



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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Mohsin Naqvi praises CTD for successful action against terrorists in Lakki Marwat

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi praised Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) for successful operation against Khawarij in Shagai Lakki Marwat. In his message, Mohsin Naqvi said CTD Khyber Pakhtunkhwa foiled the nefarious plans by killing 6 terrorists of Fitna-al-Khawarij. The Interior Minister praised the professionalism and courage of CTD Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



Ex-Senator Mushtaq Ahmad announces Gaza march from Khyber to Karachi

Former senator and head of the Pakistan Rights Movement, Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, has announced a Gaza solidarity march from Khyber to Karachi, set to begin on March 29. Speaking at a press conference in Peshawar, Mushtaq Ahmad Khan said the march aims to express solidarity with the people of Gaza and raise awareness about the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

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Security arrangements of Red zone

ISLAMABAD: Workers installing a entry gate near Global Chowk along Constitution Avenue due to security high alert, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Afghan Taliban drones shot down before reaching targets: ISPR



Representational image

Naveed Ahmad Khan

"terrorist mindset".

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's military said it shot down few rudimentary drones launched by the Afghan Taliban on Friday in an attempt to spread fear among the Pakistani public.

In a statement on Saturday, the military's media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), said the drones were intercepted before they could reach their intended targets.

"The drones were intercepted through soft and hard kills and did not reach their intended targets," the statement said.

However, debris from the destroyed drones reportedly fell in different areas, injuring civilians.

Two children were injured in Quetta, while one civilian each was reported injured in Kohat and Rawalpindi after fragments from the downed drones fell in those locations.

The ISPR stated that the drone attacks were intended to create panic among the public, calling the act a reflection of a

The statement said the Afghan Taliban portrayed themselves as victims to gain international sympathy while simultaneously targeting civilians through terrorist proxies and drone attacks.

It said the people of Pakistan and the country's armed forces are absolutely clear about the true nature and intentions of the terrorist militia-for-hire that rules Afghanistan.

The military also reaffirmed that Operation Ghazab-lil-Haq will continue until Pakistan's fundamental concerns regarding terrorism emanating from Afghan territory are addressed.

Pakistan's armed forces, the ISPR added, remain determined in their fight against terrorism and drone threats and will continue to defend citizens against militants and their facilitators.

The statement emphasised that Pakistan will not back down in the face of such provocations.

PM directs relevant secretaries to ensure implementation of govt's austerity measures

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Saturday, directed that relevant secretaries would personally ensure the implementation and monitoring of the government's announced austerity and simplicity measures and submit daily reports to the review committee.

The prime minister chaired a meeting to review the impact on petroleum product prices

due to the current regional situation and the implementation of government's austerity measures.

During the meeting, policy measures aimed at stabilizing petroleum product prices and the progress and effects of the government's cost-saving initiatives were discussed.

The meeting was informed that the amount saved through government's austerity measures would be utilized to provide relief to the public under the



prevailing situation, emphasizing that all these savings generated through the austerity measures would solely go for public relief, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

It was decided in the meeting that, similar to the government employees' mechanism, salaries of the employees of state-owned enterprises and autonomous institutions working under government patronage would be deducted in stages from 5 to 30 percent, and the saved amount would be used for the provision of public relief.

The meeting also decided that in corporations and other institutions where government representatives sit on boards, they

would not receive board meeting fees and the amounts would be added to the savings pool.

The meeting was attended by Ministers Attaullah Tarar, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Ali Pervaiz Malik, Minister of State Bilal Azhar Kayani, Chairman of the Federal Board of Revenue and other senior officials.

The prime minister further directed all Pakistani embassies around the globe to celebrate Pakistan Day (23 March) with simplicity.

Information Ministry dismisses fabricated allegations by Afghan regime

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on Saturday categorically rejected the latest statement issued by the so-called Ministry of Defence of the Afghan Taliban regime, regarding alleged capture of posts and reported damages.

In a statement posted on social media platform X, the described the Afghan Taliban regime's latest claims as "false and fabricated," saying they were aimed at

misleading Afghan public opinion, which continues to suffer under "terror sponsors."

The ministry said that damages and losses incurred by Master Proxy Afghan Taliban and their extension "Fitna Al Khawarij" are being regularly updated. Related video and pictorial evidence, where applicable, is also shared with media, rather than resorting to fake claims and propaganda.

Great care is being taken to ensure credible and timely information regarding the ongoing



targeted operations against terrorist networks and their

support infrastructure inside areas under the Afghan Taliban regime's occupation. The ministry said credible reports of targeted strikes on terrorist hideouts inside Afghanistan are being promptly shared with the media.

Apart from amplification by terrorist networks and Indian media and social platforms, no credible or verifiable evidence has ever supported the repeated claims issued by Taliban outlets, which have consistently collapsed once subjected to fact-checking.

PM lauds CTD for successful operation against militants in Lakki Marwat

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday commended the officers and personnel of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) for carrying out a successful operation against militants in Shagai area of Lakki Marwat.

The prime minister praised professional capabilities of the CTD officials for eliminating six militants during the operation.

He said the successful action reflected commitment and preparedness of the law enforcement agencies in the fight against terrorism.

Shehbaz Sharif said

the war against terrorism would continue until it was completely eradicated from the country. He added that officials of law enforcement agencies, including the CTD, were working day and night to cleanse the homeland of terrorists.

The prime minister said the entire nation was proud of the sacrifices and dedication of the security forces and law enforcement agencies.

PM Shehbaz Sharif reaffirmed that he, along with the whole nation, stood shoulder to shoulder with the security forces in their determination to eliminate terrorism from the country.

Atta Tarar commends MoIB for countering Afghan Taliban's disinformation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar, commended his ministry on Saturday for its consistent efforts in countering the disinformation of the Afghan Taliban regime on social media networking sites.

The Minister's remarks followed a recent rebuttal by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MoIB) regarding claims made by official

Taliban regime accounts on social media.

In a post on X, Tarar noted that another false claim by the Afghan Taliban had been exposed by the MoIB Fact Checker, adding that such allegations lack any foundation.

"On the other hand, all the damages and losses being incurred by the Afghan Taliban and their extension, Fitna Al Khawarij are updated by Ministry of Information with irrefutable pictorial and video evidence regularly," he noted.

China urges Afghanistan, Pakistan to resolve tensions via talks, not force

Reuters

SHANGHAI: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told his Afghan counterpart Amir Khan Muttaqi in a phone call that disputes between Afghanistan and Pakistan should be resolved

through dialogue and consultation, not force, the foreign ministry said in a statement published on Friday.

Wang urged both sides to remain calm and exercise restraint, hold face-to-face talks as soon as possible, seek an

immediate ceasefire and address differences through dialogue, according to the statement.

The further use of force would only complicate the situation and intensify tensions, Wang said.

The ministry's statement

came after Pakistan on Friday bombed the fuel depot of private airline Kam Air near Afghanistan's Kandahar airport, stepping up the neighbours' worst conflict in years, despite China's efforts to mediate.

Wang and Muttaqi also

exchanged views on the situation in Iran, the statement said.

Wang told Muttaqi, according to the statement, that Beijing is willing to work with the international community, including Afghanistan, to bring peace to Iran.

AJK Premier vows action to resolve overseas Kashmiri issues

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has said that Overseas Kashmiris are a valuable asset of the state who have playing an important role as ambassadors of the state of Azad Kashmir and promoting Kashmir cause worldwide.

The AJK premier said this while speaking to Overseas Commissioner Azhar Badralvi who called on him here today. He said that the government was prioritizing the resolution of the problems of Overseas Kashmiris.

The Prime Minister said that practical measures were being taken for the immediate resolution redressal of the problems faced by Overseas Kashmiris. On this occasion, Overseas Commissioner Azhar Badralvi apprised the Prime Minister about the problems of Overseas Kashmiris and the performance of the Commission and assured that all available resources would be utilized to resolve the problems of Overseas Kashmiris. The Commissioner appreciated the



Prime Minister's decision including the establishment of a portal for Overseas Kashmiris and a separate court for the prompt resolution of their legal matters. Meanwhile, a delegation of the Red Crescent led by Secretary Gulzar Fatima called on Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore. During the meeting ongoing meas-

ures regarding humanitarian service, emergency relief and welfare activities were discussed. The Prime Minister praised Red Crescent as one of the region's premier welfare organizations that has been playing a valuable role in helping people during difficult situations especially in natural disasters. "Serving the weak and underprivi-

leged sections of the society is indeed our shared responsibility; however with the support of welfare organizations like Red Crescent, welfare works can be further expanded", he remarked. On the occasion, Secretary Red Crescent Gulzar Fatima briefed the Prime Minister about the performance of her organization.

Helpline Trust calls for active consumer courts on World Consumer Rights Day 2026

News Desk

KARACHI: The Helpline Trust joins the global observance of World Consumer Rights Day 2026, reaffirming its commitment to safeguarding consumer interests under this year's theme, "Safe Products, Confident Consumers." The day serves as an important reminder that every consumer has the fundamental right to access products and services that are safe, reliable, and trustworthy.

On this occasion, the Helpline Trust calls upon key regulatory institutions, including the Competition Commission of Pakistan and the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority, along with provincial consumer protection bodies, to intensify their efforts to ensure safer markets. The organisation emphasises the need for strict inspections to prevent unsafe products from entering the market, clear and transparent product labelling, and stronger cross-border cooperation to curb the circulation of hazardous and counterfeit goods. At the same time, greater public awareness is required so that consumers understand their rights and can easily access complaint and redress mechanisms.

On the eve of World Consumer Rights Day 2026, the Helpline Trust reiterates its resolve to continue advocating for consumer empowerment, stronger accountability, and a safer marketplace. Ensuring the protection of consumers today will help build a fair, transparent, and confident marketplace for generations to come.

Attock police recover big qty of drugs

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Major Operation by Attock Police: Attempt to Smuggle Drugs Across Provinces Foiled, Suspects Arrested

According to details, the police of Attock Khurd police station in Attock carried out an effective operation against drug trafficking and foiled a major attempt to smuggle drugs from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Punjab. During the operation, two interprovincial drug smugglers—Hazrat Umar son of Aurangzeb and Nauman son of Hayat, residents of Nowshera—were arrested.

The police team stopped a suspicious Hiace van at Search Park Attock Khurd during routine checking. Upon searching the vehicle, more than 7 kilograms of charas (hashish) and 1,100 grams of ice (crystal methamphetamine) were recovered, which had been expertly concealed inside the body of the vehicle.

A case has been registered against both suspects under the Anti-Narcotics Act, and further investigation has been initiated.

