



A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے بریں عبد اللہ بن ابی بردہ نے بیان کیا ان سے ابورود نے اور ان سے ابو موسیٰ اشعری نے بیان کیا کہ نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے تاک ایک شخص دوسرے شخص کی تعریف کر رہا ہے اور تعریف میں بہت مبالغہ سے کام لے رہا تھا تو نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کہ تم نے اسے تاک کر دیا ہے فرمایا کہ تم نے اس شخص کی کر کو توڑ دیا۔ (بخاری ص ۶۰۶)

# Daily The Spokesman



**Bilawal felicitates newly-appointed Governor Sindh Nihal Hashmi**
Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Thursday congratulated Nihal Hashmi on his appointment as Governor Sindh. In his message, Bilawal expressed hope that Governor Sindh Nihal Hashmi would play an effective role in promoting harmony and coordination between the federal and provincial governments.



**Punjab govt aircraft went to Vienna for technical inspection: Azma Bokhari**
Punjab Minister for Information and Culture Azma Bokhari on Thursday said that the Punjab government's aircraft went to Vienna for a technical inspection. In a statement posted on the social media platform X, Azma Bokhari said that the aircraft of the Punjab government had traveled to Vienna for a scheduled technical inspection, saying that the speculation circulating about it is not only contrary to facts but also regrettable.

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## Meeting

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia H.R.H. Prince Muhammad bin Salman in Jeddah.



Photo: Online

## Seven police officers martyred in IED attack in Lakki Marwat

Syed Tauqeer Zaidi

LAKKI MARWAT: Seven police officers were martyred when militants carried out an improvised explosive device (IED) attack on a police unit in the Bettani area of Lakki Marwat, officials said.

All the slain officers belonged to the Lakki Marwat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Those martyred include SHO of Shadi Khel Police Station, Inspector Sadr Azam, a resident of Tajbi Khel, and Constables Shah Behram and Shah Khalid, both residents of Shadi Khel.

Constables Haji Muhammad and Gulzada, residents of Wargari, Constable Sakhi Zada from



Pakhel, and Constable Namdar from Ali Khel were also among the victims.

According to officials, the police personnel were targeted while performing their duties when the IED exploded.

Security sources said the attack highlights the threat posed by militant groups targeting local communities and law enforcement personnel in the region.

## PM condemns Lakki Marwat terrorist attack on police vehicle

City Desk

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the terrorist attack near a police vehicle in Lakki Marwat on Friday.

He expressed deep sorrow over the martyrdom of the Station House Officer (SHO) and other policemen who lost their lives in the explosion. He prayed for elevation of ranks

of martyrs and for patience and strength for the bereaved families.

PM Shehbaz Sharif also prayed for speedy recovery of those injured in the attack. He said the sacrifices of police personnel and security forces in the fight against terrorism would never be allowed to go in vain. He reiterated that the government remains determined to completely eradicate terrorism from the country.

## PM Shehbaz, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman discuss regional developments

Spokesman Report

JEDDAH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a restricted meeting with Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman here on Thursday, where the two leaders discussed regional developments and reaffirmed their commitment

to strengthening bilateral ties and promoting peace and stability in the region.

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Syed Asim Munir, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

At the outset, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif conveyed his respectful regards and best wishes to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and expressed deep appreciation for Saudi Arabia's longstanding support to Pakistan.

The prime minister reiterated

Pakistan's full solidarity with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during what he described as challenging times, emphasizing the strong fraternal relations between the two countries.

During the meeting, both leaders held an in-depth exchange of views on recent regional developments and

agreed to work closely together to promote peace and stability in the region.

Prime Minister Shehbaz assured the Saudi crown prince that Pakistan would continue to stand firmly with Saudi Arabia and work jointly to achieve their shared objective of regional peace and stability.

## 663 Afghan combatants & Fitna Al Khawarij killed in operation Ghazab lil-Haq: Atta Tarar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that the security forces have killed 663 combatants of the Afghan Taliban regime as well as the Fitna Al Khawarij during Operation Ghazab lil-Haq.

Providing a summary of Afghan Taliban regime and Fitna Al Khawarij's losses at 16:00 hours, the minister said as many as 249 posts of them had been destroyed, while 44 others were captured during the operation.



He said that over 887 Afghan operatives were injured during the Operation Ghazab lil-Haq (Righteous Fury).

Around 224 tanks, armoured vehicles, and artillery guns have also been destroyed during the operation, he added.

The minister noted that around 70 terrorists and terror support locations across Afghanistan were also targeted by air, effectively.

He said on night of 12/13 March 2026, Pakistan successfully targeted terrorists' affiliated installations in Afghanistan.

In Kabul, Paktia and Kandhar, terrorists and its support infrastructure including logistic bases and camps were targeted, he added.

The minister also shared a video in his post on X that clearly showed that Pakistan precisely targeted only those installations which directly or indirectly support terrorism from inside Afghanistan and terrorist camps.

"No civilian population or civilian infrastructures were targeted as falsely propagated by Afghan regime officials and media," he maintained.

## KPK told to stand united and implement federal anti-terror policy without laxity: Tariq Fazal

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Friday warned Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaff in Khabar Pakhtoonkwa (KPK) to fully implement the federal government's zero-tolerance policy against terrorism and act with seriousness, stressing that while our armed forces sacrifice their lives for national security, laxity or defiance would not be tolerated.

While speaking to a news channel, Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said while there might be debates about terrorism, KPK should recognize the sacrifices of the armed forces, noting that more than 8,200 personnel have been martyred in the fight against terrorism in the province.

He emphasized that this reflects the active and ongoing role of the military in ensuring national security.

He added that this time, instead of politics, everyone should collectively play



their role. The federal minister urged

KPK to stand united and allow operations to proceed in line with the federal government's anti-terrorism policy, stressing that full cooperation and strict enforcement are essential to effectively combat terrorism and honor the sacrifices of the armed forces.

Talking about Afghanistan, he said Pakistan's forces took timely action against terrorist hideouts. He added that Afghanistan was repeatedly warned, but it neither ensured action nor provided any guarantees.

## DPM, Norway's FM discuss regional situation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar spoke Friday with Norway's Foreign Minister, Espen Barth Eide and discussed matters of mutual interest.

They expressed deep concern over the evolving situation in the Middle East and its consequences for the region and beyond. Both leaders stressed the need for de-escalation, respect for international law, and a return to dialogue and diplomacy to resolve all issues.

They also discussed the



Pakistan-Afghanistan situation. FM Espen Barth Eide conveyed condolences over the loss of lives in the Islamabad mosque terrorist attack, and both leaders condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

They agreed to remain in close contact on bilateral and other matters of mutual interest.

## Pakistan, Bangladesh speakers discuss strengthening parliamentary ties

News Desk

National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq held a telephone conversation with the newly elected Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh, Hafizuddin Ahmed, during which the two leaders discussed ways to further strengthen parliamentary relations between their countries.

During the conversation, Ahmed thanked Ayaz Sadiq for his congratulatory message following his election as Speaker. The two counterparts exchanged views on matters of mutual interest and emphasised the importance of promoting parliamentary diplomacy between Pakistan

and Bangladesh.

Sadiq reiterated his determination to enhance cooperation and contacts between the National Assembly of Pakistan and the Parliament of Bangladesh. He said strengthening parliamentary engagement would help deepen bilateral understanding and cooperation.

The Speaker of the National Assembly also invited Ahmed to visit Pakistan, stating that the Parliament and people of Pakistan were looking forward to welcoming him.

Sadiq extended his best wishes to the newly elected Bangladeshi Speaker and prayed for his success in carrying out his responsibilities.

# Azad Kashmir PM prioritizes tourism development, meets industry stakeholders

**Bureau Report**

MUZZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir, Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has said that the promotion of tourism in the liberated territory remains one of the top priorities of his government.

He expressed these views while speaking to a representative delegation of the Hotel, Guest Houses, Restaurants and Marriage Halls Management Association of Azad Kashmir that called on him here today.

He told the visiting delegation that practical measures were being taken to develop the tourism sector on modern lines and to ensure a conducive environment for both local and foreign tourists.

Terming promotion of tourism as a key to the region's economic stability, the Prime Minister stated that a robust economy not only helps to generate employment but also enhances the



welfare of the people.

The Prime Minister said that the government was fully aware of the issues faced by hotel owners and others associated with the tourism sector.

"Steps will be taken to resolve the problems faced by all those associated with tourism industry", the pm added.

He further stated that, alongside tourism, the government was focusing

on the development of other key sectors, including health, education, agriculture, IT, industry, and trade.

The delegation welcomed the government's initiative to hold a Tourism Conference and to prepare a roadmap for the long-term resolution of issues related to the tourism sector.

The delegation included Chairman Hotel/Guest Houses Raja Muhammad

Ilyas Khan, Tanveer Ahmed Qureshi, Member and President Chamber of Commerce Ehtisham Wagra, Muhammad Siddique Rathore, Saqib Murtaza, Raja Ifkhar, Abrar Ahmed Butt, Raja Amjad, Chaudhry Sagheer, Ifkhar Ahmed, Azhar Mughal, Ali Umar, Arslan Zia, Nauman Mir, Raja Ammar, Maqbool Kiani, Waheed Awan and Adnan Awan, among others.

## AJK Minister condemns Indian ban on Friday prayers at Srinagar's historic Jamia Masjid

**Bureau Report**

MUZZAFFARABAD: Minister for Information and Religious Affairs of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Government Chaudhry Muhammad Rafiq Nayar, while strongly condemning the ban imposed by the occupying Indian forces on offering Friday prayers in the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar, has said that preventing Muslims from offering Friday prayers in the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar during the holy month of Ramadan is a very regrettable and extremist act, which is a clear violation not only of basic human rights but also of the international principles of religious freedom. He said that extremist India is committing the worst atrocities in human history in occupied Kashmir and is continuously suppressing the voice of the Kashmiri people by force, as well as denying their religious and social freedoms. Chaudhry Muhammad Rafiq Nayar said that restrictions on mosques, stopping Friday prayers and stopping religious gatherings in occupied Kashmir actually expose the hideous face of the Indian extremist government which is committed to the nefarious policy of suppressing the religious freedom and basic human rights of Kashmiri Muslims by force. He said that the faith, identity and religious freedom of the Kashmiri people cannot be suppressed through force.



