



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے عیوب اللہ بنی کرے اور ان سے اس
بن لاکھ رضی اللہ عنہ نے کر ایک صاحب
نی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کے کسی جڑوش
جھانک کر کہتے تھے تو نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ
وسلم ان کی طرف تیر کا پھل بہت سے چل
لے کر بڑے، گویا میں نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ
وسلم کو دیکھ رہا ہوں ان صاحب کی طرف اس
طرز سے چکے تھے بقیہ اے۔
(کنز العمال ص ۳۲۷)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited



Fazl announces nationwide protest against inflation from April 12

Chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F), Maulana Fazlur Rehman, on Monday announced a nationwide protest campaign against rising inflation, particularly the increase in petroleum prices, while delivering a strongly worded critique of the government during a press conference in Peshawar on Monday.



Iran rejects ceasefire, urges permanent end to war in reply to U.S. proposal — IRNA

Iran has relayed its response to the U.S.-proposed 15-point plan for ending the war to Pakistan, rejecting a ceasefire and urging a permanent end to the conflict while observing the country's considerations, the official news agency IRNA reported Monday.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Shawwal 18, Tuesday, April 7, 2026

www.dailyspokesman.net

@daily_spokesman



Daily Spokesman Vol: 19, Issue: 350 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

Electrical Vehicles Handed over ceremony

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses a ceremony of handing over of electric vehicles to Islamabad Traffic Police on Monday.



Photo: PID

DPM reviews fuel subsidy scheme



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar Monday chaired a meeting of the National Steering Committee on the Fuel Subsidy Scheme.

He stressed that relief to the public, including subsidies for motorbikes, public transport, and agriculture, must become operational at the earliest.

He was briefed that, with the support of the State Bank of Pakistan and provincial authorities, disbursement for public service transport vehicles has begun. Provincial representatives also informed

that the mobile application for motorcycle subsidy registration has been launched, with disbursement set to commence from this evening.

DPM/FM emphasized that the mechanism should be simple, accessible, transparent, and widely publicized to ensure maximum benefit for deserving citizens.

The meeting was attended by the Minister for IT & Telecom, SAPM Tariq Bajwa, Secretary IT & Telecom, Secretary Petroleum, Chief Secretaries of all provinces, and other senior government officials from relevant departments.

PM urges nationwide shift to electric vehicles to cut fuel costs, protect economy

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Monday, alluding to recent regional situation and spiraling global petroleum prices, underlined the need for introduction of environment-friendly electric vehicles across the country, thus

saving country's precious foreign reserves.

Addressing a ceremony of provision of eco-smart electric vehicles to the Islamabad Capital Traffic Police, the prime minister said that such like precedents of energy saving initiatives should be emulated by all the law enforcement agencies and provinces.

He observed that a total of 15 electric vehicles were provided by the interior ministry which ran on batteries without using petrol and oil while another batch of vehicles would be inducted soon.

Termining the initiative a significant one, the prime minister said such like steps would cast positive impacts upon the country's

foreign reserves.

On the occasion, he also congratulated Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi and his team for taking this initiative.

Federal Ministers, Islamabad Police high ups and relevant authorities were present during the ceremony.

The provision of eco-smart

electric vehicles had been the part and parcel of prime minister's vision and the government's energy saving policy.

Due to the government's prudent policies, the work on fuel economy and electric vehicles policy had kick-started prior to the current regional crises, resulting in the procurement of these vehicles.

Cabinet Committee strengthens market oversight; reviews supply, monitoring systems, stocks availability

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Committee on Petrol Prices during its meeting here on Monday reviewed the petroleum supply situation and market conditions, focusing uninterrupted supply, market discipline and enhanced monitoring across the supply chain.

The meeting of the committee was chaired by the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, according to press release issued by finance ministry.

The Committee undertook a comprehensive review of petroleum stock positions, import plans, and refinery operations, the



statement said adding the members were informed that the overall supply position remains stable, with diesel stocks providing

approximately 25 days of cover, petrol availability sufficient to meet current demand, and crude oil stocks at around 12 days of

cover, supported by incoming cargoes and scheduled imports.