District Police Officer Sardar Mawarah Khan praised the police team for the successful operation and stated that protecting the younger generation from the menace of drugs is the top priority of Attock Police. He further added that indiscriminate operations against drug dealers and smugglers will continue. #

Regional Power Shifts Contrast With Pakistan's Economic Woes, says Former MNA

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Central leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and former Member of the National Assembly Major Tahir Sadiq said that major changes are taking place in the balance of power in the region and across the world. However, it is unfortunate that the "Form-47 government" in Pakistan is focused on safeguarding its power and accumulating resources instead of strengthening the national economy, attracting foreign investment, and stabilizing state policies.

He expressed these views while talking to journalists at a lavish Iftar dinner hosted at the residence (dera) of Haji Siyar Gul Khan, a developer of Kamilpur Green Housing Society, member of the Attock Press Club (Registered), and a well-known businessman as well as political and social figure.

Major Tahir Sadiq said that those responsible for inflation and the architects of flawed economic policies are constantly looking for excuses to burden the public, as seen in the recent increase in petroleum prices. He added that the current rulers have caused serious damage to the country's economy.

Referring to the situation in the Middle East, he said that Iran, despite not being a nuclear power, has demonstrated through its determination that courageous leadership can challenge even the world's major powers. He added that Israel, which claims to be the dominant power in the region, appears to be under pressure for the first time in the face of real resistance.

Speaking about the issue of Afghan refugees, he said that Pakistan had provided shelter to these refugees for forty years and generations grew up here. Expelling them without a clear policy undermines Pakistan's decades-long tradition of hospitality and humanitarian values.

ICT admin crackdown: 58 professional beggars taken into custody in 24 hours

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration have intensified action against begging in the federal capital and enforcement teams detained 58 professional beggars from different areas of the city and shifted them to police lockups.

Officials said the operation is part of an ongoing effort to address organized begging and maintain public order in busy locations.

According to the spokesman of ICT administration, the district administration carried out the operation through coordinated teams working in several parts of the capital. Officials said the action targeted individuals involved in professional begging at markets, traffic signals, public roads, and other crowded places.

According to the administration, field teams conducted inspections in multiple sectors and commercial zones. During these checks, 58 individuals involved in professional begging were taken into custody. After their arrest, the detainees were shifted to police lockups for further legal action.

Removing the containers

ISLAMABAD: Workers removing heaving shipping containers as open the road, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

29th Urs of former Governor Punjab Makhdoom Sajad Hussain Qureshi celebrating in Multan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The 29th annual Urs and Khatam Sharif of the late Makhdoom Sajad Hussain Qureshi, the custodian of the shrine of Hazrat Ghaus Bahaudin Zakaria (RA), was the largest gathering in the historical and anniversary context in the premises of the shrine of Hazrat Ghaus Bahaudin Zakaria (RA). The grand gathering of Urs and Khatam Sharif included senior politician Makhdoom Javed Hashmi, head of the Gilani family Makhdoom Syed Ghulam Yazdani Gilani, Makhdoom Mureed Hussain Qureshi's son Makhdoomzada Sajjad Hussain Qureshi, senior politician Malik Ashiq Ali Shajra, former provincial minister Hussain Jahani Gardezi, Noor Asghar Bacha, Sajjada Nashin of Dargah Musa Pak Shaheed Makhdoom Velayat Mustafa Gilani, Makhdoom Rajan Bakhsh Gilani,



Makhdoomzada Zainul Abideen Advocate, Member of National Assembly Pir Zahoor Hussain Qureshi, members of Provincial Assembly Nadeem Qureshi, Malik Adnan Dogar, former provincial minister Hafiz Iqbal Khakwani, Sajjada Nashin of Dargah Hazrat Nawab Sakhi Makhdoom Zohaib Gilani, Sajjada Nashin of Dargah Hazrat Ghaus Pak

Noorani Dr. Ghaus Alam Gilani, Sajjada Nashin of Hujra Ghaus Pak Noorani Makhdoom Almeen Gilani, Sajjada Nashin of Dargah Hazrat Azimuddin Shah Daulat Gate Makhdoom Ghulam Mustafa Shah Gilani, Dargah Hazrat Hafiz Ismail Makhdoom Qaiser Alam Hashmi, Makhdoom Shoaib Akmal

Hashmi, Jamaat Ahlus Sunnat Provincial Nazim Allama Farooq Khan Saecdi, Brigadier (R) Maqsood Qureshi, Dr. Altaf Qureshi, Dr. Asif Qureshi, Zahid Bahar Hashmi, Khalid Javed Waraich, Malik Arshad Ran, Salim Khan Babar, Malik Zahoor Mahe, Khwaja Rizwan Alam, Babu Nafees Ahmad, Ansari, Malik Naseem Labar, Malik Akram Kumhan, Zahid Hussain Gurdizi, Abdul Qadir Qadri, Rizwan Abid Tahim, Hashim Khan Babar, Dilbar Khan Mahar, Dalir Khan Mahar, Rao Muhammad Asif, Fahad Sanghi, Barrister Usman Dogar, Makhdoom Shamsher Hashmi, Mian Tanveer A Sheikh, while Makhdoom Zain Hussain Qureshi offered special prayers for the peace and stability of the country, the unity of the Islamic world, the failure of Jews and Christians and the success of Muslims. On this occasion, a large-scale langar was also prepared.

Digital Recruitment: Eliminate Manual Job Applications and Unnecessary Fees

In today's digital era, where almost every sector has embraced technology to simplify and speed up processes, it is high time we reform one of the most outdated and burdensome systems still in place, the manual job application process. Across government departments, educational institutions, and public-sector organizations, job seekers are still being asked to submit physical documents, pay fees through demand drafts or challans, and bear the cost of printing, photocopying, and postal services.

This outdated practice not only causes unnecessary hardship but also disproportionately affects candidates

from underprivileged backgrounds. Many of these job seekers are already struggling financially, and the cumulative cost of applying for multiple positions, including application fees, bank charges for challans or demand drafts, and postal fees, becomes a barrier to opportunity. Moreover, photocopying documents, acquiring gazetted attestation, and queuing at post offices are time-consuming, stressful, and, frankly, avoidable in today's connected world.

It's time for a change. A big one: Every department, sector, and recruitment agency should adopt free-of-cost, Online and digital application mechanisms that are accurate, transparent, and accessible to all. The use of digital

platforms in recruitment would not only ease the burden on candidates but would also enhance the overall efficiency and accuracy of the hiring process.

Key Benefits of Digital-Only, Free Recruitment Processes:

Financial Relief for Candidates: Removing fees and postal/document costs will enable more candidates, especially those from rural and economically weaker backgrounds, to apply confidently for jobs.

Faster Processing & Accuracy: Digital systems reduce human error, enable instant verification, and facilitate better data management.

Environmental Responsibility: Eliminating paper-based applications significantly reduces the use of paper, envelopes, and courier packaging, contributing to a greener future.

Increased Accessibility: Digital platforms are accessible from anywhere, allowing candidates from remote areas to apply without traveling or standing in long queues.

Transparency and Tracking: Candidates can get instant confirmation of application receipt and track the status of their application in real-time.

What Needs to Be Done
Remove all manual submission requirements: No candidate should have to send hard copies unless specifically required for verification at the

final stage.

Abolish recruitment-related fees: Make application processes completely free for all candidates, as an investment in equal opportunity and talent development.

Implement centralized online portals: Institutions and departments should host recruitment on reliable, mobile-friendly, multilingual platforms.

Offer support for first-time digital users: Set up helpdesks, community centers, or mobile vans to assist candidates in filling out forms online, especially in rural areas.

Technology is meant to simplify lives, not complicate them. By continuing to demand hard copies, challans, and

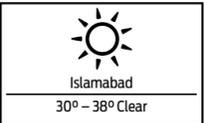
postal submissions, we are holding onto systems that no longer serve the public efficiently. In a country where digital literacy is growing and access to the internet is expanding, it's only fair and urgent to redesign our recruitment mechanisms with empathy, innovation, and inclusion at their core.

The time to go digital, free, inclusive, and paperless is now. Let us make job opportunities truly accessible to all, not just those who can afford to apply.



Analysis

Dr. Mushtaq Ahmed Rahu



Media calls on provinces to fulfill population commitments

Rafiqullah Mandokhel

QUETTA: In collaboration with the Information Service Academy (ISA), the Population Council, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), convened a Media Coalition Meeting in Islamabad to strengthen the media's role in advancing Pakistan's National Action Plan on population under the Council of Common Interests (CCI). The meeting brought together senior journalists, communication experts, and public sector representatives to discuss how evidence-based reporting can improve accountability and public understanding of demographic challenges.

Speaking at the opening session of the Media Coalition Meeting, Dr. Ali Mir, Senior Director, Population Council, highlighted the critical role of responsible journalism in shaping national discourse. "When journalists elevate facts over assumptions, they become a force for better governance and better outcomes," he said, emphasizing that sustainable progress depends on media highlighting policy gaps, service barriers, and community realities.

Adnan Akram Bajwa, Director of the Information Service Academy, reaffirmed

ISA's commitment to supporting journalists through credible information and professional capacity building. He noted that public trust in institutions grows when reporting is grounded in accuracy and clarity.

In his remarks, Ikram ul Ahad, Manager Communication, Population Council, underscored the human impact of Pakistan's reproductive health challenges. He noted that maternal mortality remains disproportionately high among poor rural women who face persistent barriers to family planning services.

Members of the Media Coalition, Zafar Sultan (PTV) and Daniyal Umar (Samaa TV), presented a consolidated stock taking exercise conducted collectively by all coalition members on provincial progress in implementing the CCI endorsed National Action Plan on Population across Punjab, Sindh, KP, Balochistan, and Islamabad.

Concluding the meeting, Dr. Jamil Ahmad Chaudhry, Program Specialist, UNFPA, emphasized the importance of collective action in safeguarding the health and rights of women and girls. "Every preventable maternal or newborn death is a reminder that urgent action is not optional, it is our obligation," he said.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 4:57 am
Zohr 12:17 pm
Asr 4:32 pm
Maghrib 6:15 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
Sui Gas Complaint 119, 9272249

Ajmal Baloch Urges Federal Govt to Grant Islamabad Workers Eid Bonus and Allowances

President of Anjuman Tajiran Pakistan Ajmal Baloch has demanded that the federal government extend the same relief to Islamabad Social Security registered employees as provided in Punjab, including a monthly allowance, additional allowance, and Eid bonus. He urged the Federal Interior Minister, the Interior Secretary, and the Chief Commissioner Islamabad to take immediate notice of the matter and address the concerns of the employees.