## DFP hails SC verdict as a ray of hope for justice

**Spokesman Report**

SRINAGAR: Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party, while welcoming the grant of bail to its incarcerated party president Shabir Ahmed Shah in a "terror funding" case by the Indian supreme court, has termed the much awaited verdict as a victory of truth and justice.

Reacting to the court order issued by a bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta, the DFP spokesman advocate Arshad Iqbal said that despite many hurdles in the process the verdict confirms that justice can still prevail.

"Although Shah Sahib has not yet been released from jail, there is a ray of hope that the precedent set by the learned bench in this case will ultimately lead to his exoneration in the other baseless cases filed against him," the spokesman said.

Referring to Shah's lifelong struggle, the spokesman emphasized that his efforts have been purely peaceful and political in nature.

Hailing the SC verdict as a major step towards justice, he expressed the optimism that the courts would provide similar relief to other Kashmiri prisoners who have been languishing in jails for years.

Srinagar: Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party, while welcoming the grant of bail to its incarcerated party president Shabir Ahmed Shah in a "terror funding" case by the Indian supreme court, has termed the much awaited verdict as a victory of truth and justice.



## Al-Quds Day

LAHORE: Shiite Muslim hold a banner, during a protest rally to mark Al-Quds Day, in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

# The memory of Mujahid-e-Awal, an era, a role, a void

**Memoona Kiayani Advocate.**

The 22nd of Ramadan is a day in the history of the state of Jammu and Kashmir that returns every year with a deep sadness and a silent sense of deprivation. Eleven years ago today, on this day, the founder of the Kashmir Freedom Movement, Mujahid-e-Awal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan Sahib left us. His death was not just the departure of a personality from the world but the end of an entire era.

Mujahid-e-Awal was a great leader, a thoughtful politician, a lifelong Mujahid and an all-round personality. He dedicated every moment of his life to the rights of the people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, their struggle for freedom and their eternal commitment to Pakistan. He was not just a political leader but the name of an ideology, a determination and a movement.

The role of Mujahid-e-Awal is a milestone in the history of the Kashmir Freedom Movement. He not only led in the most difficult circumstances but also gave a new direction to the freedom struggle with his courage, insight and steadfastness. Strengthening love for Pakistan and devotion to the Pakistani armed forces in the hearts of the people of the state was the main part of his struggle. He always stood with the conviction that the destination of Kashmir is Pakistan and this is the true aspiration of the Kashmiri people.

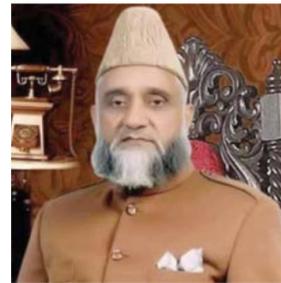
Mujahid-e-Awal's politics was a politics of principles, ideas and public service. He never used power for personal interests but dedicated it to serving the people of the state and strengthening the freedom movement. Under his leadership, the state found political stability, ideological clarity and a strong sense of national dignity.

Today, eleven years have passed since his death, but the fact is that the void

created by his departure has not been filled to this day. After his departure, the state became like an orphan and its political prestige also suffered a deep blow. Examples of foresight, courage, ideological perseverance and leadership like Mujahid-e-Awal are rare even today.

Today, the state once again needs such a sincere, brave and far-sighted leader who prioritizes the interests of the state over personal interests, who considers love for Pakistan as his faith, who makes devotion to the Pakistani armed forces a part of his ideology and who carries forward the Kashmir freedom movement with the same sincerity and courage as the first Mujahid in his entire life.

The services of the first Mujahid are not only a part of history but are a shining example for the coming generations. His struggle teaches us that leadership is not just a name of positions but a name of sacrifice, ideology and true commitment to the people.



Today, when we pay tribute to him on his death anniversary, our heart prays that Allah Almighty may grant him a high position in Paradise and grant us the same courage, sincerity and ideological steadfastness that were the hallmark of the first Mujahid.

Undoubtedly, some personalities do not become a thing of the past with the passage of time, but live forever in history and hearts. Mujahid-e-Awal was one such great personality — a leader, a Mujahid, and a character whose absence is still felt today. May Allah elevate the ranks of Mujahid-e-Awal and grant him the intercession of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Amen.

# Mujahid-e-Awal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, a great soldier of Kashmir Hurriyat

**Shah Zaman Khan Ghalzai**

There are a few figures in the history of the Kashmir freedom movement who have made a mark with their character, courage and political insight. One of these great leaders is the prominent Mujahid-e-Awal Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, whom the Kashmiri people remember with devotion and respect as the title of "Mujahid-e-Awal". He dedicated his entire life to the freedom of Kashmir, the strength of Pakistan and the intellectual training of the youth. In the historical period of 1947, when the atrocities of the Dogra government on the Muslims of the state of Jammu and Kashmir were increasing, Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan raised the flag of the freedom struggle. He organized the

youth, gave them military consciousness and led the practical struggle against the Dogra Regime. Under his leadership, the freedom fighters fought on many fronts and thus the Kashmir freedom movement got an organized direction. This is why he is remembered in history as Mujahid-e-Awal.

After the military struggle, he also played a prominent role in the political arena and emerged as a strong and dignified leader in the politics of Azad Kashmir. He held the positions of President and Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and during his tenure rendered valuable services for strengthening state institutions, promoting education and awakening public consciousness.

He visited various countries to highlight the Kashmir issue at the global level, addressed international seminars and conferences and

presented the position to the world that the Kashmir issue is actually an issue of human rights and the right to self-determination. The most prominent aspect of Mujahid-e-Awal personality was his deep connection with the youth. He played a vital role in giving national consciousness, ideological commitment and political insight to the younger generation.

He guided the Pakistan Muslim Student Federation and the Muslim League Youth Wing and developed an ideological force of the youth that was always active for the ideology of Pakistan, its unity and stability. As a result of this training and guidance of Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, an ideological political force emerged in every corner of Pakistan, which is still active in protecting the integrity and national interests of Pakistan. His trained political workers and young leaders across Pakistan are rendering

outstanding services on the horizon of national politics and are playing an important role in national politics. The responsibility of carrying forward the political and intellectual legacy of Mujahid-e-Awal is being carried out by his son Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan. He has been the President of the Al Jammu Kashmir Conference and the former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, while carrying forward the ideals and mission of his father, is continuously active in highlighting the Kashmir issue on the global stage, raising his voice for the right of the Kashmiri people to self-determination and further strengthening the ideological relationship of the Kashmiris with Pakistan.

He continues to present his position at various forums to keep the cause of the Kashmiri people alive at the political, diplomatic

and public levels. Today, as the death anniversary of Mujahid-e-Awal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan is being observed, this day reminds us of his struggle, sacrifices and national services. He not only fought for the freedom of Kashmir but also developed an ideological political leadership that is still active for the future of Pakistan and Kashmir. His life is a shining example of the fact that changing the destiny of nations requires determination, vision and constant struggle. May Allah Almighty grant Mujahid-e-Awal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan a high place in Paradise and accept his struggle in the form of freedom for the Kashmiri people. Amen, Amen, O Lord of the Worlds.

The writer is Senior central leader Balochistan Awami Party and Chairman Constitutional Committee.

## AJK Election Commission approved the All Jammu and Kashmir and Jammata e Islami registration as a political party

**Bureau Report.**

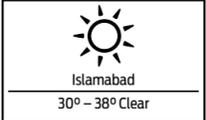
MUZZAFFARABAD: An important meeting of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission was held under the chairmanship of Chief Election Commissioner Azad Jammu and Kashmir Justice (R) Ghulam Mustafa Mughal. In which the Member Election Commission, Secretary Election Commission and other officers participated. The Commission approved the launch of the general elections in accordance with the action plan. The action plan includes delimitation of constituencies for the elections to be held in July 2026, preparation of electoral lists and registration of political parties. In the important meeting of the Commission today, the documents submitted by the political parties Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and Jamaat-e-Islami Azad Kashmir regarding the registration of the party were reviewed in the light of the law. Later, the Election Commission approved the registration of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and Jamaat-e-Islami Azad Kashmir as political parties with the Election Commission.

## NDMA warns of rain, snowfall, potential GLOF, landslide risks in northern regions

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), through its National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC), has cautioned about expected rainfall, thunderstorms, and snowfall in northern parts of the country.

The advisory also warned of possible Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) and landslides in vulnerable mountainous areas, urging residents and local administrations to remain vigilant.

According to the latest meteorological assessment, rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and snowfall in higher altitudes is expected from March 14 to 16, 2026 in parts of Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, and upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:59 am  
Zohr ..... 12:17 pm  
Asr ..... 4:31 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:14 pm  
Isha ..... 7:37 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 &  
& Rescue Services ..... 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

# Iqbal's Philosophy to be integrated into UMT Curriculum following presidential meeting

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: President of Dabistan-e-Iqbal, Iqbal Salahuddin, visited the University of Management and Technology (UMT), where he held a special meeting with President UMT and former Provincial Minister Ibrahim Hasan Murad. The meeting focused on effective ways to introduce the young generation to the ideas, message and philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal.

During the discussion, both sides agreed that Iqbal's teachings should be formally incorporated into academic curricula and coursework in line with modern educational requirements. The aim is to strengthen students' intellectual awareness, understanding of selfhood (Khudi), leadership qualities and sense of national responsibility.

It was also agreed to establish a joint working committee to develop practical recommendations for the promotion of Iqbal Studies through academic courses, research initiatives and schol-

arly programs.

On the occasion, Ibrahim Hasan Murad emphasized that coordinated efforts between educational institutions and intellectual organizations are essential to promote Iqbal's philosophy among students. He shared that connecting young people with Iqbal's message and philosophy is vital to help them become confident, capable, and responsible contributors to national development.

Iqbal Salahuddin appreciated UMT's academic, research, and intellectual contributions, stating that the university is playing a significant role in the holistic intellectual and educational development of young people. He also commended Ibrahim Hasan Murad's initiative to include Iqbal's teachings in the academic curriculum, calling it a commendable and exemplary step.

At the conclusion of the meeting, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further expand joint academic, research and educational initiatives to promote Iqbal's thought among the youth.



## Security Alert - Market Closed

ISLAMABAD: A view of shops closed at Aabpara Market due to security high alert, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Lahore Crime Plumets by 74% Thanks to AI Surveillance and Safe City Tech

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE:

Under the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif to ensure a safer Punjab, a significant reduction in crime rate has been recorded in Lahore owing to effective use of Safe City cameras and modern AI-Based surveillance technology. According to the spokesperson of Punjab Safe Cities Authority, joint smart policing strategy of Lahore Police, CCD and PSCA has resulted in a clear improvement in the overall law and order situation in the city. According to official statistics, a notable decrease has been observed in robbery, theft, snatching and other property-related crimes in Lahore. Due to effective monitoring system of Safe City Lahore, an overall reduction of approximately 74 percent in crime has been recorded across the city.