The Petroleum Division apprised the Committee that import arrangements for the coming weeks are on track through a combination of commercial procurement and government-to-government engagements, while refineries continue to operate at optimal levels to maintain throughput and ensure efficient conversion of crude into refined products. The Committee also noted the critical importance of reliable energy supply in supporting key sectors such as agriculture, fertilizer production, transportation, and industry, underscoring its role in sustaining economic activity and maintaining price stability.

Iran, US receive Pakistan's proposals for immediate ceasefire

Reuters

Iran and the United States have received a plan to end hostilities that could come into effect on Monday and reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a source aware of the proposals said on Monday.

A framework to end hostilities has been put together by Pakistan and exchanged with Iran and the US overnight, the source said, outlining a two-tier approach with an immediate ceasefire followed

by a comprehensive agreement.

"All elements need to be agreed today," the source said, adding the initial understanding would be structured as a memorandum of understanding finalised electronically through Pakistan, the sole communication channel in the talks.

Axios first reported on Sunday that the United States, Iran and regional mediators were discussing a potential 45-day ceasefire as part of a two-phase

deal that could lead to a permanent end to the war, citing US, Israeli and regional sources.

The source told Reuters that army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir has been in contact "all night long" with US Vice President JD Vance, special envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

Under the proposal, a ceasefire would take effect immediately, reopening the Strait of Hormuz, with 15-20 days to finalise a

broader settlement.

The deal, tentatively dubbed the "Islamabad Accord," would include a regional framework for the strait, with final in-person talks in Islamabad.

There was no immediate response from the US and Iranian officials.

Pakistan's foreign office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi declined to comment.

Iranian officials have previously told Reuters that Tehran

was seeking a permanent ceasefire with guarantees that they will not be attacked again by the US and Israel.

They have said Iran has received messages from mediators, including Pakistan, Turkey and Egypt.

The final agreement is expected to include Iranian commitments not to pursue nuclear weapons in exchange for sanctions relief and the release of frozen assets, the source said.

Japan FM phones Dar; praises Pakistan's facilitative role for Middle East peace



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Monday received a telephone call from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Toshimitsu Motegi.

Both leaders exchanged views on the regional situation in the Middle East and the wider region, emphasizing the importance of urgent de-escalation, according to a Foreign Office

statement.

Foreign Minister Motegi appreciated and supported Pakistan's constructive role in facilitating dialogue and diplomacy for regional peace and stability.

DPM Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to supporting all initiatives aimed at de-escalation and the achievement of lasting peace and stability.

Both leaders agreed to maintain close contact.

Iran's IRGC says targeted Israeli-owned container vessel, U.S. amphibious assault ship

Xinhua

TEHRAN: Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) said on Monday it has targeted an Israeli-owned container vessel and a U.S. assault ship.

In a statement on its official news outlet Sepah News, the IRGC elaborated on the 98th wave of its attacks against Israeli and U.S. targets, which was launched earlier in the day.

The IRGC identified the container ship as "SDN7," saying it was hit precisely with cruise missiles and caught fire.

It noted that the U.S. amphibious assault ship USS Tripoli (LHA-7), with more than 5,000 forces on board, was forced to retreat to the southern Indian Ocean after being targeted.

The IRGC added that its forces also struck strategic centers in the Israeli city of Haifa as well as petrochemical compa-

nies and plants in Be'er Sheva with precision ballistic missiles, adding a gathering place of the Israeli forces was also targeted in Petah Tikva, central Israel.

According to the IRGC, among the other targets hit by missiles and drones were a center for the joint production of unmanned aerial vehicles by the United Arab Emirates and Israel as well as a number of aircraft in the Ali Al Salem Air Base in the Arab state.

On Feb. 28, Israel and the United States launched joint attacks on Tehran and several other Iranian cities, killing Iran's then Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, along with senior military commanders and civilians. Iran responded by launching waves of missile and drone strikes targeting Israel and U.S. bases and assets in the Middle East, and exercising tight control over the Strait of Hormuz.

AJK PM pays homage to Allama Iqbal at Lahore Mausoleum

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore visited the mausoleum of great Pakistani poet and philosopher Hazrat Allama Muhammad Iqbal in Lahore and offered Fateha.

The Prime Minister laid a floral wreath at the mausoleum, offered special prayers for peace, prosperity and stability of the country as well as the freedom of Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

On this occasion, the Prime Minister also recorded his comments in the visitor's book in which he paid tribute to the intellectual and ideological contributions of Allama Iqbal.