President of Anjuman Tajiran Pakistan Ajmal Baloch, in an important statement, expressed concern that registered employees of Islamabad Social Security are being deprived of additional allowance and Eid bonus on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, terming the situation unfair and unacceptable. He said that the steps taken by the Punjab government on the directions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz to grant Social Security employees across the province an additional allowance of Rs. 7,000 along with the existing monthly allowance of Rs. 3,000 are commendable. Ajmal Baloch stated that this initiative will provide significant financial relief to employees.

Eid shopping

ISLAMABAD: A woman wears bangles bought from a stall at Jinnah Super Market as she prepares to celebrate the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr festival in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Faisalabad commissioner inaugurates newly developed City Park at Toba Tek Singh

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Under the vision of Maryam Nawaz Sharif, efforts are underway to improve urban facilities and enhance the beauty of the city in Toba Tek Singh. In this regard, Faisalabad Divisional Commissioner Raja Jahangir Anwar visited the district and inaugurated the newly renovated City Park (Bhalir). Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh Umar Abbas Mela accompanied him on the occasion.

District Police Officer Akhlaq Ullah Tarar, Assistant Commissioner Munawar Hussain Kamla Sial, Addi-



tional Deputy Commissioner General Zeeshan Labbah Masih, Chief Officer District Council Kashif Mahmood, officials of the Municipal Committee and other officers

were also present at the ceremony. Officials briefed the commissioner that a modern walking track and colourful tuff-tiled pathways have been constructed in the park, while

lush green lawns, landscaping and flower beds have also been developed. Children's play facilities have been installed and gazebos, arched pathways and benches have been added for visitors. Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Raja Jahangir Anwar said that providing quality recreational facilities to citizens was a priority of the Punjab government. He added that several new development projects aimed at further improving the city had been included in the next year's development programme and that efforts to rehabilitate parks and beautify the city would continue.

PSCA ensures swift response over alleged domestic violence reported through Public Safety App

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Safe Cities Authority ensured prompt response and action after a citizen from the Sunder Police Station area sought help through PSCA's Public Safety App during occurrence of a domestic dispute involving alleged violence. According to PSCA's spokesperson, the affected citizen contacted Punjab Safe Cities Authority using video call feature of the Public Safety App and reported alleged physical abuse by his wife. During video call, the complainant recorded visual evidence of the incident and informed the officer that he had also received life threats from his wife.

The spokesperson stated that upon receiving the said complaint, PSCA officer immediately initiated a response and dispatched the relevant field police team to the location. During live video call, the officer assured the citizen of full protection, immediate assistance and appropriate legal action. The Sunder Police team reached the spot without delay, gathered detailed information from both parties, and completed all necessary investigation process. Due to timely response of PSCA's officer and field police, domestic dispute was resolved peacefully and amicably on the spot.

According to PSCA's spokesperson, the Safe City Public Safety App is playing an effective role in providing immediate assistance to the citizens facing any kind of distress or other social issues. Through live video call feature, citizens can directly report incidents and share real-time evidence with PSCA through its Public Safety App. The spokesperson further stated that in case of any emergency situation, citizens are encouraged to use the app to share live video evidence so that prompt action can be ensured. PSCA remains fully committed to providing timely assistance along with ensuring safety and security of citizens at all times.

Renowned academic Rubina Kausar calls for national commitment to women empowerment

Zafar Chishti

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of International Women's Day, Rubina Kausar, a distinguished Public Relations Officer and renowned academic, has called for a renewed national commitment to women's higher education and digital empowerment. Ms. Kausar holds the unique distinction of being the first Pakistani woman to graduate with a Double Master's in Public Administration and International Development Cooperation from the prestigious Seoul National University (SNU) in South Korea.

During her tenure in South Korea, Ms. Kausar served as the Administrator of the Volunteer Pakistan Community, where she authored the organization's constitution and promoted Pakistani culture among Korean students. An accomplished athlete and columnist, she has also submitted her research theses in both English and Korean languages at top-tier universities to provide a roadmap for future scholars.

As the digital age transforms the workforce, Ms. Kausar highlighted the urgent need for safe digital spaces and technological training for girls, ensuring that the daughters of Pakistan can lead in innovation and global trade.



Secretary Housing Punjab Reviews Multi-Billion Sewerage Development Projects in Multan

Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: Secretary Housing, Urban Development & Public Health Engineering Department Punjab, Captain (R) Noor-ul-Amin Mengal, visited Multan to conduct an extensive review of ongoing sewerage development projects worth billions of rupees. The inspection included upgrades of disposal stations, installation of sewerage lines, and a visit to the pipe factory. Managing Director WASA Multan, Faisal Shaukat, briefed the Secretary on the progress, quality, and technical aspects of the projects. Under the vision of Chief

Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, titled "Quality Sewerage, Clean Punjab," the Punjab Development Program is rapidly advancing sewerage projects in Multan with a total investment of PKR 25.838 billion. Following special instructions from the Chief Minister, Captain (R) Noor-ul-Amin Mengal examined various phases of sewerage and drainage projects, including the upgrading of disposal stations and installation of sewer lines across the city.

MD WASA reported accelerated work in densely populated and key areas of the city. In Hussain Agahi, the installation of

an 18-inch, 2,000-foot sewer line has been completed. In Naveed Biryani Street, Gulgasht, an 18-inch, 880-foot line has been installed. Basti Suraj Kund saw the installation of 1,300 feet of 12-inch and 18-inch sewer lines. In Kayianpur, 125 feet of a 250-foot, 24-inch sewer line was completed using thrust boring, with remaining work progressing rapidly.

Captain (R) Noor-ul-Amin Mengal also visited the pipe factory, inspecting the production stages, raw materials, technical standards, and quality of pipes intended for project installation. He emphasized

that all materials and construction equipment used must meet strict engineering standards to prevent future technical failures, structural weaknesses, or public inconvenience.

MD WASA Multan, Faisal Shaukat, affirmed that WASA Multan is committed to providing modern, high-quality, and sustainable sewerage facilities in line with the Chief Minister's vision. Completion of these projects will bring significant improvements to the city's sewerage and drainage system, long-term relief to residents, and a cleaner urban environment.

Deputy Managing Director



Engineering Zeeshan Shaukat Kondal, Director Works Muhammad Waqas, Deputy Directors Engineering, and other officials and staff accompanied the Secretary during the visit.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almass Ayoub Sabir**
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**
 Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Khurram Jaffrani**
 (jaffrani@adpluse.pk)
 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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CM Punjab Urged to Curb Fake Newspapers Through Enforcement of Media Regulations

In Pakistan, a free and responsible press serves as a fundamental pillar for the survival of a democratic society and the transparency of state institutions. The primary purpose of journalism is to provide the public with authentic information, maintain oversight of state affairs, and strengthen the process of accountability within society. However, when the journalistic system lacks regulation, transparency, and legal discipline, the same field can fall victim to disorder, mistrust, and unprofessional practices. Considering the current media structure in Punjab, it is increasingly evident that significant reforms are urgently needed. Without the effective and practical enforcement of the Press and Publications Ordinance 2002, the institution of journalism cannot preserve its true spirit.

In Pakistan, the publication, registration, and monitoring of newspapers and printed materials are governed by the Press, Newspapers, News Agencies and Books Registration Ordinance 2002. The fundamental objective of this law is to ensure that all publications produced in the country operate under proper registration so that their legal status, responsibility, and accountability remain clear.

Unfortunately, there appears to be a lack of seriousness at the district administrative level regarding the enforcement of media laws. In every district, the Press Branch within the Deputy Commissioner's office is primarily established to oversee newspaper declarations, registrations, and other legal matters related to the press. However, in reality, the officer in charge of the press branch in many districts often lacks comprehensive knowledge of media laws and journalistic regulations. As a result, neither

proper scrutiny of newspapers takes place nor effective action is taken against illegal publications. If the responsible officers in press branches were fully aware of media laws, the newspaper system at the district level could be made significantly more transparent and organized.

Another major issue is that in most districts of Punjab there is no proper or modern record of authentic newspapers. In an era when government institutions are moving toward digital governance, it is extremely important that each district maintain an online record of legitimate newspapers and their declarations. This would not only increase transparency but also enable the immediate verification of the legal status of any newspaper or printer. In this regard, the rules and official guidelines issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of Pakistan and the Registrar of Newspapers for Pakistan (RNP) provide clear guidance. Unfortunately, many district offices fail to implement these directives with the seriousness they require.

It is also a reality that when fake or illegal newspapers and printers begin to operate within a district, their impact extends beyond the journalistic system and reaches press clubs and journalistic organizations as well. Individuals who are not genuinely engaged in journalism often obtain membership in press clubs through the support of paper-only publications. As a result, the dignity of journalism is undermined and the representation of professional journalists becomes weaker. If strict scrutiny of newspapers is carried out at the district level and the

declarations of unregistered or fake publications are cancelled, it will ensure that only genuine and active journalists are admitted to press clubs.

Similarly, in the modern media landscape, electronic media cannot be ignored. Today, television channels, digital platforms, and bureau offices have become an integral part of the journalistic environment. Therefore, it is necessary that along with provincial-level records, district offices should also maintain a proper registry of electronic media representatives. Membership in press clubs or journalistic bodies should only be granted to representatives who are affiliated with a recognized on-air channel or an authentic media organization's bureau office. Such measures would help improve the professional standards of the media.

The reality is that media reflects the intellectual and democratic progress of any society. If illegal and unprofessional elements infiltrate the media, it not only lowers journalistic standards but also erodes public trust. For meaningful media reforms in Punjab, it is essential to ensure full implementation of the Press and Publications Ordinance 2002, conduct regular scrutiny of newspapers at the district level, strengthen press branches on legal and professional grounds, and preserve records of authentic newspapers in digital form.

The situation of the Press Branch at the Deputy Commissioner's Office in Multan appears particularly unfortunate and alarming, where even basic records related to newspapers are almost nonexistent. In March 2023, on the direction

of the then Additional Deputy Commissioner General (Media), Abida Fareed, a list of newspapers published in Multan was compiled following our request. Regrettably, that list has still not been computerized. Moreover, the officer in charge of the press branch or the relevant clerk lacks adequate knowledge of the fundamental provisions of the Press and Publications Ordinance 2002, resulting in an almost complete absence of administrative oversight. It is particularly astonishing that a newspaper titled "Apna Akhbar" continues to be published on the basis of a self-created declaration bearing an allegedly fake seal of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, yet the press branch has not filed any legal case regarding this serious forgery. Similarly, a newspaper that obtained its declaration in the year 2000 failed to complete its registration even by 2026, and although the Press Registrar ordered the cancellation of its declaration, no effective legal action has been taken by the Deputy Commissioner of Multan. Under such circumstances, the incompetence and irresponsible conduct of the district administration and the press branch staff have severely undermined the legal status of newspapers and the discipline of journalism.