The spokesperson stated that 4,272 crime cases were reported in January 2025, while this number decreased to 1,108 in February 2026. Similarly, the number of crimes reported in March 2025 was 4,522, which gradually declined to 1,264 by December 2025. Throughout 2025, a consistent monthly decrease in crime was observed due to PSCA's modern surveillance cameras and advanced monitoring system.



## Asma Butt Ismail Hosted Iftar Dinner



**City Desk**

RAWALPINDI: Former Deputy Speaker of Azad Kashmir Assembly, Ms. Shaheen Kosar Dar, was congratulated on her election as President of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Central Women's Wing by Chief Executive of Dolphin Communications, Ms. Asma Butt Ismail, who hosted an Iftar dinner in her honor. Addressing the attendees, Ms. Butt Ismail praised Ms. Dar's long-standing dedication to promoting women's rights and expressed confidence that she will continue to effectively highlight women's issues through her leadership. The lavish Iftar dinner was attended by senior political and media figures, including senior PML-N leader Haji Syed Shahid Iqbal, central PML-N Youth leader Naem Gul Pasha, Kaleem Khan, senior journalist Shakeel Awan, Chaudhry Khalid, Zulfiqar Baig, Amjad, Rais Ahmed Khan, Dr. Waqar Anjum Sajjad, Shazia Adeeb, Nabeel Shehzad, and other distinguished guests.

## Armed Men Threaten Family of US-Based Journalist Zia Qureshi in Karachi

**Qayum Sarohi**

KARACHI: The family of US-based journalist Zia Qureshi living in Karachi has reportedly received threats from armed men, who also snatched a mobile phone to obtain data.

According to details, Aisha Zia, wife of journalist Zia Qureshi, lodged a complaint at Aziz Bhatti Police Station regarding the incident that occurred in the Gulshan-e-Iqbal area. In her complaint, she stated that when she stepped out of her house with family members, armed men riding motorcycles followed them and later stopped and harassed them on the road.

Aisha Zia said the armed men questioned them about the activities of her husband Zia Qureshi in the United States and claimed they were aware of what he was doing there. When they were asked to identify themselves, the suspects refused to disclose their identity.

The complaint further states that the armed men also snatched their mobile phone, saying they would obtain further information about Zia Qureshi's activities in the United States through the device.

The affected family said they fear for their lives and have urged the police to provide protection and take legal action against those involved in the incident.

## AC Kamalia Erum visits to THQ Hospital

**Zafar Chishti**

TOBA TEK SINGH: Assistant Commissioner Kamalia Erum Shahzadi paid a surprise visit to Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital Kamalia and conducted a detailed review of the medical facilities being provided at the hospital. During the visit, she inspected the Emergency Ward, various departments, patients' wards, medical store and the overall cleanliness arrangements in the hospital. On the occasion, the Assistant Commissioner checked the attendance of doctors and paramedical staff. She also interacted directly with patients and their attendants to inquire about the treatment being provided and the availability of medical facilities. The patients informed her about the issues they were facing, upon which she directed the concerned staff to take



immediate steps for improvement.

Erum Shahzadi directed the hospital administration to further improve the cleanliness system, maintain hygiene standards in the wards and keep proper records of medi-

cines. She said that providing the best possible health-care facilities in government hospitals is the top priority of the government and any negligence in this regard will not be acceptable. On this occasion, Medical Superin-

tendent (MS) THQ Hospital Kamalia, Dr. Adeel Arif gave a detailed briefing to the Assistant Commissioner regarding the hospital's administrative matters, available medical facilities, number of patients and staff.

## Al Quds Day Celebrated in Multan

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: On the call of Quaid-e-Millat Jafariya Pakistan Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi, like other cities of the country, Quds Day was celebrated in Multan, including the country, under the auspices of the Shia Ulema Council Tehsil and District Multan.

In the Friday prayer gatherings, the atrocities committed against the oppressed Palestinians were strongly condemned and the resolve to liberate the first Qibla was renewed, while the American and Israeli attacks on Iran were also strongly condemned. Protest rallies were taken out to express solidarity

with the oppressed Palestinians and Iranians, demonstrations were held and sit-ins were held, and memoranda against Israel and America were also approved.

In this regard, a protest rally was organized at Nawan Shahr Chowk under the auspices of the Shia Ulema Council Tehsil and District Multan, which was led by the District President of the Shia Ulema Council Multan, Allama Ghazanfar Ali Haideri, Allama Syed Ali Sajjad Naqvi, Basharat Abbas Qureshi, Makhdoom Syed Zahoore Hussain Shamsi, Mehr Shahid Abbas Chavan Mujahid Hussain Siddiqui, Sabir Khan, while the rally was attended by Allama Baqir Naqvi, Allama Ghulam

Shabbir Haideri, Maulana Hussain Bakhsh Sarwari, Maulana Engineer Kashif Hussain Haideri, Maulana Mazhar Hussain Kharal, Allama Syed Muhammad Raza Naqvi, Maulana Fayyaz Hussain Sangi, Allama Ijaz Hussain Beheshti, Maulana Tanveer Hussain Siddiqui, Shahid Raza Siddiqui, Haji Tahir Hussain Numberdar, Mushtaq Hussain, Syed Ali Gilani, Haider Zaman, Kamran Haider, Masour Naqvi, Asif Gardezi, Waseem Abbas, Iqbal Hussain, Mureed Hussain, Anees Haider Naqvi, Syed Ali Qasim Naqvi, Rana Munir Hussain, Yasir Siddiqui, Ali Mushtaq Baloch and others participated in the rally. The

participants raised slogans of "Our school is Karbala, Karbala, Labaik Ya Hussain", while slogans were raised against America and Israel. On this occasion, the President of Shia Ulema Council Multan, Allama Ghazanfar Ali Haideri, Allama Syed Ali Sajjad Naqvi, Basharat Abbas Qureshi, while speaking, said that the purpose of celebrating Quds Day is to give a message to the world that Muslims are the first Qiblah.

We will continue to struggle at all levels for freedom and self-determination for the Palestinian people. At the end of the speech, Maulana Hussain Bakhsh Sarwari led a prayer for unity. Multan: Allama Ghazanfar Ali Haideri, Allama Syed Ali Sajjad Naqvi, Basharat Abbas Qureshi, Zahoore Hussain



Shamsi, Mehr Shahid Abbas Chavan, Mujahid Siddiqui are leading the Quds Day rally at Nawan Shahr Chowk organized by the Shia Ulema Council Multan District.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almass Ayoub Sabir**  
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 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Khurram Jaffrani**  
 (jaffrani@adpluse.pk)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Head Office: AIMS Building, Street No. 4, H-8/1, Islamabad.  
 spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com  
 Phone: +92 51 2227123,  
 WhatsApp +92 346 5008408  
 Karachi office: A111, Block C, Gulsha-e-Jamal, PRECHS,  
 Karachi Phone: 021-33399390  
 Email: spokesmankarachi@gmail.com  
 Lahore Office: 7-E, Samanberg, Johar Town.  
 spokesmanlahore@gmail.com  
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# Iran's Asymmetric Trap for America

The war involving Iran, Israel, and the United States has evolved into one of the most consequential geopolitical confrontations of the modern era. What began as a calculated military campaign by Israel and the United States against Iranian targets has expanded into a conflict whose consequences are spreading far beyond the battlefield. Energy infrastructure, routes, financial markets, and global political alliances are all now entangled in the crisis.

Far from slowing down, Iran has steadily widened the warzone. Instead of responding only with direct military retaliation against Israel or U.S. bases, Tehran has pursued a broader strategy aimed at increasing the global cost of the conflict. In recent weeks, multiple energy facilities and shipping routes across the Gulf region have been struck, signaling Iran's determination to ensure that the war's economic burden is shared by the entire international system.

Hormuz remains the world's most critical energy chokepoint. Approximately 20 percent of global oil consumption—around 20 million barrels per day—passes through this narrow waterway. Even limited disruptions can send energy markets into turmoil. Already, insurance premiums for tankers operating in Gulf waters have surged, and several major shipping companies have begun rerouting vessels to avoid high-risk areas.

Iran's strategy appears to be based on a simple but powerful calculation: if the country cannot defeat the United States and Israel in conventional warfare, it can still make the war so economically costly that continuing it becomes politically unsustainable. By targeting energy infrastructure and maritime traffic, Iran is effectively expanding the battlefield from the Middle East to the global economy.

economies, still recovering from earlier energy shocks, face renewed financial strain if energy markets remain unstable.

What makes this conflict particularly striking is the contrast in military resources between the opposing sides. The United States alone spends more on defense than any country in history. Its annual military budget now exceeds \$850 billion, larger than the combined defense spending of the next several countries.

This approach has proven particularly effective in the narrow waterways of the Gulf. Iran's arsenal includes thousands of ballistic and cruise missiles, as well as large numbers of armed drones capable of striking targets across the region. Combined with naval tactics involving swarms of fast boats and remotely controlled vessels, these capabilities make it extremely difficult to secure commercial shipping routes during wartime.

Military experts have long warned that escorting every tanker through the Strait of Hormuz would be an almost impossible task. Thousands of vessels pass through the corridor annually. Protecting them from drones, missiles, and naval mines across hundreds of miles of sea lanes would require enormous naval resources even for the United States Navy.

Another striking development in the conflict has been the political messaging emerging from Washington. During a speech delivered at a midterm election rally, the President of the United States declared that the United States had already won the war. According to the speech, Iranian military assets—including radar systems, aircraft, ships, and missile infrastructure—had been destroyed, and the conflict had effectively been decided.

However, events on the ground appear to contradict that narrative. Iranian missile and drone strikes continue across the region, and attacks on energy infrastructure and shipping routes have not subsided. Instead of ending, the conflict appears to be expanding.

For many observers, the declaration of victory may represent an attempt to create a political exit from a war whose strategic objectives have become increasingly unclear. Wars often begin with precise goals, but as they evolve,

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## As UNSC debates Iran nuclear programme

The United Nations Security Council on Wednesday debated Iran's nuclear programme amid rising tensions in the Middle East, with Pakistan telling the 15-member body that an enduring situation lies in embracing diplomacy rather than abandoning it "for short-sighted policies."