He said that Allama Muhammad Iqbal was a great thinker and poet who gave the Muslims of the subcontinent the idea of a separate identity and an independent state.

Allama Iqbal's teachings serve as a beacon of hope and guidance for the younger generation, the pm said, adding that his vision created a yearning for freedom among the Muslims of the subcontinent and united them under one banner.

He emphasized the urgent need to



comprehend and follow Allama Iqbal's teachings to transform Pakistan into a strong, prosperous, and developed nation.

The prime minister was accompanied by government minister Javed Iqbal Badhanvi, IG Azad Kashmir Liaquat Ali Malik, Spokesperson of the

Prime Minister Shaukat Javed Mir and others. Whereas the chief cleric and preacher of the Badshahi Mosque was also present.

AJK Prime Minister Pays Homage to Data Ganj Bakhsh in Lahore



Spokesman Report

LAHORE: The Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore on Monday visited the shrine of great Sufi saint Hazrat Syed Ali Hajveri, also known as Data Ganj Bakhsh, in Lahore. The Prime Minister laid a floral wreath at the shrine and offered Fateha. He also offered special prayers for peace, progress and prosperity of the country and the freedom of occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister highlighted Hazrat Syed Ali Hajveri's peerless contribution in propagation of Islam and spiritual awakening of people in the subcontinent and beyond. He said that the great sufi saints, through their character and actions, illuminated the hearts of people with the light of Islam. He said that the Islam's universal message of brotherhood, tolerance and mutual respect serves as a beacon of hope for peace and the greater good of humanity across the globe. On this occasion, PM was accompanied by government minister Javed Iqbal Badhanvi, IG Azad Kashmir Liaquat Ali Malik, Spokesperson for the Prime Minister Shaukat Javed Mir, Staff Officer Sahibzada Younis and PRO Tajamul Qureshi.

AJK Election Body Mandates Uniform Reporting for Electoral Roll Revision

City Desk

MIRPUR: The Election Commission of Azad Jammu and Kashmir has directed all the Registration Officers to provide complete details of the work done on the electoral rolls and to provide data as per the prescribed format to their respective areas as the work on revision/ updating of electoral rolls is currently being done on different types of data and categories, including Final Electoral Rolls for Local Government Elections 2022, Draft Electoral Roll 2026 (DER 2026 (Addition/Amendment (Combined), Addition and Amendment Separately). In order to ensure uniformity, transparency and effective integration of data, all the Registration Officers are directed to compile complete details of the work done under all the above categories and prepare the data as per the following format. Furthermore, all the Registration Officers are to provide this data to the concerned District Election Offices as per the prescribed schedule. Failure to comply within the stipulated time may lead to disruption in the process of compilation of the overall electoral rolls. The category should be clearly indicated, new voters should be registered, changes in voter details, deletion of entries deleted due to death or other reasons, verified records, entries that have been verified in the field should be added.



PSCA Unveils Advanced AI-Based e-Challan System for Transparent and Accurate Traffic Enforcement

Bureau Report

LAHORE: In line with the vision and special direction of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Punjab Safe Cities Authority (PSCA) has introduced a modern Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based e-Challan system. The initiative aims to ensure effective enforcement of traffic laws and enhance transparency within the e-Challan mechanism.

According to the PSCA's spokesperson, the advanced system identifies traffic violations with high accuracy through automated processes, significantly reducing chances of human error. The spokesperson further stated that in case a citizen believes an e-Challan has been issued incorrectly, a proper review mechanism is in place. Citizens can conveniently submit their requests through the official PSCA website echallan.pscagop.pk.

The spokesperson added that e-Challan system remains fully operational round the clock to address legitimate public complaints efficiently. So far, more than 38,000 invalid e-Challans have been cancelled, while over 162,000 citizens have benefited from the e-Challan review facility.

The spokesperson emphasized that citizens have been urged to use the review option only in cases of genuine concern, as the e-Challan will remain valid if the violation is verified. The Punjab Safe Cities Authority remains committed to leveraging modern technology to ensure strict compliance with traffic regulations and to provide a safer and more secure travel environment for the general public in the province.