We urge Maryam Nawaz, the Chief Minister of Punjab, that freedom of the press and responsibility in journalism are inseparable. In this context, the supremacy of press laws and a transparent regulatory system must be ensured. This will not only restore the dignity of journalism but will also help eliminate fake news in society and strengthen the process of truth and accountability. This is the path through which the foundation of a responsible, dignified, and effective media system can be established in Pakistan, particularly in Punjab.



Analysis

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

International Day to Combat Islamophobia (15 March 2026)

On the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, following a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, we stand against hatred, discrimination and intolerance directed at Muslims worldwide. The day calls attention to the rise in prejudice and violence faced by Muslim communities and to the need for tolerance and respect for religious diversity.

It also recalls the tragic events in Christchurch, which shocked the conscience of humanity. Islamophobia appears in many ways. Hate speech. Discrimination. Attacks on religious symbols and places of worship. Such acts violate fundamental human rights and run counter to the basic principle that all people deserve equal treatment under the law.

Islam teaches peace, compassion and justice. It calls for respect for all humanity, regardless of faith, race or background. Attempts to link Islam with extremism or violence reflect ignorance and weaken efforts to promote dialogue and mutual understanding among civilisations.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Article 2 makes clear that everyone is entitled to these rights without distinction of any kind, including religion. These principles remain central to a just international order.

Pakistan has ratified several human rights conventions. We speak out against Islamophobia at international meetings and conferences. Freedom of expression is a fundamental right, but it carries responsibility. It must not be used to incite hatred or division. The international community should strengthen legal safeguards against hate crimes and promote practical cooperation among faith leaders, educators and media organisations.

Across the world, many Pakistanis live and work abroad. They run businesses, serve in hospitals, study in universities and contribute to their communities. When prejudice against Muslims grows, it affects their sense of safety and their prospects at work or in education. No one should be judged or excluded because of their faith.

In Pakistan, we make sure non-Muslims can access government services, schools, and jobs without barriers. Their voices should be heard in local councils and national debates. The Federal Cabinet has approved the Interfaith Harmony Policy and the Strategy of Religious Tolerance. Parliament has enacted the National Commission for Minorities' Rights Act, 2025. An independent National Commission for Minorities is now being set up to protect minority rights and handle complaints.

I call upon governments, civil society, media and faith leaders across the world to reject prejudice and work together through dialogue and lawful means. Respect for religious belief and equal protection under the law are not optional principles. They are obligations.

Pakistan will continue to speak clearly and act consistently in support of these principles, at home and abroad.



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

A World on the Edge of Catastrophe

Rising tensions in the Middle East and the failure of global diplomacy raise troubling fears of another devastating global conflict.

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." The warning by philosopher George Santayana feels strikingly relevant today. As tensions escalate across the Middle East and global powers increasingly align themselves on opposing sides, the world appears to be drifting toward a dangerous moment in history. The uncomfortable question now being asked in diplomatic circles and among political observers alike is whether humanity is once again approaching the brink of another catastrophic global war. History offers sobering lessons. The twentieth century witnessed two world wars that inflicted unimaginable suffering upon humanity. World War I claimed an estimated 16 million lives, while World War II resulted in the deaths of over 70 million people, making it the deadliest conflict in human history. Entire cities were reduced to rubble, economies collapsed, and millions were left homeless or displaced. Perhaps the most terrifying moment came in 1945 when nuclear weapons were used for the first and thankfully only time in warfare. Determined to prevent such devastation from ever occurring again, the international community established the United Nations in 1945. Its mission was clear: to maintain international peace and security by encouraging dialogue, diplomacy, and adherence to international law. Yet despite these noble intentions, many of the world's most serious conflicts remain unresolved, and the authority of global institutions appears increasingly weakened. The Middle East continues to be one of the most volatile regions in global politics. Decades of unresolved disputes, geopolitical rivalries and external interventions have created a fragile environment where tensions

can escalate rapidly. Today, the involvement direct or indirect of multiple powerful states has made the situation even more precarious. When global powers become entangled in regional conflicts, the potential for escalation increases dramatically. History shows that world wars rarely begin as deliberate global confrontations. More often, they emerge from a series of escalating crises, diplomatic failures and miscalculations. What begins as a localized conflict can quickly spiral into a much larger confrontation once alliances are triggered and military responses intensify. The current situation carries worrying similarities to such patterns. Equally troubling is the continued failure to resolve long-standing disputes in accordance with United Nations resolutions. Many resolutions addressing conflicts in the Middle East have remained unimplemented for

decades. This selective application of international law has contributed to a growing sense of injustice and frustration among affected populations. When international norms are ignored or applied inconsistently, the credibility of the global order inevitably erodes. Another worrying dimension of the present crisis is the perception that global decision-making is increasingly influenced by domestic political calculations and strategic interests rather than a sincere commitment to global stability. Critics argue that the policies of the current American administration appear to be shaped by geopolitical considerations that risk further inflaming an already volatile region. Whether entirely accurate or not, such perceptions deepen global mistrust and complicate efforts to de-escalate tensions.

What makes the current situation even more dangerous is the unprecedented destructive capability of modern warfare. Today, more than 12,000 nuclear warheads are believed to exist worldwide, many of them capable of destroying entire cities within minutes. A large-scale conflict

involving nuclear-armed states would not merely devastate the combatant nations it could trigger global environmental catastrophe and long-term climatic effects often described as "nuclear winter."

The humanitarian consequences of modern warfare would also be staggering. According to estimates by international organizations, even a limited nuclear conflict could place billions of people at risk of famine due to disruptions in agriculture and global supply chains. In such a scenario, the destruction would extend far beyond battlefields, threatening the very foundations of modern civilization.

God forbid that humanity ever witnesses such a catastrophe. If a major war were to erupt, the consequences would be felt across every continent. Global trade networks would collapse, financial systems would plunge into crisis, and millions of civilians would be displaced from their homes. The destructive power of modern weapons means that large parts of the world could be reduced to ashes within a matter of days. Yet despite these alarming realities, war is not inevitable. History also demonstrates that wise leadership, effective diplomacy, and international cooperation can prevent crises from spiraling into catastrophe. The responsibility now lies with global leaders to exercise restraint, revive meaningful dialogue and address long-standing disputes through peaceful means.

The international community must recommit itself to the principles of diplomacy, justice, and respect for international law. The true test of leadership in the twenty-first century is not the ability to wage war but the wisdom to prevent it. Humanity cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the past. The devastating lessons of the two world wars must guide the decisions of the present. As tensions rise and uncertainties grow, the need for collective wisdom has never been more urgent. Time is running fast. If the world once again chooses confrontation over dialogue, the consequences may not simply be another tragic chapter in human history it could mark the beginning of the end of the civilization we know today.



Analysis

Shahid Hussain Jilani

Empowered Women and the Rights of Working Women

In the contemporary era, the role of women is no longer confined to domestic responsibilities. Women have emerged as an active and decisive force in the intellectual, social, and economic development of society. In the modern world, the indicators of progress are not limited to economic growth or industrial advancement; they are also closely linked to the extent to which a society provides women with equal opportunities, a safe environment, and a dignified status. In societies like Pakistan, where traditional social structures still hold significant influence, the professional struggle of women has become an important social reality. In this context, events organized on the occasion of International Women's Day are not merely ceremonial gatherings but also serve as opportunities to reflect upon the issues, challenges, and prospects faced by women especially those belonging to the working class.

In this regard, a meaningful seminar was organized at Valika Hospital SITE in connection with International Women's Day. The theme of the seminar was "Empowered Women and the Rights of Working Women." The event was organized by the Public Relations Department of the Sindh Employees' Social Security Institution (SESSI) and focused on discussions related to women's rights, their professional challenges, and the need for institutional reforms.

Addressing the seminar, the speakers highlighted the role of women and their rights in a thoughtful and well-reasoned manner. They paid tribute to the services of working women and emphasized that Pakistani women play a vital and valuable role in shaping the intellectual, moral, and social fabric of society. The

speakers stressed that providing women with a respectful and safe working environment is a collective responsibility of all segments of society.

On this occasion, Zehra Khan, a member of the Governing Body of the Sindh Employees' Social Security Institution, addressed the gathering as the chief guest. She highlighted the fact that Pakistani women play a key role in shaping the intellectual and moral foundations of society. According to her, a civilized and balanced society can only emerge when women are provided equal opportunities in education, employment, and decision-making.

Other speakers at the event included Director Public Relations Waseem Jamal, Dr. Hina Ejaz, and Medical Superintendent and General Surgeon of Valika Social Security Hospital, Dr. Ghayasuddin, who elaborated on the role of women and the issues they face. The speakers stated that women not only nurture families but also contribute significantly to strengthening the moral foundations of society. Therefore, it is essential that they receive the same respect and facilities in professional life that are considered fundamental principles of a civilized society.

Director Public Relations Waseem Jamal stated in his address that working women play a crucial role in the development of society and the economy; therefore, it is necessary to ensure that they are provided with a dignified and safe working environment. He also emphasized the importance of institutional measures to resolve women's issues and promote their welfare.

Dr. Hina Ejaz appreciated the professional abilities and services of women and stated that Pakistani women are achieving remarkable

Continued on Page 7



Analysis

Dr. Muhammad Tayyab Khan Singhanvi

Iranian Ambassador Blasts US and Israel During Islamabad Quds Day Address

By Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam, the Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan, sharply criticized the United States and Israel while addressing a gathering in Islamabad marking the International Quds Day.

Prominent religious leaders and intellectuals from various schools of thought participated and expressed their views. A large number of peoples of different walks of life, Diplomats and media persons also attended the event. This was an important event in the context of the recent Iran-US-Israel conflict.

Speaking at a ceremony hosted by the Iranian Embassy, Dr. Moghaddam told diplomats, officials and members of the community that Iran has faced sustained aggression by global powers, naming the United States and Israel as its principal adversaries.

The Iranian envoy said the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan was designated as International Quds Day at the initiative of Ruhollah Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic.

According to the ambassador, the day represents a unified protest by the Muslim world and



supporters of Palestine against what he described as the "usurpation of the historical land of Palestine" and the creation of Israel in the region.