"It is clear that dialogue, diplomacy and constructive engagement remain the only viable way forward. And yet, diplomacy has been forfeited in favour of military means," Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the United Nations (UN), said during a discussion on the UN 'Committee 1737', which oversees international sanctions on Iran regarding its nuclear and missile programmes.

"The developments since last June as well as the ongoing situation that started with the unprovoked and unwarranted attacks on Iran have deeply impacted the context of Iran nuclear file," he said.

Regretting the breakdown of diplomacy on the Iranian nuclear issue, the Pakistani envoy said the validity of the fundamental principles and the multilateral spirit that led to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal, remained intact as also the consensus adoption of resolution 2231 in 2015. (But President Donald Trump, during his first term announced in 2018 the withdrawal of the United States (US) from JCPOA, terming it a "horrible," "one-sided" deal that failed to protect US national security interests.)

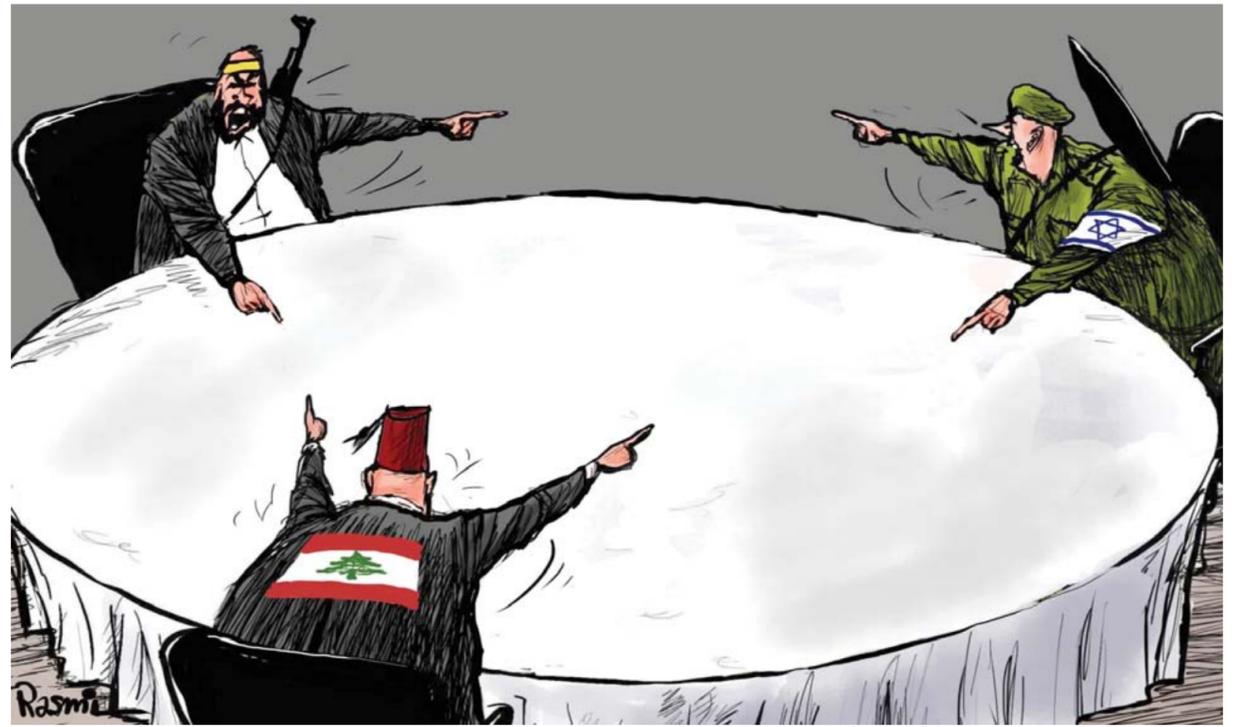
"More than ever, and even during the current conflict and heightened tensions, it is clear that an enduring solution lies in embracing those time-tested principles rather than abandoning them for short-sighted policies," Ambassador Asim Ahmad said.

The JCPOA, he said, was a "unique instrument", manifestation of an approach based on dialogue, diplomacy and pragmatism, highlighting that it was the outcome of painstaking and arduous, yet constructive negotiations that charted a roadmap to comprehensively address the concerns of the parties based on reciprocal actions and thus embodying peaceful resolution of disputes that is at the heart the UN Charter. "Pakistan lent its support to the negotiated settlement of the issue, and it remains our core position till today", he added.

"We have condemned all use of force, targeting of civilian infrastructure, and strikes on nuclear sites under IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) safeguards", the Pakistani envoy said, pointing out that strikes against nuclear facilities carried huge environmental and safety risks for the local population and people all around the region.

He warned against disrupting IAEA's crucial verification mandate, saying that the agency is responsible for verifying compliance with respective nuclear safeguards obligations of Member States in an objective, impartial and credible manner on technical grounds.

"The IAEA should be enabled to fulfill this statutory function and its verification activities in Iran should resume unimpeded," the Pakistani envoy said.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Ashfaq Al-Azcat)

## Punjab's AI Roadmap for South Asia's Tech Lead

The global race for artificial intelligence is no longer confined to traditional technology hubs such as Silicon Valley or East Asia.

Around the world, governments are recognizing that the next phase of economic growth will be driven by data, algorithms and digital innovation. In this evolving landscape, the approval of Punjab's first provincial Artificial Intelligence Roadmap by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif represents an important step toward positioning the province as a competitive technology player in South Asia.

Artificial intelligence is expected to reshape the global economy in profound ways. Estimates suggest that AI could contribute up to \$15.7 trillion to global economic output by 2030, transforming industries ranging from healthcare and agriculture to finance and governance.

For emerging economies, this shift presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Regions that adopt AI strategically can accelerate productivity, create new employment sectors and expand their technological capabilities.

The economic expectations associated with the initiative are substantial. According to Adviser on AI Mr. Ali Dar, the programme has the potential to create more than 100,000 new jobs over the next three years. In addition, the integration of AI across key sectors could increase Punjab's GDP by an estimated 5 to 10 percent. Technology-driven innovation and exports may also contribute between \$10 billion and \$20 billion to Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves, highlighting the broader national significance of the project.

These projections illustrate how artificial intelligence can function as a catalyst for

economic diversification. The roadmap outlines six major pillars that will guide implementation: AI infrastructure, AI administration, citizen-centric services, workforce development, AI-driven economic growth and effective governance. Together, these pillars form a comprehensive framework aimed at modernizing government operations while encouraging private-sector innovation and entrepreneurship.

Human capital development remains central to this vision. Recognizing that technological progress depends on skilled talent, the provincial government has already introduced AI education in 100 schools, with an additional 155 institutions scheduled to begin teaching artificial intelligence in the coming months. Early exposure to emerging technologies can nurture a generation of programmers, engineers and data specialists capable of contributing to both domestic and global digital economies.

Beyond education, the roadmap emphasizes practical applications that address real-world challenges. Artificial intelligence will be integrated into environmental monitoring systems to improve smog detection and mitigation, a pressing concern for urban centers such as Lahore. In healthcare, digital tools and AI-enabled platforms can enhance service delivery and data management. Meanwhile, the proposed Kissan AI Board aims to provide farmers with timely information on crop management, weather patterns and modern agricultural techniques.

Agriculture remains a cornerstone of Pakistan's economy, contributing roughly 24 percent to national GDP and supporting a significant portion of the workforce. Introducing AI-driven advisory systems into this sector could improve

productivity, strengthen food security and increase rural incomes, demonstrating how advanced technology can support traditional industries rather than replace them.

Equally significant is the emphasis on governance and oversight. The AI Governance Policy will address issues such as data protection, transparency and ethical use of artificial intelligence. As AI systems become increasingly integrated into public decision-making, responsible frameworks will be essential to maintain public trust and ensure that technological progress benefits society as a whole.

Of course, the success of any ambitious initiative depends on sustained effort and collaboration. Developing a robust AI ecosystem will require investments in digital infrastructure, high-speed connectivity and cloud computing capabilities. Partnerships with global technology firms, universities and research institutions will also play a vital role in strengthening Punjab's innovation landscape.

Nevertheless, the AI Roadmap represents a forward-looking vision that aligns Punjab with the direction of global economic transformation. By integrating education, governance and technology into a unified strategy, Punjab is laying the groundwork for a future in which innovation becomes a central driver of development.

Implemented with consistency and inclusivity, Punjab's initiative could serve as a model for other regions seeking to harness artificial intelligence for sustainable growth. More importantly, it has the potential to empower millions of people with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in the twenty-first century digital economy. In an increasingly competitive world, such strategic foresight may well determine the region's place in the global technology landscape. (The writer is a public policy analyst and can be reached at qudratu@gmail.com)



Analysis

Qudrat Ullah

## Shadows Over the Valley: The Silent Agony of Kashmir

Across Kashmir's long and troubled history runs a silent yet unbroken thread of grief—the grief of its people whose yearning for dignity and freedom has repeatedly been met with force.

In recent days, that familiar anguish has once again cast its shadow across the Valley, as reports emerge of hundreds of young Kashmiris arrested in sweeping crackdown by the Indian authorities.

What might appear, in the cold language of administration, as a matter of "security operations," is for the ordinary inhabitants of the Valley a human tragedy unfolding behind closed doors.

Reports suggest that over eight hundred people were arrested in districts such as Srinagar, Ganderbal, Budgam, Bandipora, and Baramulla. Those detained included young boys—mostly teenagers—and in some instances young women, taken from their homes during night raids or picked up at demonstrations across the Valley.

These demonstrations themselves were not born of mere political calculation but of the deeper emotional currents that so often move the people of Kashmir—solidarity with distant suffering and outrage at perceived injustice.

Yet the response of the state was harsh and implacable. Homes were searched in the early hours when the world is most silent. Doors were knocked upon with a severity that sent shudders through entire neighbourhoods. Mothers watched as their sons were led away by uniformed men, uncertain whether the next dawn would bring their return or only further silence. The Valley, already accustomed to the heavy tread of authority, felt once again the

familiar tightening of its invisible chains.

For decades, Kashmir has been described—not without reason—as one of the most heavily militarised regions in the world. Vast numbers of security personnel remain stationed across the territory, empowered by extraordinary legislation such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, a law that grants sweeping authority in the name of maintaining order. To the authorities it is an instrument of necessity; to many Kashmiris it represents something far darker—the codification of a life lived under perpetual suspicion.