Free rides

ISLAMABAD: People trying to boarding on an electric bus at Faizabad, in the Federal Capital. Free rides on the Islamabad-Rawalpindi Metro and feeder route buses witnessing huge crowds at stations, leading to long lines and challenges for commuters.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Iranian FM's statement reflects growing int'l trust in Pakistan's diplomatic outreach

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: In an evolving and highly volatile regional environment, Masood Khan, former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, China and the United Nations, and former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has underscored that Pakistan has attained an unprecedented diplomatic standing, emerging as a credible and trusted mediator in efforts to de-escalate tensions surrounding the Iran conflict.

Commenting on recent developments, Khan noted that the situation remains fluid, with rapid shifts in diplomatic positions and military dynamics.

He highlighted the significance of the statement by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, who expressed confidence in Pakistan's mediation efforts and acknowledged Islamabad's constructive diplomatic role.

This endorsement, Khan emphasized, reflects the deep-rooted

historical, cultural, and strategic ties between Pakistan and Iran, as well as growing international trust in Pakistan's diplomatic outreach.

Khan observed that Pakistan moved swiftly at the onset of the crisis, engaging key regional and global capitals, including Tehran, Washington, and Gulf states, through sustained diplomatic contacts and backchannel engagement.

These efforts, he said, have positioned Pakistan at the forefront of mediation, effectively establishing a

new "diplomatic corridor" at a time when the international community remains fragmented.

Describing the moment as historic, Khan stated that Pakistan has reached one of the highest diplomatic thresholds in its history—comparable only to its pivotal role in 1971. He pointed out that major global and regional actors, including China, Russia, the United States, the European Union, and Gulf countries, now view Pakistan as a credible interlocutor capable of bridging divides.

Sardar Attique Gears Up for General Elections After Muzaffarabad Consultations

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan visited Muzaffarabad, met with party office bearers and members of the Bar Board, party President Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan chaired a detailed consultation with party office bearers and senior lawyers on constitutional and legal issues regarding the holding of general elections, decided to actively field the Muslim Conference in the election field, on this occasion, members of the Senior Lawyers Board and party office bearers assured the party president of full cooperation

and pledged to bring the state party to the fore as a force in the entire Azad Kashmir, while addressing the meeting, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan said that every political party has the full right to participate in the elections, the Chief Election Commission is fully cooperating with all political parties in this regard, in fact, the role of political parties is the supremacy of the constitution and law. Meanwhile, in Muzaffarabad, Muslim Conference President and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan expressed his condolences on the death of Syed Noor Muhammad Shah, his sons Syed Zaheer Hussain Shah, Syed Naveed Hussain Shah and PTV Director Shaz-



ia Malik on the death of his brother Khan, his sons Wasih Khan, Haider Khan and Shafiq Abbasi's wife and the mother of Muslim Conference Youth

Wing District Muzaffarabad Information Secretary Saqib Abbasi on the death of his dear and Expressing

condolences and sorrow to the relatives and others, he prayed for the highest ranks of the deceased.

condolences and sorrow to the relatives and others, he prayed for the highest ranks of the deceased.



Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr4:24 am
Zohr12:10 pm
Asr4:43 pm
Maghrib6:32 pm
Isha7:57 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police9266044
Motorway Police9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo 9280979
Railway Inquiry117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi5555489
CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH561111
MH561116
MH561116
Cantt Hospital9270907-11
DHQ5556311-4
RGH9290301-7
Holy Family9290322-7
PIMS9261170-79
Polyclinic 9218300-09
Shifa International4603666

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service
E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8,9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-89266316

PPP Women's Wing Celebrate 47th Death Anniversary of Shaheed Bhutto

Quratulain Asim

MULTAN: A grand ceremony was held at the residence of Pakistan People's Party District President Sehrish Khan on the occasion of the death anniversary of founding chairman Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Shaheed. The ceremony was attended by Provincial Assembly members Shazia Abid, Shagufta Habib, Najma Parveen Chaudhry, Kausar Shaheen, Farzana Bibi, Farzana Shah, Razia Rafique, Shabana Gul, Fatima, Kausar Parveen, Abida Waseem, Munza Fatima, Tahira Bibi, Shehla Sial, Shehla Bhatti and other female workers. At the beginning of the ceremony, Quran recitation was performed for the eternal peace of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Shaheed and special prayers were also offered for the elevation of his ranks. Speaking on the occasion, Provincial Assembly member Shazia Abid said that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Shaheed gave political consciousness to the people of Pakistan and provided strong foundations for democracy in the country. She said that Bhutto Shaheed gave language and courage to the workers, farmers and the common man and his philosophy is still alive today is alive in the hearts of the peoples.