"Quds Day is a symbol of the unified protest of the Islamic world and freedom-seekers of the world," Moghaddam said, adding that it reflects global opposition to what he called violations of the Palestinian people's right to determine their

own future. In remarks reflecting the official position of Iran's Foreign Ministry, the ambassador accused Israel of committing serious crimes in the occupied Palestinian territories.

He alleged that the ongoing violence in Gaza Strip and the treatment of Palestinians in the West Bank represent the continuation of policies aimed at eliminating Palestinian presence in

the region.

Moghaddam also criticized what he described as a coordinated media campaign designed to "distort reality" and shift global perception of the conflict. According to him, such narratives attempt to portray Israel as a victim while overlooking the suffering of Palestinians.

The ambassador further said that Iran is currently defending its sovereignty and territo-



rial integrity against what he termed "military aggression" by Israel and the United States. He warned that such actions threaten not only Iran but the broader region and the Islamic world.

Referring to the wider Middle East, Moghaddam argued that regional tensions are linked to what he called expansionist ambitions, including the concept of "Greater Israel," which he said

would face resistance from Iran and its allies.

Reiterating Tehran's stance on the Palestinian issue, the envoy said Iran would continue to support what it described as the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination.

He emphasized that the international community has a moral and legal responsibility under international law and the United

Nations Charter to support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

International Quds Day is marked annually in Iran and several other countries on the final Friday of Ramadan, with rallies and events expressing solidarity with Palestinians and opposition to Israeli control over Jerusalem and the Palestinian territories.

Damage Caused by US and Israeli Attacks to Iran's Historical Sites and Cultural-Civilizational Heritage

By Dr. Mehdi Taheri

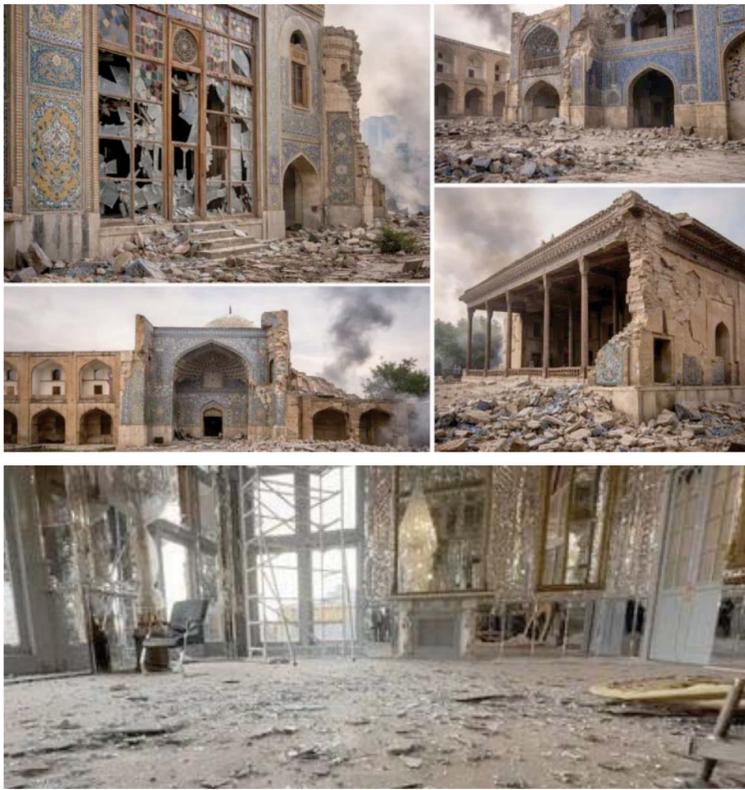
The United States and the Zionist regime of Israel, under what are described as unfounded pretexts, carried out a harsh and unjust attack against Iran, inflicting significant human and material losses on the country and its people. The scope of these damages has not been limited merely to civilian casualties and the destruction of urban infrastructure; it has also extended to some of Iran's most significant historical spaces.

Cultural heritage is not merely a collection of ancient buildings.

These monuments represent the material layers of a nation's collective memory. They are signs of historical pathways, cultural exchanges, and shared experiences that have developed over centuries. When such sites are damaged, what disappears is not only stone and brick; a part of a society's historical narrative about itself is also lost.

Over the past decades, the global community has repeatedly faced similar experiences. The destruction of the temples of Palmyra, the demolition of the Buddhas of Bamiyan, and the extensive damage to the historic fabric of Mosul demonstrated how vulnerable cultural heritage can be during times of war. Each of these events was later recognized not only as a national loss but also as a tragedy for the shared heritage of humanity.

For this reason, over the past several decades a range of international rules and conventions have been developed to protect cultural heritage during armed conflicts.



The 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention, and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347 all emphasize a common principle: cultural heritage, regardless of geographical borders, constitutes part of the shared heritage

of humanity, and its protection is a global responsibility.

According to these frameworks, states and parties engaged in military conflicts are obliged to prevent damage to cultural sites and monuments, and when harm occurs, they must facilitate investigation and protection measures. Experiences in recent years also show that

the international community has not remained indifferent to such cases. In 2016, the International Criminal Court prosecuted the intentional destruction of cultural heritage in Timbuktu, Mali, as a war crime for the first time. This landmark case demonstrated that damage to cultural heritage can carry serious legal consequences

at the international level.

Within this context, reports about damage to historical sites in Iran are not merely a local or national matter. Such incidents naturally attract the attention of the international community and specialized institutions concerned with cultural heritage. Organizations such as UNESCO, ICOMOS, and other related bodies have played an important role in documenting and protecting historical monuments in conflict zones in recent years.

What is most important today is recognizing that cultural heritage becomes extremely vulnerable during wartime. Historical structures were never designed to withstand explosions or the pressures generated by military conflicts. Many of these monuments were built centuries ago under entirely different circumstances, and even relatively small vibrations can seriously damage their structures.

Therefore, protecting these sites cannot be postponed until after the war ends; it must also be addressed during the crisis itself. Accurate documentation of damages, systematic recording of the condition of monuments, and drawing the attention of global heritage institutions can constitute the first steps in this process.

What is at risk today is not merely a few historical buildings. The real issue concerns the preservation of a portion of the world's historical memory—a memory formed through different civilizations over centuries and transformed into the shared heritage of humanity. Every time part of this heritage is damaged, it is not only one nation that loses something, but the entire human community



loses a piece of its shared past.

Looking back at history, the tragedy of civilizations destroyed in the flames of war has never truly ceased. From the collapse of the Bamiyan Buddhas to the devastation of the ancient city of Palmyra, the loss of cultural heritage has repeatedly meant the erasure of a part of humanity's collective memory. UNESCO has long emphasized that cultural monuments are protected under international law. Yet when these regulations cannot stop deadly missiles and declarations remain merely words, the world can no longer remain silent in the face of such events.

Wars sooner or later come to an end. Cities are rebuilt and infrastructures are reconstructed. However, when historical heritage is destroyed, restoring it is rarely possible. For this reason, protecting history during wartime is not a marginal issue but an inseparable part of the global responsibility toward human culture and civilization. The death of more than a hundred Iranian schoolgirls is tragic enough; we cannot stand by indifferently while thousands of years of civilization collapse into the ashes of war.

The writer is Director General, Iran's Cultural House, Rawalpindi.

'The Sinking Delta: Sea Intrusion Sounds Death Knell for Indus Ecosystem'

By Kamran Khamiso Khawaja

SUJAWAL, March 14: Marking the International Day of Action for Rivers, environmentalists and activists have once again drawn attention to the alarming threats facing the Indus Delta, where sea intrusion and the rapid disappearance of mangrove forests are putting the region's ecology and coastal communities at serious risk.

Observed annually on March 14, the International Day of Action for Rivers highlights the vital importance of rivers as a source of life and survival. Many countries have taken significant steps to protect their rivers. For instance, New Zealand granted legal personhood to the Whanganui River in 2017 through legislation passed by its parliament, recognizing the river as a living entity with rights. Meanwhile, China has also adopted measures aimed at safeguarding its river systems.

In contrast, experts say Pakistan has yet to take adequate

measures to protect its rivers—particularly the Indus River, the country's longest and most significant waterway. Environmentalists warn that declining freshwater flows into the delta are accelerating ecological degradation and exposing coastal areas to the advancing sea.

The Indus Delta, where the freshwater of the Indus River meets the Arabian Sea, stretches along approximately 250 kilometers of coastline. During the 1950s and 1960s, the delta was known for its fertile lands and thriving agriculture. However, reduced river flows over the decades have led to the destruction of vast tracts of agricultural land.

The once unique delta system—consisting of 17 creeks—now faces multiple environmental threats, with sea intrusion considered the most severe. Residents of coastal districts fear that if sufficient freshwater is not released downstream of the Kotri Barrage, seawater could move further inland, potentially reaching areas as far as Kotri and



Hyderabad.

The coastal belt of District Sujawal, particularly covering a large part of Taluka Jati and Shah Bunder, has been facing severe destruction due to the continuous intrusion of seawater. This devastation is largely attributed to the non-release of adequate freshwater downstream of the Kotri

Barrage.

According to Wafa Ali Shah, Haji Zahid Ishague, Umer Khaskeli, and Advocate Faissal Farooque Tamimi, the Jati region was once well known for cultivating high-value crops such as red rice, sugarcane, and turmeric. However, drastic changes in weather patterns and the persist-

ent scarcity of freshwater have severely damaged agricultural productivity, depriving local farmers of the capacity to grow these profitable crops.

The sea has also evaded historical sites and structures of Jati Taluka during the past two decades with no measures taken by the authorities for their pres-

ervation.

According to environmental observers, the sea has already swallowed approximately 2.6 million acres of land in the delta region, particularly around Shahbandar in Thatta District. If coastal erosion continues at the current pace, experts warn that Shahbandar could disappear by 2035, while seawater may reach Thatta city by 2050.

Another critical concern is the rapid decline of mangrove forests along the delta's coastline. Mangroves play a crucial ecological role by absorbing saltwater, stabilizing coastal soil, and supporting diverse marine life. These forests provide habitat for fish, shrimp, reptiles, mammals, and countless microorganisms, while also serving as a major source of livelihood for local fishing communities.

However, the excessive cutting and utilization of mangrove wood by local communities have led to a sharp decline in mangrove coverage. Conservation efforts by organizations such as World

Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) have attempted to restore and protect mangrove ecosystems, but environmentalists say the decline has not yet been effectively reversed.