What renders the present moment particularly poignant is the youthfulness of those now detained. The Valley's younger generation has grown up amid curfews, and the intermittent silencing of the digital world through internet shutdowns. Their childhood memories are interwoven with the rumble of armoured vehicles and the watchful gaze of soldiers stationed at street corners. When such a generation takes to the streets, even in peaceful demonstration, it does so with the accumulated frustrations of a lifetime.

In the quiet homes of Kashmir the consequences are felt most acutely. A father sits by the doorway waiting for word of his son. A sister refreshes her telephone again and again, hoping that the network may suddenly return and carry a message of reassurance. A mother whispers prayers into the stillness of the night. These are not the images that appear in official communiqués, yet they form the true landscape of the tragedy.

The All Parties Hurriyat Conference, a prominent voice within Kashmiri political

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Sarah Rasul Taus Banihali

# Bryansk Bombing: Russia condemns alleged Kiev Regime Terrorist Attack

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: On March 10, the neo-Nazi Kiev regime perpetrated yet another heinous crime against peaceful civilians in Russia by launching a missile strike on Bryansk, statement issued by Russian embassy Islamabad

Russian MFA strongly condemn that deliberate and premeditated terrorist attack. It targeted a busy commercial area near residential buildings, commercial and industrial enterprises, public catering facilities and children's goods stores.

Six people were killed and 42 wounded in the attack. A teenager born in 2009 has been admitted to the regional children's hospital. The authorities are providing the necessary medical and other assistance and support. We express our sincere condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims and wish a swift recovery to those wounded.

According to available information, the attack was carried out using about

seven British Storm Shadow long-range missiles. The head of the Kiev regime, Zelensky, publicly reported to his masters on this barbaric act, which he described as "a successful operation" of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and expressed gratitude to them for carrying it out.

We have repeatedly pointed out that high-tech Western weapons cannot be used without foreign specialists who ensure their operation and targeting, and without the intelligence support provided by certain NATO countries. Kiev's Western handlers therefore bear full responsibility for the consequences of this attack and the resulting civilian casualties.

It is evident that Britain has become deeply entangled in geopolitical games, seeking to strengthen its status as the informal leader of European hawks on the Ukrainian track and as Russia's irreconcilable adversary. In doing so, Britain has violated the norms of international law and is ready to use its puppets to push the conflict to a funda-

mentally new level in terms of destruction and casualties.

We have also noted that British weapons were used at a time when political and diplomatic efforts to settle the Ukrainian crisis in the trilateral Russia-US-Ukraine format are intensifying. The obvious goal of London and other Western capitals is to stage a large-scale provocation involving civilian casualties in order to derail the peace process and escalate hostilities. This is a well-worn tactic that has been used by the sponsors of the Kiev regime every time a settlement becomes a distinct possibility.

It is no coincidence that the attack was carried out at a time when Washington indicated that the conflict may be approaching a turning point and that achieving peace is quite possible.

We call on the concerned international organisations, primarily the UN, whose leadership has been informed of the situation but has refrained from making any comment, to provide an appropriate assessment of this latest criminal action of the Kiev regime



carried out in violation of international law. Silence will be regarded as nothing less than tacit approval of the criminal actions of Zelensky and his puppet masters, who are seeking to escalate the conflict.

# Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Occasion of International Quds Day

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan was named "#InternationalQudsDay" at the initiative of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Imam Khomeini (RA). This day is a symbol of the unified protest of the Islamic world and freedom-seekers of the world against the usurpation of the historical land of #Palestine and the creation of a fake, occupying, terrorist and racist entity in the heart of the Islamic world and the West Asian region.

Quds Day is a symbol of the natural and moral opposition of the world to the violation of the right of a nation to determine its own destiny, and a sign of the awakening of human conscience against organized oppression and violence against its fellow human beings.

The Zionist regime, enjoying the comprehensive support of the United States, England, Germany and some



other countries and in the absence of any practical action by the United Nations and the international community to hold accountable and punish the gang ruling this regime, has committed the most heinous crimes in the occupied Palestinian territory. The horrific genocide in Gaza over the past two and a half years, along with the killing and torture of Palestinians in the West Bank, is the latest example of the colonial policy of annihilation of Palestine that has been pursued since the establishment of the regime in 1948.

At the same time as the systematic killing of Palestinians and their forced displacement from their homeland, the Zionist regime has launched a diabolical media campaign using its own media network to spread lies and distort reality in order to change the roles of the executioner and the victim and whitewash the crimes of itself and its supporters.

We celebrate this year's #QudsDay in a situation where the Iranian nation is defending Iran's sovereignty, national dignity, and territorial integrity against

the brutal military aggression of the Zionist regime and the United States. The military aggression of the Zionist regime and the United States against Iran is a clear sign of the barbaric, inhumane and hegemonic nature of a regime that, in the last 3 years alone, in addition to killing about 75,000 innocent people in occupied Palestine, has attacked 7 Islamic countries and committed thousands of terrorist acts in different countries. The aggressive attack of the Zionist regime and the United States against Iran is an attack against the entire region and the Islamic world, and is in line with the advancement of the evil illusion of "Greater Israel"; a dream that will undoubtedly not be interpreted with the epic defense and perseverance and steadfastness of the Iranian people, but this does not negate the historical responsibility of all Muslim nations and freedom-seekers of the world for the article with the dangerous and evil conspiracy of the #Zionist\_regime.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while emphasizing the continuation of Iran's principled policy in supporting the legitimate struggles of the Palestinian people to realize their right to self-determination and to be free from the yoke of occupation, apartheid, and colonialism of the Zionist regime, notes the moral and legal duty of all countries, in accordance with the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, to support the Palestinian people on the path to realizing this fundamental right and establishing an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital in the entire historical land of Palestine.

On the eve of #Quds\_Day, we honor the memory of all the martyrs of the resistance who have sacrificed their lives in the fight against the occupation, oppression, evil, and terrorism of the Zionist regime on various fronts, including Palestine, Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq, Iran, and other parts of the world.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran sends its greetings to the lofty spirit of the martyred and visionary leader of the Islamic Revolution, His Highness the Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Hosseini Khamenei (Quds be upon him), the leader of the resistance martyrs, and his loyal companions who were martyred during the attack by the American-Zionist aggressors, and emphasizes its pledge to uphold his great legacy in defending right, justice, and freedom.

Without a doubt, the passionate and conscious presence of the Iranian people to commemorate this year's International Quds Day is not only a renewal of allegiance to the lofty ideals of our late Imam and martyred leader, His Highness the Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (Quds be upon him), but also a loud cry of the Iranian nation in declaring its hatred for the brutal aggression and atrocious crimes of the Zionist regime and the United States against our beloved homeland.

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## Discussion on Indonesia's D-8 Chairmanship

# Bringing Together Students from Indonesia and Pakistan

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Islamabad, in collaboration with the International Institute for Regional and International Studies (IIRIS), organized a discussion session titled "Towards the D-8 Summit: The Relevance of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation Amid Global Challenges" on 11 March 2026 at the Indonesian Corner, National Library of Pakistan in Islamabad.

The session was attended by Mr. Shafiqat Rasool, President of IIRIS; Mr. Donny Ardiwidha, First Secretary for Political Affairs at the Indonesian Embassy; and Mr. Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma, Coordinator for the Information, Social, and Cultural Affairs at the Indonesian Embassy.

The event brought together Indonesian students from the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) and Pakistani students from several leading universities, including Quaid-

i-Azam University (QAU), National Defence University (NDU), Bahria University, Riphah International University, and the National University of Modern Languages (NUML).

The session served as an academic platform to examine the role of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation in addressing emerging global economic challenges.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Rasool welcomed diplomats, speakers, and students from Pakistan and Indonesia, emphasizing the importance of academic dialogue in strengthening multilateral cooperation and mutual understanding among D-8 member states.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. M. Saeed Uzzaman, Head of the Department of International Relations at NUML Rawalpindi, who presented on "Reinvigorating the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation: The Strategic Role of Pakistan-Indonesia Collaboration."

Dr. Uzzaman highlighted the poten-

tial of D-8 as a dynamic South-South economic bloc, provided that member states enhance intra-D-8 trade, address connectivity gaps, strengthen logistics and maritime integration, and improve institutional capacity. He emphasized that such measures could increase intra-D-8 trade to more than USD 500 billion, contribute to a combined GDP of USD 8-10 trillion, and create over 50 million new jobs across D-8 member countries.

In his presentation titled "The Strength of D-8 Countries in Global Competition," Mr. Ardiwidha underscored the strategic geographical positions of D-8 member states, which encompass three major global trade routes: the Strait of Malacca, the Suez Canal, and the Bosphorus Strait. He emphasized that the combination of strategic location and significant human capital positions will lead the D-8 as a potential stabilizing force in the global economy. "D-8 is a small group with a big impact," he remarked.

Mr. Kusuma provided an overview



of Indonesia's chairmanship of the D-8 for the 2026-2027 period. He elaborated on the theme "Navigating Global Shifts: Strengthening Equality, Solidarity, and Cooperation for Shared

Prosperity." Indonesia's chairmanship will prioritize five key areas: economic and trade integration, halal economy development, blue economy and green

transition, connectivity and digital transformation, and institutional reform. He also announced that a Special Session on Palestine will be included in the upcoming D-8 Summit agenda. "This is as part of Indonesia's commitment to humanity and solidarity," he added.

The event concluded with an engaging question-and-answer session, during which students, scholars, and participants actively exchanged views with the speakers on the future of D-8 cooperation and the role of youth and academia in strengthening economic partnerships among D-8 member states.

This discussion marked the second round of a series of discussions on D-8 under Indonesia's chairmanship. The first session was held the previous week at the Indonesian Corner and featured Mrs. Noor Fatima, Chairperson of the Department of International Relations at IIUI. The final session of the series is scheduled to take place after the Eid al-Fitr holiday.

# Pakistan's Youth Ignite Climate Action Showcase Backed by UK Support

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Young Pakistanis Take the Lead on Climate Action as UK Steps Up Support Pakistan's next generation of climate leaders took centre stage in Islamabad as the British High Commission and Oxford Policy Management (OPM) convened the Youth Climate Catalysts, a high energy showcase of innovation, diplomacy, and youth led climate solutions.

The event brought together young innovators, experts, and community voices, to support youth leadership for a more climate resilient future. The event is supported by the British High Commission under the UK-Pakistan Green Compact and implemented by OPM.