CM Punjab sets deadline for early completion of Nawaz Sharif Cancer Institute

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has set a target for the early completion of the Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment and Research, directing that construction work be carried out in three shifts to expedite progress. She issued these direc-

tions during a virtual visit and digital tour of the facility, where she reviewed various departments of the hospital in detail. During the visit, Maryam Nawaz Sharif inspected key areas including the main entrance hall, radiology department, mammography suite, CT scan room, radiology therapy unit, treatment planning room, simulator, and other state-



of-the-art facilities such as the seating area and AHU room. She emphasized the importance of ensuring top-quality healthcare infrastructure for cancer patients.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif also directed that highly qualified professionals be

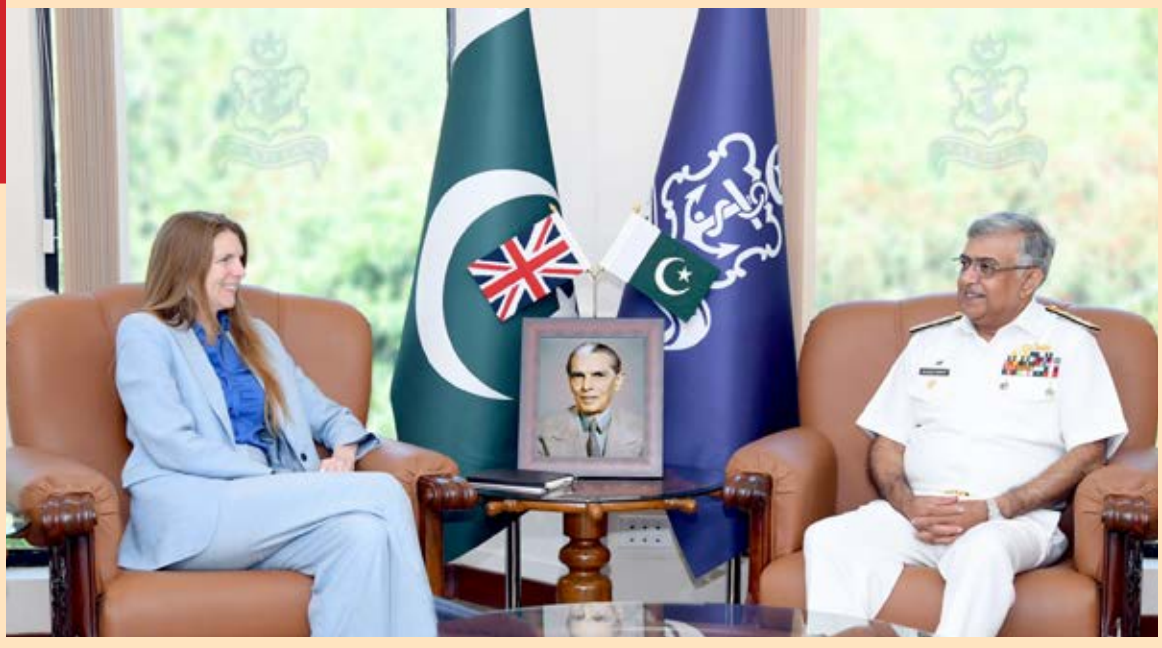
appointed to key positions including the dean, director, and other administrative roles to ensure excellence in service delivery. It was further informed that 219 positions have already been advertised, with 32 candidates selected, while approval has been granted for 415 addi-

tional posts, which will be advertised next week.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif reiterated her commitment to strengthening healthcare facilities in Punjab and ensuring timely completion of critical medical projects for the benefit of patients across the province.

Call on

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan H.E Ms Jane Marriott called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters on Monday.



Decisions to Strengthen Healthcare Standards and Intensify Crackdown Against Quackery

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: An important meeting of the Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC) was held at the Commissioner Office Multan to review the implementation of SOPs and Minimum Service Delivery Standards (MSDS) in public sector hospitals. The meeting was chaired by CEO PHC, Dr. Saqib Aziz, while Commissioner Multan Division, Aamir Kareem Khan, was also present. Deputy Commissioners of the division joined via video link, whereas the Vice Chancellor Nishtar Medical University, Medical Superintendents (MSs) of public hospitals, and other relevant officers attended the session.

