating from Afghanistan threatens not only Pakistan but also broader regional and global stability, and to support efforts aimed at preventing its further spread.

Funeral prayer

LAHORE: Shiite Muslims offering Absentee funeral prayer after the death of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei amid US-Israel during a protest, in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

PM briefed on Interior Minister's European visits and immigration agreements

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a meeting on Sunday with Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, during which the minister briefed the PM on his recent visits to European countries and participation in key international conferences. Mohsin Naqvi informed

the prime minister about his attendance at a four-country Interior Ministers' meeting held in Rome, Italy, which was also attended by the interior ministers of Italy, Spain, and Greece. He further briefed the prime minister on a six-country meeting in Poland, attended by ministers from Pakistan, Poland, Latvia, Finland, Estonia, and

Lithuania.

According to the briefing, participating countries in both conferences agreed to expedite the issuance of legal work permits for Pakistani citizens. The member states appreciated Pakistan's performance in reducing illegal migration to European countries by 47 percent within one year and acknowledged its measures to

curb human smuggling.

The interior minister also informed that Poland and Italy will soon abolish visa requirements for holders of Pakistani diplomatic and official passports. He added that a comprehensive plan to further improve Pakistan's immigration and border security capacity will soon be presented to the European

Union.

The Prime Minister appreciated the efforts of the interior minister and emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation with European countries on immigration and security issues. Matters related to the country's internal security and overall situation also came under discussion during the meeting.

Iran retaliates with missiles as Israel strikes Tehran

Reuters

Israel launched a new wave of strikes on Tehran on Sunday, saying it aimed to dominate the skies after killing Iran's supreme leader and leaving the Islamic Republic grappling to rebuild its leadership amid its biggest test in five decades.

U. S. and Israeli strikes — and Iranian retaliation — sent shockwaves through sectors from shipping to air travel to oil, amid warnings of rising energy costs and disruption to business in the Gulf, a strategic waterway and global trade hub.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said a leadership council composed of himself, the judiciary



head and a member of the powerful Guardians Council had temporarily assumed the

duties of Supreme Leader following the death of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The U. S. military said it had sunk an Iranian ship, while Iran's Revolutionary

Guard Corps (IRGC) said they had launched an attack on the U. S. aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln with four ballistic missiles, state media reported.

However, U. S. Central Command on Sunday rejected the IRGC claims.

"Iran's IRGC claims to have struck USS Abraham Lincoln with ballistic missiles. LIE," U. S. Central Command said in a post on X.

In a sign of widening turmoil, Israel's ambulance service said nine people were killed by a missile strike in the town of Beit Shemesh, the United Arab Emirates said Iranian attacks killed three people, and Kuwait reported one dead in Iranian raids.

Leghari expresses deep grief over martyrdom of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

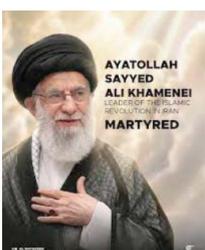
City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the reported martyrdom of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, stating that the tragedy has grieved not only Iran but the entire Muslim Ummah.

In his condolence message, the minister said that the people and Government of Pakistan stand in complete solidarity with their Iranian brothers and sisters during this difficult time.

"This sorrow is our shared sorrow," he remarked, emphasizing Pakistan's unwavering support for Iran.

He urged citizens to express their emotions peacefully and refrain from



taking the law into their own hands.

The minister assured that the state would ensure the protection and security of all citizens.

"We are equal partners in the grief of the Iranian people and stand with them in this challenging hour. God willing, this sorrow too shall pass through collective patience and struggle," he added.

Religious scholars meet Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to discuss unity amid Iran developments

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting between prominent scholars of the Shia school of thought and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi is being held in Islamabad in view of the recent events in Iran, sources said.

According to sources, leading scholars and dignitaries have arrived in the federal capital to meet the interior minister. The scholars include Allama Mutahir, Allama Arif Wahidi, Syed Wazir Kazmi, Syed Ahmed Naqvi and Imran Ali Haideri.

The delegation also comprises Syed Basharat Hussain Emami, Wajihul Hassan Kazmi, Abid Hussain, Amjad Alvi and Syed



Zahid Abbas Kazmi, sources added.

The meeting is expected to deliberate in detail on the prevailing national situation, sectarian harmony and efforts to promote unity within the

Muslim Ummah.

Sources said that in the current circumstances, the role of religious scholars in fostering mutual brotherhood, unity and solidarity among Muslims is of significant importance.

President Zardari to address joint Parliamentary session today



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari, has summoned a joint session of Parliament today at 10:30 a.m. for his constitutional address.

The session has been convened under Articles 54(1) and 56(3) of the Constitution, which authorize the President to call Parliament for such meetings. According to the National Assembly Secretariat, this joint session is traditionally held at the beginning of each parliamentary year, and the President's address fulfills a constitutional requirement. This will mark President Zardari's ninth address to a joint session.

Preparations for the session are

underway, with heightened security measures in place given the tense regional situation. The President is expected to comment on recent developments, including the conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan, ongoing hostilities involving United States, Israel, and Iran, and retaliatory attacks in the Gulf region.

The President's speech will also highlight the government's two-year performance, national priorities, democratic consolidation, constitutional supremacy, sustainable economic development, regional and global affairs, and Pakistan's resolve against terrorism, including efforts to eliminate externally-backed terrorist networks.

DPM, Oman FM call for de-escalation in region



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister / Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Sunday spoke with Oman's Foreign Minister, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi.

They expressed serious concern over the ongoing escalation in the region and underscored the urgent need for restraint, dialogue, and de-escalation to preserve peace and stability.

Both agreed to remain in close contact over the evolving situation.

Abdullah Gul urges restraint amid regional tensions, mourns Khamenei's martyrdom

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Chairman of Tehreek Javanan Pakistan, Mohammad Abdullah Gul, on Sunday, expressed profound grief over the martyrdom of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Syed Ali Khamenei and called for restraint and dialogue to ease escalating regional tensions.

Abdullah Gul, in a condolence message, said Iran and the wider Muslim world had been deprived of an influential and respected leader, and prayed for the elevation of the departed leader's ranks while extending sympathies to the Iranian people.

He voiced serious concern over rising tensions in the region and condemned aggression and violations of international law, stressing that sustainable peace in the Middle East required restraint, dialogue and prioritisation of diplomatic engagement by all parties.

Mohammad Abdullah Gul also condemned attacks on Qatar, the



United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

He underscored the need for unity, wisdom and constructive engagement within the Muslim Ummah to prevent further instability and urged the international community to play an effective role in de-escalating tensions and promoting peace and stability across the Middle East.

Pakistani students being evacuated from Iran

TEHRAN: Pakistan's ambassador to Iran, Muhammad Muddasir Tipu, has said that, on the instructions of the government of Pakistan, the Pakistani students in Iran and

expatriates are being evacuated by land routes.

There are over 3000 Pakistani students studying in various medical and non-medical institutes in Iran.