At the Innovation Souq, young entrepreneurs unveiled climate-tech tools, renewable energy models, circular economy solutions, and AI powered climate applications, offering practical ideas ready for real world adoption.



While presenting her project ezGeyser, Sana Khattak one of the innovators and Co-Founder of ezGeyser Smart Thermostats shared that she works to reduce natural gas and LNG wastage from geysers, helping lower carbon emissions through smarter energy use. She further shared,

"We have been given a platform, an opportunity to showcase our work, people are asking questions, showing interest in our work, youth is inspired which is quite encouraging and it is also helping us to get more contacts and sales, I can see the future of my business aligned with the future of Pakistan."

Anna Ballance, the British High Commission Climate Expert, said "Young Pakistanis are driving the ideas and energy needed to tackle climate change head on. The UK is investing in their leadership because a resilient, greener Pakistan will be built by this generation — through innovation, community action, and a clear vision for a safer future."

In Meet the Leader, emerging climate leaders sat down with senior experts for a candid conversation about the future of climate policy, green jobs, and the role of youth in driving national and global change.

Pakistan is among the most climate vulnerable countries. With more than 64% of Pakistanis under 30, the event underscored the urgency, and opportunity of unleashing youth leadership at scale.

Held during Ramadan, the gathering also highlighted climate action as a shared moral responsibility, not just a technical challenge.

# Best Wishes to the Newly Elected Iranian Supreme Leader: Dr. Ijaz Bashir

## Anwar Chohan

GUJRAT: A delegation led by Dr. Ijaz Bashir, including the representatives of Ayesha Bashir Trust, Descent Welfare Society and Cleft Hospital, Mirza Ashfaq Bashir, Aziz-ur-Rehman Mujahid and Hamza Ijaz, visited the Iranian Embassy in Islamabad to express condolences on the martyrdom of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The delegation met with Iranian Ambassador Reza Amiri Moghaddam and the diplomatic representative Dr. Mehdi Bahmani. Members of the delegation wrote messages of tribute in the condolence book, honoring the life and service of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Speaking on behalf of the delegation, Dr. Ijaz Bashir said that the martyrdom of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has renewed the spirit of the Iranian nation. He conveyed the solidarity of Paki-



stani welfare circles with the Iranian people and extended best wishes to the newly elected Supreme Leader, Hazrat Mojtaba Khamenei.

Dr. Bashir also strongly condemned attacks on civilians in Iran and called the killing of schoolgirls in a recent attack a violation of human rights and international law. The Iranian diplomats thanked the delegation for their visit, highlighting the historic and brotherly ties between the people of Pakistan and Iran.

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

| Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index |                         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Current                       | Prev. Close             |
| 153,866.16                    | 154,421.43              |
| Day's High                    | Day's Low               |
| 155,002.10                    | 152,780.79              |
| Index Value                   | Change                  |
| 11,734,798,583                | -555.27                 |
| Percentage                    | Time                    |
| -0.36%                        | 13 Mar, 2026<br>4:30 pm |

| Europe: FTSE 100 Index |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Index Value            | Change                 |
| 10,261.15              | -44.00                 |
| Percentage             | Time                   |
| -0.43%                 | 13 Mar, 4:35 pm<br>GMT |

| USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Index Value                       | Change                   |
| 46,639.25                         | -38.60                   |
| Percentage                        | Time                     |
| -0.083%                           | 13 Mar, 1:04 pm<br>GMT-4 |

| Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average |                          |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Index Value                         | Change                   |
| 53,819.61                           | -633.35                  |
| Percentage                          | Time                     |
| -1.16%                              | 13 Mar, 3:45 pm<br>GMT+9 |

| Open Market Forex Rates |        |         |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|
| Currency                | Buying | Selling |
| Australian Dollar       | 193.40 | 197     |
| Bahrain Dinar           | 730.65 | 730.70  |
| Canadian Dollar         | 202.18 | 206.50  |
| China Yuan              | 36.50  | 37.75   |
| Danish Krone            | 43.32  | 43.72   |
| Euro                    | 320.59 | 324.05  |
| Hong Kong Dollar        | 34.8   | 35.8    |
| Indian Rupee            | 2.4    | 2.85    |
| Japanese Yen            | 1.7177 | 1.8164  |
| Kuwaiti Dinar           | 889.45 | 900.25  |
| Malaysian Ringgit       | 65.25  | 66.45   |
| New Zealand \$          | 162.77 | 166.25  |
| Norwegians Krone        | 27.61  | 27.91   |
| Omani Riyal             | 715.65 | 725.65  |
| Qatari Riyal            | 74.6   | 75.3    |
| Saudi Riyal             | 73.75  | 74.7    |
| Singapore Dollar        | 214.34 | 219.25  |
| Swedish Korona          | 30.15  | 30.45   |
| Swiss Franc             | 355    | 358.85  |
| Thai Bhat               | 8.05   | 8.15    |
| U.A.E Dirham            | 75.50  | 76.75   |
| UK Pound Sterling       | 371.65 | 375.25  |
| US Dollar               | 279.05 | 280.40  |

# Bank Alfalah joins forces with PC Hospitality for Financial Digital Transformation

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Bank Alfalah Limited and PC Hospitality, the hospitality division of Hashoo Group, have entered into a strategic partnership aimed at enhancing and streamlining the banking and financial service needs of PC Hospitality and its affiliated businesses.

Under this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Bank Alfalah will provide a comprehensive suite of financial products, digital banking solutions, and payment infrastructure designed to support the operational and financial growth of PC Hospitality. The partnership reflects both organizations' commitment to innovation, efficiency, and customer-centric financial services.

As part of the collaboration, PC Hospitality will benefit from Bank Alfalah's award-winning digital banking platform, Alfa App, along with access to one of Pakistan's largest digital banking networks including 24/7 Cash Deposit Machines (CDMs), ATMs, and extensive payment acceptance chan-



nels. Bank Alfalah will also facilitate a broad range of banking services including savings and current accounts, credit and debit cards, financing solutions, and investment prod-

ucts. The partnership will further support PC Hospitality's operational requirements through advanced Point-of-Sale (POS) terminals. Bank Alfalah's Android-based POS machines enable secure, efficient, and seamless cashless transactions, with automated daily settlement, auditing, and management information system (MIS) reporting. Merchants will also have access to a dedicated merchant portal, providing full visibility and control over transaction activities.

Bank Alfalah currently operates one of the largest card portfolios in Pakistan, with over 1.5 million cards in circulation. The bank is the country's largest issuer of Visa and Mastercard cards and the exclusive issuer and acquirer of American Express cards in Pakistan. Through its card acquiring services, Bank Alfalah supports multiple international and domestic payment schemes including Visa, Mastercard, American Express, UnionPay International (UPI), PayPak, and JCB.

## Signing ceremony

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Economic Affairs Division, Mr. Muhammad Humair Karim, and Mr. Sebastian Jacobi, Country Director of the German Government Bank for Development (KfW), signing a grant agreement on Friday.



## Intertextile Shanghai and Yarn Expo 2026 conclude successfully



**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics - Spring Edition 2026 and Yarn Expo Spring 2026 concluded today at the National Exhibition and Convention Center in Shanghai after bringing together textile manufacturers, suppliers, designers, and buyers from around the world.

Both exhibitions are among the leading global platforms for the textile and apparel

industry, showcasing the latest developments in yarns, fabrics, accessories, and sustainable innovations while connecting international buyers and suppliers.

Four Pakistani companies participated in the events. Din Industries Limited, Global Textile Sourcing, and Xiamen Naseem Trade & Co exhibited at Yarn Expo, while Mahmood Textile Mills Limited took part in Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics.

During the three-day events, the companies presented their latest yarn and fabric collections, innovative developments, and sustainable textile solutions to global buyers and sourcing professionals.

The Pakistani exhibitors had a positive experience, gaining strong interest from international buyers and valuable networking opportunities, which further highlighted Pakistan as a key player in the global textile market.

## Happilac Paints Annual Sales Conference 2025/26



**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: Happilac Paints Annual Sales Conference 2025/26 concluded with the Performance Awards Ceremony, a memorable evening dedicated to recognizing excellence and outstanding achievements. Our honorable management proudly presented prestig-

ious trophies and awards to top performers and exceptional teams, appreciating their dedication, hard work and remarkable results throughout the year.

The ceremony not only celebrated success but also inspired everyone to aim higher and achieve even greater milestones in the year ahead.

## Pakistan Peoples Party Strongly Condemn and Reject The increase Fuel Price in Pakistan

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: President Pakistan Peoples Party South Punjab Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood. Chief Coordinator Punjab and Federal Council Member Abdul Qadir Shaheen and Senior Vice President PPP South Punjab Khawaja Rizwan Alam have termed the federal government's brutal increase in the prices of petroleum products by Rs 55 per liter in a single day as a highly anti-people decision and said that this move has dropped an economic bomb on the people due to inflation. They said that this brutal decision of the government has ruined the lives of the poor and middle class, while the petrol mafia and hoarders have been provided with an opportunity to earn extraordinary profits overnight.

Party leaders expressed deep concern and said that just two days ago, the federal government and the Ministry



of Petroleum had assured the nation that there was no shortage of petroleum products and LNG gas in the country, nor was there any crisis, but the government had ample stock for 30 to 40 days. But surprisingly, the very next day, prices were increased so sharply, which is clear evidence that the government's decisions are based on malice and incompetence rather than transparency.

He said that after this brutal increase in the prices of petroleum products, a new storm of inflation will come, which will further skyrocket the prices of food items, transport and daily necessities of life. In this situation, even getting two meals a day is becoming more and more difficult for the poor and middle class.

## ICCI President Calls for expanding digital skills programmes for youth

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sardar Tahir Mehmood has said that promoting digital skills among the youth is essential for preparing them to benefit from emerging opportunities in the global digital economy.

Talking to a group of University students here at the Chamber House on Friday, he stated that Pakistan has a large youth population which can become a valuable asset for the country if provided with proper training in modern digital technologies, including information technology, e-commerce, digital marketing, software development, and freelancing. Equipping young people with such skills will not only enhance their employability but also enable them to contribute effectively to economic development.

Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that the rapid growth of the digital economy has opened new avenues for entrepreneurship and employment. However, without adequate digital training and skill development programs, a significant portion of the youth may not be able to fully utilize these opportunities.

payments, and hybrid annuity structures combining guaranteed and lifetime income benefits.

These products will help retirees convert their accumulated savings into a regular and predictable income stream after retirement, reducing financial uncertainty in later years.