Over the past two weeks, various awareness events have been organized across Sindh to highlight the deteriorating condition of the Indus River and its delta. Environmentalists, social activists, and irrigation experts participating in these events have called for granting legal personhood rights to the Indus River, inspired by international precedents, to ensure stronger legal protection for the river and its delta.

Experts warn that without urgent policy measures—such as restoring environmental flows downstream of Kotri Barrage and protecting mangrove forests—the Indus Delta could face irreversible ecological damage, threatening the survival of coastal communities and one of South Asia's most significant river ecosystems.

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 4:30 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
10,261.15	-44.00	
Percentage	Time	
-0.43%	13 Mar, 4:35 pm GMT	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
46,639.25	-38.60	
Percentage	Time	
-0.083%	13 Mar, 1:04 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
53,819.61	-633.35	
Percentage	Time	
-1.16%	13 Mar, 3:45 pm 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

SECP Eases Stock Market Access for Small Investors

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has increased the investment limit for Sahulat Accounts from PKR 1 million to PKR 3 million, bringing it in line with limits allowed in the banking sector. The move aims to make stock market investment easier and more accessible for small retail investors.

SECP has also allowed investors to open Sahulat Accounts with multiple licensed securities brokers, providing greater flexibility in choosing brokerage services. However, investors may maintain only one Sahulat Account with each broker. The reform aligns the framework with practices followed in the banking and mutual fund sectors.

The Sahulat Account was introduced to enable small investors to participate in the stock market through a simplified and user-friendly account opening process. Individuals can open a brokerage account with a licensed securities broker by submitting only their Computerised



National Identity Card (CNIC), significantly reducing documentation requirements.

The facility is particularly suitable for low-risk retail investors and first-time market participants who may have previously been discouraged by complex account opening procedures. Currently, all licensed securities brokers offer Sahulat Accounts, which can also be opened online, providing greater convenience and accessibility for investors across the country. Individuals categorized as low risk through the broker's risk assessment process may open such accounts, with brokers applying simplified due diligence measures.

There are 542,748 total individual sub-accounts in the market. Of these, 144,634 are classified as Investor Accounts (Individual), which also include Roshan Digital Account (RDA) investors.

The Commission will continue introducing further reforms to simplify investment processes so that young investors can confidently participate in Pakistan's formal capital market rather than experimenting with unregulated and unauthorised foreign investment platforms.

People busy in shopping

RAWALPINDI: A Large numbers of people busy in shopping in connection with celebrates upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr festival, at Commercial Market, in the city.



Photo: Online

Fuel Price Hike Begins to Hurt Economy, Business Costs Surge: PCDMA

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan Chemicals & Dyes Merchants Association (PCDMA) has warned that the recent Rs55 per litre increase in petroleum product prices has begun to inflict serious damage on the economy, pushing business costs to unsustainable levels and slowing commercial activity across the country.

PCDMA Chairman Salim Valimuhhammad, in a statement, urged Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervez Malik and Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal to take immediate measures to mitigate the economic fallout of the steep fuel price hike. He said the sudden increase in petrol and diesel prices had placed

an "extraordinary financial burden" on traders, particularly importers and exporters, making it increasingly difficult for them to maintain production and business operations.

He noted that if the government was genuinely committed to promoting industrial and commercial growth, it must prioritise reducing the cost of energy instead of adding further pressure on the business community.

Salim Valimuhhammad expressed concern that the recently announced Rs4 per unit reduction in electricity tariffs might prove temporary, warning that the relief could be reversed through upcoming fuel adjustment charges.

Metro Bus travel to cost more in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Multan after 33pc fare hike

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Commuters using metro bus services across Punjab will soon face higher travel costs after authorities approved a 33 percent increase in fares across the province's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network.

According to the Punjab Mass Transit Authority, the revised fares will come into effect from March 26, 2026, impacting passengers travelling on metro bus systems operating in major cities of the province.

Officials confirmed that the increase applies to all BRT corridors operating under the provincial mass transit network, including the Pakistan Metrobus System.

ICCI President urges government to take proactive measures to shield economy amid Middle East conflict

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Sardar Tahir Mehmood has urged the government to take timely and proactive measures to safeguard Pakistan's economy in the wake of the evolving situation in the Middle East, which may have far-reaching implications for trade, remittances and overall economic stability.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, he said that the Middle East is a vital economic partner for Pakistan, particularly in terms of energy supplies, employ-



ment opportunities for Pakistani workers and the inflow of foreign remittances. Any prolonged instability in the region could potentially disrupt economic activities and affect the steady flow of remittances sent by millions of overseas Pakistanis working in Middle Eastern countries.

Sardar Tahir Mehmood noted that remittances play a critical role in strengthening Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves and supporting the national economy. Therefore, the government should remain vigilant and adopt contingency planning to minimize any possible economic repercussions arising from the situation.

Middle East Shipping Halt Strands Exports, warns Saquib Magoon

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan's export sector is facing severe disruption as shipping lines have halted vessel movements to the Middle East, leaving hundreds of export containers stranded at local ports, senior business leaders warned on Saturday.

Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Senior Vice President, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) and

Chairman of the BMP-Progressive (BMPP), said the sudden suspension of vessel operations had brought export logistics to a standstill, putting exporters at risk of substantial financial losses.

He said exporters had already moved their consignments to the ports in line with shipment schedules, but with vessels no longer calling, terminal operators were now asking exporters to retrieve their containers.

Closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the Global Oil Crisis, and Pakistan's Economic Reality

The Strait of Hormuz is considered one of the most important maritime passages in the world. This narrow waterway connects the Persian Gulf to the Indian Ocean and serves as a central route for global energy transportation. More than twenty percent of the world's crude oil and liquefied natural gas passes through this route. For this reason, whenever tensions rise in the Middle East or there are discussions about the possible closure of the Strait of Hormuz, global oil markets react immediately. Oil prices often increase rapidly, and the effects are felt in different countries in different ways. In some countries prices are not raised immediately, while in others governments make early adjustments. Pakistan is among the countries where petrol and diesel prices were increased relatively quickly.

Interestingly, in several Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, India, Bhutan, Indonesia, Iraq, and Azerbaijan, petrol and diesel prices have not increased significantly yet. However, this does not mean that oil will not become expensive in those countries. Oil prices will certainly rise there as well. The main reason is that these countries still have sufficient oil reserves in stock. Because of these reserves, they are currently relying on existing supplies rather than

immediately increasing prices. Once those reserves are depleted and new oil is imported at higher prices, fuel prices in those countries will also rise. This process may take about a month or possibly longer. That is why many countries have temporarily maintained current prices in order to provide short-term relief to their citizens.

The situation in Pakistan, however, is somewhat different. According to available information, Pakistan has around two million metric tons of commercial oil reserves, which is approximately equivalent to fifteen million barrels of oil. Under normal conditions, this reserve can meet the country's needs for roughly one month. In other words, Pakistan also has some buffer time to deal with short-term disruptions in supply. Despite this, Pakistan increased petrol and diesel prices earlier than many other countries following the rise in global oil prices. This decision raised several questions among the public about why prices were increased so quickly when the country still had roughly a month's supply available.

The Government of Pakistan justified the decision by linking it to global market conditions and the possibility of future shortages. According to government officials, since oil prices had increased internationally, future imports would be significantly more

expensive. Therefore, price adjustments were considered necessary. Some reports suggested that government officials had recommended an increase of about 110 rupees per liter in petrol prices. However, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reportedly reduced the proposed increase and approved an adjustment of around 55 rupees per liter in order to provide some relief to the public. As a result, petrol prices reached approximately 332 rupees per liter, while diesel prices rose to around 336 rupees per liter.

An increase in oil prices does not remain limited to petrol pumps; it spreads throughout the entire economy. Transportation becomes more expensive, which in turn increases the cost of food and other basic goods. When transportation costs rise, the prices of essential commodities such as flour, cooking oil, sugar, and rice also increase. This is why rising fuel prices are often seen as the beginning of a new wave of inflation. In a country like Pakistan, where inflation is already high, increases in fuel prices further intensify economic hardship for ordinary citizens.

If we examine the global context, the situation becomes even more inter-

esting. India is one of the world's largest oil-importing countries and obtains more than 80 percent of its oil through the Strait of Hormuz. Despite this heavy reliance, petrol prices in India were not immediately increased. One major reason is that India has been allowed to purchase discounted oil from Russia, which has helped it temporarily shield

its economy from the immediate impact of global oil market fluctuations. In addition, India maintains strategic petroleum reserves that can be used during emergencies. China presents another important example. It is one of the world's largest economies and receives about 40 percent of its oil through the Strait of Hormuz. Nevertheless, fuel prices in China have remained relatively stable. China possesses large strategic reserves, a strong economic structure, and diversified supply chains, which allow it to manage the short-term impact of global crises more effectively.

Japan's situation is similar. Japan obtains nearly 90 percent of its oil through the Strait of Hormuz, yet fuel prices there have also remained relatively stable for the time being. For decades, Japan has invested heavily in

strategic energy reserves and diversified supply routes, which helps it manage disruptions in global energy markets.

Considering these examples, it is natural for questions to arise in Pakistan about why fuel prices were increased so quickly. The government itself stated that the country had approximately 28 days of oil reserves available. Critics argue that the government raised prices in anticipation of higher future import costs, while others believe the move was linked to fiscal pressures or efforts to stabilize government revenues. In reality, for a heavily indebted country like Pakistan, avoiding the effects of a global oil crisis is extremely difficult.

Rising oil prices also create significant social impacts. When petrol and diesel become more expensive, transportation costs increase, placing additional financial pressure on ordinary people. Citizens who are already burdened by expensive electricity, costly gas, and rising food prices find their financial difficulties intensifying. In such circumstances, people often ask whether the ruling class is making the same level of sacrifices as ordinary citizens.

In Pakistan, the use of government fuel is also frequently debated. Government vehicles, ministerial convoys, fuel allowances for officials, and other privileges often come under public scrutiny. Many people ask whether government expenditures will be reduced if

the country is truly facing an economic crisis. Will ministerial convoys be restricted to official duties only? These questions are important because, during times of economic hardship, citizens expect sacrifices to be shared equally.

The reality is that a global oil crisis directly affects ordinary citizens. For a laborer, a salaried worker, or a small business owner, rising petrol prices are not merely an economic statistic they represent a daily struggle to meet basic needs. In such circumstances, the public expects the government not only to control prices as much as possible but also to adopt policies of austerity and responsible spending.