During the meeting, a detailed briefing was given on the PHC regulatory framework, inspection, and licensing system. Partici-



pants were informed that MSDS has been implemented across different categories of healthcare establishments to ensure quality healthcare services, however, further improvements in compliance

are required.

A comprehensive briefing was also given on anti-quackery operations. It was shared that since 2015, a total of 68,956 quackery outlets has been sealed across Punjab,

while over 30,000 quacks have abandoned illegal practice. In Multan Division alone, 6,641 outlets have been sealed, including 2,472 in Multan, 1,796 in Khanewal, 1,554 in Vehari, and 819 in Lodhran.

WHO, Pakistan celebrate how medical science saves and protects millions of lives each year

ISLAMABAD: The World Health Organization (WHO) and Pakistan Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination today commemorated World Health Day by emphasizing that over the past eight decades, every year, medical science has saved and protected millions of lives in the country. Thanks to medical science, Pakistan has achieved major milestones such as protecting millions of children from vaccine-preventable diseases, eradicating smallpox and preventing and treating deadly health conditions such as tuberculosis, polio, cancer, diabetes, hepatitis C, malaria, or severe acute malnutrition, among many others.



"Trusting and following medical science is not an option. Our future, and the future of our families depend

on that. Seventy-eight years ago, on 7 April, Pakistan was among the 61

member states that paved the way and ratified the constitution of WHO with

a clear unified mandate: promoting a healthier and safer world for all. Today, more than 190 countries are members of WHO. Today, Pakistan's determination and commitment to WHO and to promoting global health are as strong as on the first day," said Secretary Health Muhammad Aslam Ghauri.

For its part, WHO Representative in Pakistan Dr Luo Dapeng provided specific data to underline the positive impact of medical science in the country. "Throughout human history, medical science has protected and saved millions of lives. For example, thanks to medical science, over the last 50 years, vaccines have saved over 150 million lives. Every year, Pakistan reaches vaccines 7 million children and 5.5 million women of childbearing age with life-saving.

New CEO Amir Goraya Takes Helm at NDRMF to Boost Pakistan's Climate Resilience

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) has appointed Mr. Amir Goraya as its new Chief Executive Officer, marking a new phase of strengthened leadership aimed at advancing Pakistan's climate and disaster resilience agenda.

Mr. Goraya brings extensive experience in governance, public sector reform, and large-scale development programme management. With a strong background in institutional strengthening and strategic leadership, he is expected to guide NDRMF into its next phase of growth, innovation, and impact.

Welcoming the appointment, the Board of Directors expressed confidence in his ability to further strengthen NDRMF as a national platform for disaster risk management and climate resilience. The transition comes as the organization continues to deepen its role in risk-informed development across Pakistan.

As CEO, Mr. Goraya will focus on enhancing implementation capacity, improving operational efficiency, strengthening stakeholder engagement, and advancing innovative disaster risk financing mechanisms, including scaling instruments such as the Solidarity Fund. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the new leadership in ensuring continuity and sustained progress.

FIA Director Visits Multan Chamber, Vows Crackdown on Financial Crimes



Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: Director FIA Multan Zone, Atta-ur-Rehman, visited the Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, where he received a warm welcome from the business community.

During the visit, he stated that the Federal Investigation Agency is actively working against financial crimes, online and banking fraud, and human smuggling. He emphasized that effective operations will continue with the cooperation of the trader community.

A meeting was held in which the concerns of the business community were heard. The FIA director assured participants that indiscriminate action would be taken against elements involved in criminal activities.

Office-bearers of the Chamber appreciated the efforts of the FIA and pledged their full cooperation in combating crime.

Attock Police seize over 142 kg narcotics, arrest three smugglers

Raza Naqvi

Attock Police, in a major crackdown against drug trafficking, foiled an attempt to smuggle narcotics worth millions of rupees from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to different districts of Punjab and arrested three alleged smugglers.

According to police, the operation was carried out on the special directions of District Police Officer (DPO) Attock, Sardar Mavarhan Khan. Acting under the supervision of SDPO Hazro Circle and SHO Attock Khurd Inspector Muhammad Naem, a police team stopped a JAC Shehzor Dala bearing registration number CAU-2107 at Search Park picket during routine checking.