The decision follows consultations with stakeholders in the insurance sector and addresses a key gap in Pakistan's retirement framework.

Traditionally, retirement savings products in the country have focused mainly on the accumulation of savings during a person's working life, while limited options have been available to convert those savings into steady post-retirement income. This gap has increased financial risks for retirees, particularly in the context of rising life expectancy and persistent inflation.

The newly approved annuity prod-

ucts are designed to provide flexible retirement income options. Life-contingent annuities provide payments for the lifetime of the annuitant, while deferred annuities begin payments after a specified deferral period. Annuities with guaranteed payments ensure regular income for a fixed period, and hybrid annuity structures combine guaranteed payments with lifetime income benefits.

The products will be offered by conventional life insurance companies as well as Window Takaful and full-fledged Takaful operators, ensuring availability in both conventional and Shariah-compliant segments. Additional insurers are expected to introduce similar products in the coming months.

The initiative is also aligned with the government's broader policy direction of shifting from

defined-benefit pension systems to defined-contribution pension schemes, where annuities play a key role in converting retirement savings into stable and predictable income streams.

The introduction of diversified annuity products will strengthen Pakistan's retirement ecosystem, enhance financial security for retirees, and support the long-term development of the insurance sector.

## SECP Approves New Annuity Products to Strengthen Retirement Income Security

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has approved several new annuity products to strengthen retirement income security and support the development of Pakistan's annuity market.

The approved products include life-contingent annuities, deferred annuities, annuities with guaranteed

# Pakistan to Host Historic Wheelchair Cricket Showcase Featuring T20 Day/Night Action

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The format you've outlined for the World Series of Wheelchair Cricket is a fascinating tribute to the golden era of the 1980s and 90s Australian tri-series. It is a bold move by the Pakistan Wheelchair Cricket Council (PWCC) to reintroduce this classic, high-stakes structure to the global para-sports stage.

Here is a breakdown of how this ambitious 2027 tournament is taking shape:

- Round-Robin Stage: A "Triple Round-Robin" where the three participating teams play each other three times, totaling 9 matches in the group stage.
- Best-of-Three Finals: The top two teams from the points table advance to a three-match final series. The first team to win two games is the champion.
- Match Conditions:
  - o Format: T20
  - o Aesthetics: Colored clothing and white balls.



o Timing: Day/Night (D/N) matches played under floodlights to maximize viewership and professional appeal.

Participants (1st Edition-2027)

The expected lineup for the inaugural edition features a diverse mix of established and emerging wheelchair cricket powers:

1. Pakistan (Hosts & defending Asia Cup champions)
2. Nepal (A growing force in the South Asian wheelchair cricket circuit)
3. Kenya (Representing the expanding reach of the sport in Africa)

A Global Initiative

The PWCC, as a founding member of the International Council of Wheelchair Cricket (ICWC), is positioning this series as a cornerstone for "uplifting the format globally." By moving away from single-elimination formats, they are providing athletes with more international exposure and a professionalized platform that mirrors the highest levels of able-bodied cricket.

# Massive Al-Quds Rally in Gujrat Denounces US, Israel Policies

Anwar Chohan

GUJRAT: A large "Al-Quds Rally" was organized from Kutchery Chowk to Gujrat Press Club, led by Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Punjab Dr. Tariq Saleem. The rally was attended by prominent religious and political figures including Syed Altaf Abbas Kazmi, along with leaders and workers of Shia Ulema Council and Jamaat-e-Islami. A large number of citizens and activists participated in the demonstration to express solidarity with the oppressed people of Palestine and to protest against the policies of the United States and Israel.

During the rally, participants raised strong slogans against America and Israel, condemning what they described as continued aggression and injustice against Muslim nations, particularly Palestine. The demonstrators carried banners and placards expressing support for the Palestinian cause and demanding an immediate end to violence and oppression.

Addressing the participants outside the Gujrat Press Club, Dr. Tariq Saleem and Syed Altaf Abbas Kazmi strongly condemned the attack on Iran, describing it as a dangerous development that could further destabilize peace in the



region. They stated that such actions not only threaten regional stability but also endanger global peace.

Dr. Tariq Saleem criticized former U. S. President Donald Trump, saying that while seeking international recognition and even aspiring for a Nobel Peace Prize, he has contributed to policies that have pushed the world closer to conflict rather than peace. According to him,

global powers must take responsibility for ensuring justice and stability rather than fueling tensions.

He further stated that under the patronage and support of the United States, Israel has been targeting unarmed Palestinian civilians for the past two years, resulting in immense human suffering. Innocent men, women, and children in Palestine continue to

face bombardment, displacement, and humanitarian crises, which, he said, have shocked the conscience of the world.

Dr. Tariq Saleem also alleged that the United States has played a role in conflicts across several countries in the Middle East, including Iran and Lebanon, where violence and military actions have resulted in the loss of countless innocent lives. He said that such policies have stained the hands of powerful nations with the blood of innocent people.

He emphasized that Muslim rulers must awaken to the gravity of the situation and recognize the growing alliances against the Muslim world. According to him, the United States, Israel, and India have increasingly aligned their interests in ways that are harmful to Muslim nations and communities.

Dr. Tariq Saleem concluded by stressing that the Muslim world remains divided and fragmented, which weakens its ability to respond effectively to global challenges. He called for unity, solidarity, and collective action among Muslim countries, stating that only through unity can the Muslim Ummah safeguard its dignity, defend oppressed peoples, and promote peace and justice on the international stage.

# Thousands march on Youm-e-Quds,

Continued from Page 8

Allama Raja Nasir Abbas also paid tribute to Ayatollah Syed Ali Khamenei, saying he had consistently raised his voice for the dignity of the Muslim Ummah, the oppressed people of Palestine, and the cause of Jerusalem's liberation.

Speaking on the occasion, Allama Arif Hussain Wahidi said the participants wanted to send a clear message to the world that their path was the path of Karbala and that they could not remain silent in the face of oppression.

He criticized what he described as attempts by the authorities to restrict

the rally, saying rulers believed they could block their way by placing containers on roads, but stressed that the demonstrators were peaceful, civilised and patriotic citizens.

Addressing the Palestinian people directly, he said that on Youm-e-Quds, Pakistanis were sending a message to the oppressed people of Palestine that their blood would not be forgotten.

He added that this resolve was inspired by the lessons of Karbala, and urged Pakistan's rulers to "come to their senses."

The speakers and participants strongly condemned what they termed

Israeli aggression against Gaza, Lebanon and Iran, while the crowd raised slogans in support of the Palestinian people, the liberation of Jerusalem, and resistance against oppression.

Massive protests were reported across Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) on Youm-e-Quds and Jumat-ul-Wida, as thousands of Kashmiris poured onto the streets after Friday prayers to express solidarity with Palestine and Iran, despite strict restrictions imposed by Indian authorities.

According to Kashmir Media Service (KMS), demonstrations were held in several areas, including Srinagar,

Budgam, Baramulla, Bandipora, Ganderbal, and Pulwama, where large crowds gathered after congregational prayers and raised slogans against Israeli aggression and in support of the Palestinian people and Iran.

The participants said that Kashmiris stand firmly with Palestine and Iran and rejected what they described as India's pro-Israel policies.

Protesters condemned Israeli military actions and voiced anger over the reported US attack on Iran, with demonstrations said to have continued in the occupied territory since the escalation began.

# Shadows Over the Valley: The Silent Agony of Kashmir

Continued from Page 4

life, has condemned the arrests in the strongest possible terms. Its representatives argue that such sweeping detentions are intended to quell not merely protests but the very sentiment of dissent itself. Whether one agrees with their political vision or not, their statements echo a widely shared feeling among ordinary Kashmiris: that the space for peaceful expression has grown perilously narrow.

Meanwhile, the administrative authorities maintain that security measures are necessary to preserve stability and prevent unrest. It is an argument frequently advanced by governments confronting turmoil. Yet history offers many reminders that stability imposed through fear seldom

yields lasting peace. True tranquillity grows not from the shadow of force but from the presence of justice and dialogue.

Beyond the political arguments lies the more enduring human question: how long can a society endure such a cycle of grievance and repression before its spirit begins to fracture? Kashmir, famed throughout history for its ethereal beauty — its lakes shimmering beneath the Himalayan sky and its orchards blossoming in spring — has too often become a theatre of sorrow rather than serenity.

There was a time when poets and travellers described the Valley as paradise upon earth. Today, those same valleys echo with stories whispered from household to household: of

sons taken away, of demonstrations dispersed, of curfews that descend upon cities like an unexpected winter. The contrast between the land's natural splendour and its political anguish is almost unbearable in its poignancy.

Yet amid this sorrow there persists a remarkable resilience. The people of Kashmir continue to live, to work, and to nurture hope even in circumstances that might have extinguished the spirit of a less steadfast society. It is perhaps this quiet endurance that constitutes the Valley's most profound testimony — a testament that suffering, though heavy, has not wholly conquered the human will.

For the wider world, the events unfolding in Kashmir ought to serve as a solemn reminder. Conflicts that

endure for generations cannot be resolved by the language of coercion alone. They demand patience, empathy, and above all a willingness to hear the voices of those whose lives are most intimately shaped by the dispute.

Until such a moment arrives, the Valley will continue to bear its burden — a land of incomparable beauty, yet also a land where the cries of grief mingle with the mountain winds. And in the silent courtyards of Kashmiri homes, the same prayer will continue to rise night after night: that one day justice, compassion, and peace might finally descend upon this troubled paradise.

The writer is a researcher focusing on the history, culture, and contemporary realities of Kashmir. She can be reached via email: rasoosara134@gmail.com

## NA Speaker felicitates Nihal Hashmi on assuming office as Governor of Sindh



ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has felicitated Nihal Hashmi on taking oath as the Governor of Sindh.

In his congratulatory message, Ayaz Sadiq extended his best wishes to Nihal Hashmi and said that his assumption of the office of Governor of Sindh is a recognition of his long-standing political services, commitment to democratic values, and dedication to public service.

He expressed hope that Nihal Hashmi, as Governor of Sindh, will play an effective role in further strengthening coordination between the Federation and the Province and in promoting public welfare.

Ayaz Sadiq emphasized that the role of the Governor of Sindh is of vital importance in promoting development and prosperity in the province as well as fostering harmony among the federating units.

He also prayed for the continued success of Mr. Nihal Hashmi in the discharge of his official responsibilities.