In conclusion, tensions surrounding the Strait of Hormuz and the resulting global oil crisis are not merely regional issues but major challenges for the global economy. For a developing country like Pakistan, the effects can be particularly severe. In such a situation, it is essential for the government to promote alternative energy sources, increase strategic reserves, and adopt balanced economic policies. At the same time, the leadership must set an example of simplicity and fiscal responsibility so that citizens feel that the burden of sacrifice is shared by the entire nation, not borne by the public alone.



Muhammad Asif

Pakistan-Bangladesh ODI series set for dramatic decider in Dhaka today

DHAKA: The three-match One-Day International series between Pakistan national cricket team and Bangladesh national cricket team is poised for a thrilling finish as the third and final match will determine the winner after the contest stands level at 1-1.

The decisive encounter will be played tomorrow (Sunday) in Dhaka, with the teams set to take the field at 1:15pm Pakistan Standard Time. Both sides enter the match with momentum from contrasting performances in the opening two fixtures, setting up a high-stakes finale to the series.

Pakistan staged a remarkable comeback in the second ODI on Friday, producing a dominant performance to defeat Bangladesh by 128 runs under the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method after rain interrupted the match.

Pakistan level ODI series after commanding victory in rain-affected Dhaka clash

Batting first, Pakistan were bowled

out for 274 in 47.3 overs, posting a competitive total on a surface that initially favoured the batters. Bangladesh's chase was later reduced to 32 overs due to heavy rain, leaving the hosts with a revised target of 243 runs.

However, Pakistan's bowlers quickly seized control of the match, dismantling the Bangladeshi batting line-up with relentless accuracy and pace. Bangladesh were eventually dismissed for just 114 in 23.3 overs, handing Pakistan a comprehensive victory that levelled the series.

Pakistan's fast-bowling attack played a key role in the collapse, with figures including Haris Rauf contributing to the relentless pressure that left the home side struggling to build partnerships.

All-rounder Maaz Sadaqat delivered one of the standout performances of the series in the second ODI, producing a dynamic display with both bat and ball. Sadaqat struck a rapid 75 runs off just 46 deliveries, injecting momentum into

Pakistan's innings at a crucial stage. His aggressive stroke play helped lift the visitors towards a strong total despite regular wickets falling around him.

The all-rounder later returned with the ball to claim three wickets, playing a decisive role in Bangladesh's dramatic collapse during the chase. His match-winning contribution earned him the Player of the Match award and significantly shifted the momentum of the series back in Pakistan's favour.

Before Pakistan's comeback, Bangladesh had dominated the opening match of the series. The hosts secured an emphatic eight-wicket victory in the first ODI, chasing down Pakistan's total with relative ease and taking a 1-0 lead in the series.

Bangladesh's convincing performance in that match highlighted their strong batting depth and home advantage, placing early pressure on Pakistan to respond in the second game. The result raised expectations among the



home crowd in Dhaka that Bangladesh could clinch the series before Pakistan's spirited fightback forced the contest into a decider.

ICC reprimands Pakistan's Salman Ali Agha for code of conduct breach in Bangladesh ODI

The second ODI was not without controversy. A run-out incident

involving Salman Ali Agha during Pakistan's innings drew considerable attention and sparked debate about the spirit of cricket.

The incident triggered reactions from players on both sides as well as match officials, with discussions continuing after the match regarding whether the dismissal aligned with the unwritten

conventions of the game.

Despite the debate, the focus quickly shifted back to the on-field contest as Pakistan's bowlers delivered a commanding performance to secure victory.

All eyes on the series decider

With the series tied at 1-1, the final ODI now carries decisive significance. Tomorrow's match in Dhaka will determine which team claims the three-match series, making it a winner-takes-all contest.

Pakistan will enter the match with renewed confidence after their dominant victory in the second ODI, while Bangladesh will aim to capitalise on home conditions and replicate the form that earned them victory in the opening game.

The decider is expected to draw significant attention from cricket fans across South Asia as both sides seek to seal the series with a final statement performance.

Abdul Waheed Khan XI Clinched Ramadan Hockey League Title

President Karachi Hockey Association Khawaja Izhar-ul-Hasan distributed prizes

Sports Desk

KARACHI: The Fourth Ramadan Hockey League held at the Olympian Islahuddin and Dr. Muhammad Ali Shah Hockey Academy was won by Abdul Waheed Khan XI. In the final, they defeated Anwar Ahmed Khan XI by 3-1 in a penalty shoot-out to claim the title. The final proved to be exciting and thrilling, with both teams displaying excellent hockey.

In the 8th minute, Abdul Waheed Khan XI earned a penalty stroke after a dangerous move. Center forward Nauman Khan converted it to give his team a 1-0 lead. However, in the 14th minute, Siddiq Khan of Anwar Ahmed Khan XI scored on a penalty corner, leveling the match 1-1. For the winning team, Usman Ashraf scored from a penalty corner in the 22nd minute, restoring the lead and making it 2-1. But in the 24th minute, Siddiq Khan once again



found the net for Anwar Ahmed Khan XI, bringing the score to 2-2. The match remained 2-2 until the end of regular play.

In the penalty shoot-out, Irfan Khan, Rizwan Khan, and Nauman Khan scored for Abdul Waheed Khan XI, while the only goal for the losing team was scored

by Asim Khan. After the match, the President of Karachi Hockey Association and Member of National Assembly, Khawaja Izhar-ul-Hasan, distributed prizes among the players.

On this occasion, several notable personalities were present including Olympian Islahuddin Siddiqui (Chairman of the Pakistan Hockey Federation Management & Development Committee), Olympian Qamar Ibrahim, Olympian Sameer Hussain, Olympian Kamran Ashraf, Olympian Kashif Jawad, Youth Olympic coach Muhammad Ali Khan, Jan Muhammad, KHA Secretary Abuzar Amrao, Tasneem Usmani, Riffat Jahan, Nasir Ismail, Latafat Hussain Shah, Asghar Ali, Syed Alay Hassan, Moin Alam, Muhammad Waheed Hussain, Azmat Pasha, Tariq Khan, Waqas Ahmed, Madam Saeeda Khanum, Saleh Omar, Aslam Khan, Umair Ahmed, Uzair Ahmed, Nadeem Saeed, and others.

Carmona: actor, skateboarder, Paralympic history-maker

Sports Desk

Diogo Carmona has worn many hats in his young life, from his beginnings as a child actor to becoming a skateboarder before a train accident cost him his leg, now he's a history-maker after becoming the first Portuguese Winter Paralympian.

Carmona and his coach, Nuno 'Mancha' Marques, took time out of their schedule at the Paralympic Village in Cortina to tell AFP how the 28-year-old found his new passion: para snowboarding.

An unlikely vocation for someone that grew up in the Portuguese coastal resort of Cascais, Carmona said it was Mancha who convinced him to give snowboarding a try three years ago after seeing videos online of him skateboarding with his prosthetic leg.

"He saw me skateboarding and he said, 'let's give it a try. No promises, just let's see if it works out.' And it did," Carmona explained.

Mancha, who also coaches the Brazil snowboard team, said it was an "honour" to take Carmona from someone with no snow experience to becoming a Paralympian.

"It's been a journey from zero to here, both together, doing everything, coaching, board preparation," Mancha said.

"I'm super proud of him, I'm super proud of us as a team and I truly believe



this is his first (Winter Games) of many," Carmona, as the sole representative of his nation at the 2026 Games, was Portugal's very first flag-bearer at the opening ceremony of a Winter Paralympics.

And alongside him for the athletes parade last week at the Verona Arena was Mancha.

"I think it only makes sense being the two of us (at the ceremony) because it's been a double journey," Carmona said.

"He's been everything in this journey. So yeah, we attended the ceremony, it was really emotional.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

In his sole event at the Games, Carmona finished 18th in the snowboard

banked slalom LL2 event.

Mancha said he was "super proud of (Carmona's) progression" considering the total 90 days he has spent snowboarding are "maybe half of what all the other athletes do in a year".

Part of the game

Carmona's life changed at the age of 23 when he lost the lower half of his left leg in a train accident. Prior to that his two principal loves in life were acting and skateboarding.

In the 2000s, Carmona gained notoriety as a cast member of popular Portuguese teen shows like Morangos com Acucar and Floribella, before progressing into cinema. "Right now I'm not acting. I'm not

doing anything. The last film I did was like three years ago," he said. "But yeah, it's still an open path in my life."

Carmona revealed the principal reason he has put acting to one side for the moment was to accommodate his blossoming snowboarding career.

"When the snowboarding got more serious, I had to make choices," he explained.

"If I have a schedule of competitions... I had to make a choice and I'm super happy with my choice.

"My life took me this, to this sports path and I think it's the right thing I'm doing."

If acting is on the backburner, Carmona still skates whenever he can, however.

But Carmona's Games were nearly over before they had even begun when he broke his foot skateboarding last May.

"When I broke my foot, I called Mancha and I was crying and I said, 'I'm sorry,'" Carmona said.

And the tears were very much real as Mancha revealed Carmona told him he did not think he would be able to compete at the Paralympics.

"I think actually it was a very nice thing because he thought he was disappointing me as a coach," Mancha said.

"And I told him: 'Hey bro, this is just part of the game. Sometimes bad things happen, but I'm still believing that you will be in 2026 here in Milan-Cortina.'"

CM Punjab Congratulates Athlete Haram Rehan for Breaking Indian Record

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has congratulated young athlete Haram Rehan from Gujranwala for breaking a six-year-old Indian record and making history by entering the Guinness World Records.



Haram Rehan, a student of Government College for Women Satellite Town Gujranwala, set a new world record by performing 143 knee strikes in one minute, surpassing the previous record held by an Indian male athlete for the past six years.

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif extended heartfelt congratulations to Haram Rehan on her remarkable achievement and also paid tribute to her coaching staff for their efforts and dedication.

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that Haram Rehan has raised the Pakistani flag high by breaking the long-standing record. She added that the daughters of Punjab are not alone, and that she stands with every daughter and will continue to support them.

Chief Minister Punjab remarked that Haram Rehan has become a source of inspiration for young girls and has proved that if the daughters of Punjab show determination, they can surprise the world with their achievements.

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif further stated that the Punjab government is utilising all available resources to help young people fulfil their dreams and is providing every possible facility so that they can represent Pakistan proudly on the global stage.

The So-Called Unpredictable Team Is Very Predictable

Tahmeed Sadiq

The Pakistan cricket team has long carried the label of "unpredictable." Commentators repeat it, fans embrace it, and rivals fear it. On their day, they can defeat the strongest teams in the world; on another, they can collapse against an underdog. Yet in recent years, a curious trend has emerged: the so-called unpredictable team has become surprisingly predictable.