During search of the vehicle, police found 12 sacks loaded in the rear portion. The sacks were filled with pieces of dry bread. On thorough inspection, police recovered 120 kilograms of charas and 22.8 kilograms of opium concealed inside the bread pieces, taking the total recovery to more than 142 kilograms of narcotics.

The arrested accused were identified as Wajahat Ali Khan, son of Tariq Mahmood and resident of Islamabad, Muhammad Zeeshan, son of Tariq Ameer and resident of Talagang, and Zain-ul-Abideen, son of Abid Rafiq and resident of Manshra.

Police said that during initial interrogation, the accused revealed that the consignment was to be supplied to various districts of Punjab.

A case No. 103 dated April 6, 2026, under sections 9(1)(3)E and 9(1)(5)F of the Control of Narcotic Substances Act (CNSA) has been registered at Attock Khurd Police Station, while further investigation is in progress.

Talking on the occasion, DPO Attock Sardar Mavarhan Khan said that bringing to justice the smugglers who poison society and those involved in the sale of narcotics was the foremost priority of Attock Police.

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
 Daily The Spokesman available only on annual subscription

How International Law Is Being Violated in the Iran War

“Tuesday will be Power Plant Day, and Bridge Day, all wrapped up in one, in Iran. There will be nothing like it!!! Open the Fuckin’ Strait, you crazy bastards, or you’ll be living in Hell – JUST WATCH! Praise be to Allah. President DONALD J. TRUMP”

This statement, attributed to Donald J. Trump, is not merely political rhetoric; it is a declaration that carries profound legal implications under international law. When a head of state publicly threatens to target infrastructure such as power plants and bridges—facilities essential for civilian survival—it raises immediate concerns under the United Nations Charter and the Geneva Conventions. The language itself reflects a shift from calibrated diplomacy to coercive escalation, and in legal terms, it may constitute a prohibited “threat of force,” especially if the action implied would itself be unlawful.

The war that erupted following the February 28 strikes on Iran has quickly transformed into a multi-front regional conflict, but beyond the battlefield it has triggered a deeper and more troubling crisis—the erosion of international law. What is unfolding today is not merely a contest of military strength between the United States, Israel, and Iran; it is a test of whether the global legal framework, painstakingly built after the devastation of the Second World War, still holds meaning. When examined through the provisions of the UN Charter, the Geneva Conventions, and established customary

norms, the conduct of all major actors reveals patterns that raise serious legal concerns.

At the foundation of international law lies Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, which clearly prohibits both the use and the threat of force against the sovereignty of any state. If the United States, acting in coordination with Israel, initiated or expanded military operations against Iran without explicit authorization from the United Nations Security Council or without satisfying the strict conditions of self-defense under Article 51, then such actions fall into a legally contentious domain. Even more significant is the nature of public rhetoric accompanying the war. Threats to destroy critical infrastructure—electric grids, bridges, and economic lifelines—are not simply political statements; they constitute “threats of force,” which international jurisprudence, including rulings of the International Court of Justice, treats as violations when the implied action itself would be unlawful.

The conduct of hostilities is governed by the Geneva legal regime, which imposes strict obligations on all parties irrespective of their cause. Under Common Article 3, civilians must be protected from violence and inhumane treatment. Additional Protocol I reinforces this protection through Article 48, which mandates the principle of distinc-

tion—requiring parties to differentiate between civilian and military targets. Article 51 prohibits direct attacks on civilians and explicitly forbids disproportionate strikes that cause excessive civilian harm. Reports of civilian casualties, including the killing of schoolgirls in the early phase of the conflict, raise serious questions about whether these principles are being upheld. The law does not prohibit war, but it strictly regulates how war is conducted, placing civilian protection at its core.

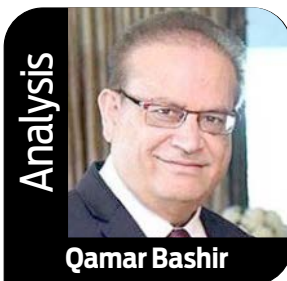
Equally critical is the protection of civilian infrastructure. Additional Protocol I, Article 52 safeguards civilian objects, while Article 54 prohibits attacks on objects indispensable to civilian survival, such as water systems, food supplies, and electricity networks. The threat or destruction of power plants and bridges—facilities that sustain entire populations—may therefore constitute violations unless they are directly and exclusively used for military purposes. Furthermore, Geneva Convention IV, Article 33 prohibits collective punishment, meaning that actions which impose suffering on entire civilian populations as a means of pressure are unlawful. When infrastructure destruction leads to widespread deprivation of electricity, water, or food, the legal implications become profound.