## Reports of Airspace Closure Denied: Islamabad International Airport Fully Operational



ISLAMABAD: Authorities have firmly rejected circulating reports claiming that the airspace over the federal capital has been closed, terming them completely baseless and misleading. According to officials, Islamabad International Airport continues to function smoothly, with all flights operating strictly as per schedule.

An airport spokesperson clarified that flight operations remained uninterrupted throughout the day, and no restriction or suspension was imposed on air traffic in or around Islamabad. "All arrivals and departures are proceeding normally. Any claims about the closure of Islamabad's airspace are false and should be disregarded," the spokesperson stated.

The official added that misinformation circulating on social media had caused unnecessary concern among travelers, urging the public to rely only on verified updates from relevant authorities and airlines. "Passengers are advised to contact their respective airlines for accurate flight information and to avoid relying on unverified or sensational online posts," he said.

Aviation authorities reiterated that both the airspace and airport operations remain stable, secure, and fully operational, assuring that there is no disruption to routine services. The situation at the airport, they added, is completely normal and business continues as usual.

## Mohsin Naqvi chairs high-level meeting, approves majors security & civic reforms

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi presided over a high-level meeting in Islamabad, where important decisions were taken to improve law and order as well as civic amenities in the federal capital.

During the meeting, it was decided that Islamabad's 109 entry points will be gradually reduced to 25 in order to streamline security and enhance monitoring. The minister directed authorities to formulate an effective strategy for this transition, emphasizing that the Red Zone must be made fully functional with practical enforcement measures.

"Strict monitoring at security checkpoints and entry points will ensure foolproof security," Naqvi said, adding that checkpoints must not exist merely for formality — their true effectiveness should be visible.

## Iran's Asymmetric Trap for America

Continued from Page 4

controlling the escalation becomes more difficult.

In this case, the timeline of the war may no longer be determined solely by Washington or Tel Aviv. Iran's strategy appears aimed at prolonging the conflict until economic pressure and political realities force its adversaries to reconsider their position.

At the diplomatic level, Iranian leaders have outlined several conditions they consider necessary for peace. These include recognition of Iran's right to pursue peaceful nuclear research, the withdrawal of certain foreign military forces from the region, and compensation for damages caused during the conflict. Whether these demands will form the basis of negotiations remains uncertain.

The broader lesson emerging from this confrontation is profound. Military superiority alone does not guarantee strategic control. Economic leverage, asymmetric warfare, geographic advantages, and political endur-

ance can fundamentally reshape the dynamics of modern conflict.

The war that began with the expectation of overwhelming military dominance is now evolving into a contest of endurance and economic pressure. Global markets, energy supplies, and political alliances are all being tested.

If the current trajectory continues, the decisive question may no longer be whether the United States can win the war militarily, but whether it can find a way to end it without triggering even greater global instability.

And in a remarkable reversal of expectations, the timing and terms of peace may ultimately be shaped not by the world's most powerful military alliance—but by the resilience and strategic calculations of the nation it set out to defeat.

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

## Protest

ISLAMABAD: Shiite Muslim hold a protest rally on the eve of Youm-ul-Quds (International Quds Day), in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Thousands march on Youm-e-Quds, leaders vow continued support for Palestine

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: A large number of people participated in the central Youm-e-Quds rally in Islamabad on Friday. The participants renewed their support for the Palestinian cause, condemned Israeli aggression in Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran, and called for the liberation of Bait-ul-Muqaddas (Jerusalem).

The event was jointly organised by Majlis Wahdat-

e-Muslimeen, Shia Ulema Council, and Tehreek-e-Bedari-e-Ummat.

The rally was held as part of the annual observance of Youm-e-Quds, a day introduced by Imam Khomeini to express solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people and to highlight the struggle for the freedom of Jerusalem.

The central procession formally began in the federal capital amid strict security arrangements, with author-

ities deploying additional police personnel, placing containers around the central imambargah Asna Ashari, and closing routes in surrounding areas.

The rally saw participation from a wide range of religious and student organisations, including Shia Ulema Council, Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM), Imamia Students Organization (ISO), Tehreek-e-Bedari-e-Ummat, Jafaria Students, and other

groups.

A significant number of workers, supporters, and members of the public joined the procession, making it one of the major Youm-e-Quds gatherings in the capital.

Addressing the rally, Allama Raja Nasir Abbas said Youm-e-Quds is a day to express solidarity with the oppressed Palestinians and to show hatred for the oppressor.

He asserted that if any country was standing with the

Palestinian people in practical terms, it was Iran.

He warned that anyone supporting former US President Donald Trump or Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in any way would be considered guilty in the eyes of the Palestinian people.

He further declared that the liberation of Quds and the downfall of Israel and the United States were drawing near.

Continued on Page 7

## Petroleum dealers threaten nationwide pump shutdown from March 26

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association has announced plans to shut petrol pumps across Pakistan from March 26 if its demands are not met.

Speaking to the media on Friday, the association's senior vice chairman Tariq Hassan said dealers were facing severe financial pressure due to extremely low profit margins. He said Pakistan has around 12,000 to 14,000 petrol pumps, while dealers already pay advance income tax but continue to struggle under the current pricing structure.

According to Hassan, dealers currently receive a margin of 2.59 per cent, equivalent to Rs8.64 per litre. The associ-



ation has demanded that the margin be increased to 8 per cent.

He added that the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority

had last year recommended an increase of Rs1.68 per litre in dealers' margins. However, the proposal was rejected after the prime minister linked the

increase to the implementation of digitisation measures.

Hassan also alleged that several of the 42 oil marketing companies operating in the

country were "fake" and called for investigations into their activities.

He claimed that some companies were not supplying fuel to dealers, causing shortages at several petrol pumps, while large quantities of petroleum products were allegedly being stockpiled.

The association also criticised recent increases in petroleum product prices and the petroleum levy, warning that further hikes of Rs50 to Rs60 per litre would further squeeze dealer margins.

Hassan said dealers did not want to inconvenience the public during Ramadan, but warned that petrol pumps across the country could shut down if their demands remained unresolved.

## President condemns Lakki Marwat terrorist attack, vows defeat of terrorism

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday strongly condemned the terrorist attack near a police vehicle in Lakki Marwat that resulted in the martyrdom of a Station House Officer (SHO) and other police personnel.

Expressing deep grief over the loss of lives, the president offered prayers for the eternal peace of the martyred officers and extended heartfelt condolences to their families. He also prayed for patience and strength for the bereaved families in this difficult time, a Presidency's news release said.

President Zardari also expressed concern over those injured in the blast and prayed for their early and



complete recovery. The president said their bravery and commitment to safeguarding the country would not go in vain. He reiterated the nation's resolve to continue the fight against terrorism until its complete eradication.

The president emphasized that the government and security institutions remain fully determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and ensure lasting peace and stability in the country.

## Farooq Sattar reacts angrily to removal of Kamran Tessori as Sindh governor

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Leader of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement - Pakistan and Member of the National Assembly Farooq Sattar has expressed anger over the removal of Kamran Tessori from the position of Sindh governor.

In a statement, Farooq Sattar said that by removing Kamran Tessori from the post of Governor Sindh, the federal government and the Prime Minister have sent them a clear message that they are no longer needed.

Farooq Sattar further stated that the party should now treat this matter as its red line and immediately say goodbye to the government.

Earlier, a spokesperson for the Muttahida Qaumi Movement - Pakistan had said that the federal government did not take the party into confidence regarding the change of the Sindh governor, while also announcing that a course of action would soon be decided in response to



the decision.

It is worth mentioning that the federal government has removed Kamran Tessori and appointed Nihal Hashmi, a leader of Pakistan Muslim League (N), as the new Governor of Sindh.

President Asif Ali Zardari has also approved the appointment of Nihal Hashmi as Governor of Sindh, and he is expected to take oath of office today.

## PM Shehbaz decides not to increase petroleum prices despite global rise

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has decided not to increase the prices of petroleum products this time, honoring the promise made to the public despite a further rise in oil prices in the international market.

The Prime Minister said that the decision has been taken to reduce the burden on the common man. He added that, in line with his commitment, the government will provide as much relief as possible to the people during these difficult circumstances.

He said that the global economy is currently under pressure due to tensions in the region, which could have significant effects on Pakistan's economy.

The Prime Minister said that through timely policy-making, government savings measures and financial discipline, efforts are being made to deal with this situation in the best possible manner.

He stated that as a servant of Pakistan, he has resolved to begin reducing the burden on the poor by starting with the country's elite and the government itself during these difficult times.

PM Shehbaz added that along



with the federal government's austerity measures, provincial governments are also fully supporting these efforts, which is a welcome development.

He further said that by the grace of Allah Almighty and due to the efforts of the diplomatic and economic teams, sufficient quantities of crude oil are available to meet the country's requirements.

He said the federal and provincial governments are jointly ensuring that no one charges prices higher than those fixed by the government.

The Prime Minister expressed hope that conditions at the global level will improve and stability will return to petroleum product prices in the international market.

## PM nominates Isphanyar Bhandara as Committee for Minority Rights Commission's member

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Member National Assembly (MNA) Isphanyar Bhandara has been nominated by the Prime Minister as a member of the Parliamentary Committee for the appointment of the Chairperson of the National Commission for Minorities Rights.

As the parliamentary representative of Pakistan's least numerous minority communities, many of whom live in distant parts of the country, his inclusion in this committee carries particular significance, said a notification issued here on Friday.

It underscores the principle that every community, regardless of its numbers or geographic distance from the center, deserves to have its voice reflected in decisions concerning



minority rights and representation.

The nomination also reflects the Prime Minister's emphasis on inclusive governance and his commitment to ensuring that all communities have a place in Pakistan's democratic process.

## Abdul Aleem Khan condemns Lakki Marwat attack, vows to foil enemy plots



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications and President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party, Abdul Aleem Khan has strongly condemned the tragic terrorist incident in Lakki Marwat, stating that the enemy country is making malicious attempts to disturb the peace of the homeland.

However, he emphasized that the nation and security institutions together will foil such conspiracies.

Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan expressed deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of the SHO and Police Personnel in the unfortunate

incident and paid rich tribute to the martyrs.

Abdul Aleem Khan stated that the brave personnel of the Pakistan Army and Police are rendering great sacrifices for the peace and stability of the country, and these sacrifices will never go in vain.

Federal Minister and President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party Abdul Aleem Khan further said that in the fight against terrorism, the entire nation stands shoulder to shoulder with its armed forces and law enforcement agencies and anti-state elements will not be allowed to succeed under any circumstances.