The players like Babar Azam and Shaheen Afridi, Pakistan has shown flashes of brilliance. Their bowling attack, often fueled by pace and aggression, can dismantle top batting line-ups. Yet the batting order frequently struggles under pressure, especially in high-stakes matches.

This cycle has become all too familiar for Pakistan cricket fans. The team often delivers strong performances in bilateral series, raising expectations ahead of major tournaments. Yet, at critical moments, they sometimes suffer shocking defeats, which are quickly followed by public criticism and debates over leadership.

It's a script that fans have come to know all too well. In ICC events, Pakistan often starts slowly, recovers dramatically, and then falters when consistency matters most. Tournaments like the ICC Cricket World Cup and ICC T20 World Cup have followed this rollercoaster pattern.

While unpredictability once led to surprise victories, it now often results in predictable inconsistency — brilliant one day, vulnerable the next.

Perhaps the real paradox is this: even if inconsistency has become predictable, their potential for brilliance keeps hope alive.

The Pakistan cricket team may carry the tag of "unpredictable," but recent trends suggest otherwise. Inconsistency, reliance on key individuals, and tournament drama have formed a pattern that fans and critics can now anticipate.

Yet cricket is unpredictable by nature. Perhaps the day will come when Pakistan surprises the world by being consistently excellent rather than predictably inconsistent. Until then, the so-called unpredictable team remains, in many ways, very predictable.

Empowered Women and the Rights of Working Women

Continued from Page 4

positions in every field of life through their dedication, competence, and determination. She stressed the need to further empower women and provide them with greater opportunities.

Dr. Ghiyasuddin, Medical Superintendent of Valika Social Security Hospital and a general surgeon, highlighted the commendable services of women in the healthcare sector. He stated that the institution is striving to provide better facilities and a supportive environment for female employees so that they can perform their duties with greater

dedication and peace of mind.

In her speech, Zehra Khan emphasized that addressing the problems faced by female employees at the institutional level on a priority basis is the need of the hour. She pointed out that many women encounter various challenges while performing their professional duties, including a lack of basic facilities, professional inequality, and at times inappropriate attitudes. According to her, if institutions create a positive and respectful working environment, it can significantly enhance the confidence and performance of women.

During the event, speakers also highlighted that the Government of Pakistan has introduced several laws aimed at ensuring women's autonomy and protecting their rights. These laws are designed to safeguard women from harassment, exploitation, and discrimination. However, for these laws to be effective, it is essential to create awareness within institutions and implement administrative measures that can practically ensure a safe and respectful working environment for women.

The challenges faced by working women are multidimensional. On the one hand, they shoulder economic respon-

sibilities, and on the other, they often confront social biases and traditional mindsets. Women working in industrial institutions, hospitals, and offices frequently face issues such as long working hours, limited facilities, and restricted opportunities for professional growth. In such circumstances, the need for institutional reforms and sensitive policies becomes even more critical.

The speakers also emphasized that the progress of any institution depends on providing equal opportunities and respect to all its members. Empowering women not only benefits individ-

uals but also improves the overall performance and productivity of institutions. In many developed countries, the inclusion of women in the workforce has not only strengthened economies but has also enhanced institutional discipline and creativity.

Pakistani society has a long history of women's struggle and resilience. From agricultural activities in rural areas to roles in healthcare, education, and industry in urban centers, women are contributing to national development through their hard work and abilities. Despite this, their services often do not receive the recognition and

facilities they truly deserve. This is why seminars and discussions of this nature serve as important platforms for raising awareness in society.

At the conclusion of the event, the chief guest was presented with a commemorative shield and a traditional Ajrak, a cultural symbol of Sindh, as a token of appreciation. This gesture not only reflects respect for the guest but also represents the rich cultural heritage and traditions of Sindh.

In reality, the issue of women's rights and their professional advancement should not be limited to a single day of celebra-

tions. Instead, it must be pursued as a continuous social and institutional effort. Until the principles of gender equality, mutual respect, and justice are practically implemented in society, the dream of true progress cannot be fully realized.

Therefore, it is essential that state institutions, social organizations, and the private sector collectively take meaningful steps to empower women and address their challenges. If society fully recognizes that women are equal partners in development, Pakistan can certainly move toward a more just, balanced, and brighter future.

Friday prayer

Gaza: Displaced people perform the last Friday prayer of Ramadan in the courtyard of the UNRWA-run Salah al-Din School, which has been converted into a shelter for displaced people in Gaza City.



Photo: Wafa News Agency

Committee reviews fuel stocks and energy preparedness; Supply position remains stable

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Committee to Monitor Petrol Prices was held virtually today under the chairmanship of the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, as part of the Committee's ongoing daily review of developments in the energy sector amid continued regional

tensions.

Chairing the meeting, Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb emphasized that the Government's foremost priority remains ensuring uninterrupted availability of petroleum products across the country while minimizing the burden on the public to the greatest extent possible. He noted that although global

energy markets are currently experiencing significant volatility, Pakistan's supply position remains stable due to proactive planning and close coordination among relevant stakeholders.

The Finance Minister further stated that the Committee will continue to closely monitor developments in international energy markets, domestic stock

positions, and supply chain dynamics on a daily basis to ensure timely and coordinated policy responses. He reiterated that the Government remains fully committed to maintaining market stability, safeguarding national energy security, and ensuring that supply chains remain uninterrupted during this evolving global situation.

The meeting was held

virtually and was attended by Federal Minister for Petroleum Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister of State for Finance Mr. Bilal Azhar Kayani, the Governor State Bank of Pakistan, along with federal secretaries and senior officials from the concerned ministries, divisions, and regulatory bodies.

Punjab Police DSP arrested in Rs33.3 million fraud case

Bureau Report

LAHORE: A Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) serving in the Punjab Police has been arrested after a fraud case involving more than Rs33.3 million was registered against him in Lahore, police officials confirmed.

The accused officer, identified as DSP Azhar Naveed, was taken into custody following allegations that he deceived a citizen in a financial transac-

tion related to luxury vehicles.

According to police sources, the complainant, Hussam, alleged that the officer obtained a large sum of money under the pretext of arranging two high-end vehicles. The complainant told investigators that a total of Rs33.3 million was transferred to the accused as payment for the cars. However, the vehicles were never delivered, prompting the citizen to approach authorities and file a complaint.



Based on the application submitted by the complainant, a fraud case was registered at Defence B Police Station in

Lahore against DSP Azhar Naveed and his son Nail Azhar. The First Information Report accuses the two of deception and unlawful financial gain linked to the vehicle deal.

Police officials stated that the case has been formally registered and an investigation is under way to examine the circumstances surrounding the transaction, including the transfer of funds and the alleged promise to provide the vehicles.

Govt announces Eid holidays as Met Office forecasts 30 days of fasting

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to announce four public holidays on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr this year.

According to the announcement, the holidays will be observed from 20 to 23 March, covering Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Reports suggest that there is a strong possibility that the holy month of Ramadan will complete the full 30 days this year. As a result, the first day of Shawwal, marking Eid-ul-Fitr, is expected to fall on Saturday, 21 March.

However, the final and official announcement regarding the Eid date will be made by the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee after sighting the moon.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Meteorological Department has shared its assessment regarding the moon sighting. According to Deputy Director of the Department Anjum Nazir, a meeting of the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee will be held in Islamabad on 19 March to find evidence of the



Shawwal moon.

He explained that the moon will be born on 19 March at 6:23 am (Pakistan Standard Time) and by sunset its age will be approximately 12 hours. According to Nazir, a moon that is only 12 hours old cannot be seen with

the naked eye.

He noted that even with the help of a telescope, a moon must be at least 14 hours old to become visible. Therefore, the chances of sighting the moon on 19 March are extremely low.

Based on the Meteorological Depart-

ment's prediction, there is a strong likelihood that Ramadan will complete 30 days, with 1 Shawwal expected to fall on 21 March. Nevertheless, the final decision will be formally announced by the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee after its meeting.

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President condemns drone attacks targeting Pakistani civilian areas

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has strongly condemned the rudimentary drone attacks carried out yesterday by Afghan Taliban elements aimed at targeting civilian areas in Pakistan.

The illegitimate regime of Afghanistan installed by terror and brute force continues to renege on its commitments not to provide safe sanctuaries to terrorist groups and now has the audacity to provoke a major military power of the Islamic world, the President said. While the Afghan terrorist regime seeks negotiations with our friendly countries, it crossed a red line by attempting to target our civilians while Pakistan remains engaged in efforts to promote peace and stability in the Gulf region and West Asia.

The President said the illegitimate and terrorist Taliban regime has brought grave consequences upon itself by crossing this red line.

The President expressed his best



wishes for the speedy recovery of children and other civilians injured by drone debris in Quetta, Kohat and Rawalpindi.

President Zardari also reaffirmed that Pakistan's armed forces and security institutions remain fully committed to the defence of the country and the protection of its people.

Death toll in Gaza surges to 72,234 amid Israeli genocide



Wafa

GAZA: The death toll from the Israeli occupation's aggression on the Gaza Strip rose on Saturday to 72,234, with 171,852 people injured since the start of the Israeli aggression in October 2023.

Medical sources said that seven more Palestinians were killed and 13 wounded and were later admitted to hospitals across Gaza over the past 24 hours.

Since the ceasefire agreement

went into effect at noon on 10 October 2025, the occupation forces have killed at least 658 Palestinians and injured 1,754 others. The bodies of 756 Palestinians have been retrieved over the same period.

Thousands of victims remain trapped under collapsed buildings or on the streets.

However, emergency responders are struggling to reach them due to a lack of essential equipment for debris removal and rescue operations.

CM Punjab Praises Security Forces for Successful Operation Against Khawarij in Lakki Marwat

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has expressed appreciation for the successful operation carried out by security forces against militants in Lakki Marwat and other areas.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz commended the security institutions for eliminating six terrorists during the operation against Khawarij elements. She paid tribute to the bravery and professionalism of the security personnel involved in the operation.

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that the nation stands united with its security forces in the fight against terrorism and acknowledged their continued sacri-



ces for the peace and stability of the country.

High Commissioner Saleem Joins Key Discussion on New World Order in Montreal

News Desk

OTTAWA: The High Commissioner for Pakistan Muhammad Saleem participated at the Global Insights, hosted by the John Molson International Business Association at Concordia University, Montreal, on March 12, 2026.

During the discussion on "The

New World Order and Trade Implications," Ambassador Saleem shared Pakistan's perspective on evolving global trade and economic dynamics. He highlighted the importance of engaging with the students and researchers—the next generation of leaders in the international business and diplomacy fields.