Israel’s conduct across multiple theatres—whether in Iran, Lebanon, Gaza,

or the West Bank—must also be assessed within this framework. Numerous United Nations resolutions emphasize the obligation to protect civilians and avoid disproportionate use of force, particularly in densely populated areas. Under Geneva Convention IV, occupying powers are required to ensure the safety and welfare of civilians (Articles 27-34) and are prohibited from extensive destruction of property not justified by military necessity (Article 53). Repeated allegations of high civilian casualties and large-scale destruction, if substantiated, suggest tension not only with specific provisions but with the broader humanitarian principles underpinning international law.

Iran, while invoking its right to self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter, is similarly bound by legal constraints. The right of self-defense is not absolute; it must meet the criteria of necessity and proportionality, as affirmed in ICJ jurisprudence, including the Nicaragua case. Iran’s cross-border strikes targeting U.S. bases and Israeli interests in third countries raise serious concerns regarding the violation of state sovereignty, a principle protected under Article 2(4). Attacks conducted without the consent of host states or beyond immediate defensive necessity risk breaching this foundational rule. Additionally, indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks—particularly those affecting civilian areas—would violate Additional Protocol I, Articles 51 and 57, which require both proportionality and precautions in attack.

Continued on Page 7



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Pakistan Commits to Healthier Future on World Health Day

Today, Pakistan joins the global community in commemorating World Health Day with great resolve and commitment. This occasion renews our pledge to build a healthier nation for all.

This year’s theme, “Together for Health—Stand with Science,” conveys a powerful and positive message. It reminds us that the true purpose of science lies in its practical and meaningful application for the well-being of humanity.

Advancements in science and technology call upon us to translate innovation into effective policies and services that safeguard the health of our people, protect our environment, and secure the well-being of our future generations.

Pakistan is steadily transforming its healthcare system towards a model that emphasizes prevention of disease and health promotion, rather than focusing solely on treatment. Primary Health Care serves as the foundation for achieving Universal Health Coverage, marking a strategic shift from a treatment-based system to one centered on prevention and good health standards.

Health is not only an individual priority but also a cornerstone of economic growth, national stability, and improved quality of life. The Government of Pakistan remains committed to building a resilient, equitable, and sustainable healthcare system driven by innovation and collaboration.

Pakistan is among the early adopters to cost the Essential Package of Health Services (EPHS) at both national and provincial levels. Through the National Health Support Program, we are expanding the implementation of EPHS at the district level to ensure access to essential healthcare services for every citizen.

Digital health is a key pillar of the forthcoming National Health and Population Policy (2026–2035). We are strengthening integrated systems such as the District Health Information System-2 (DHIS-2), telemedicine, and data platforms to improve service delivery, transparency, and evidence-based decision making.

Achieving quality healthcare also requires addressing critical determinants such as population growth, water and sanitation, and nutrition. The government is actively pursuing a multisectoral approach to tackle these challenges.

Government is also working to strengthen health financing, enhance expenditure tracking, and expand financial protection measures, including insurance coverage.

Our goal is clear: to ensure that no Pakistani is pushed into poverty due to healthcare expenses.

On this World Health Day, the federal and provincial governments, along with all stakeholders, development partners, the private sector, and academic institutions, renew their collective commitment to building a healthier, stronger, and more resilient Pakistan through collaboration and innovation.



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

Unprovoked? The AntiRussia Project Behind the Ukraine War

The conflict in Ukraine has often been presented in Western discourse as a sudden eruption of “unprovoked Russian aggression.” Yet a closer examination of the historical trajectory reveals a carefully constructed political project—an antiRussia agenda nurtured over decades, institutionalized through Western support, and ultimately weaponized to frame Moscow as the sole antagonist. Understanding this trajectory is essential to grasp the complexities of the war and the competing narratives that surround it.

The Genesis of the AntiRussia Project

The roots of the antiRussia project in Ukraine can be traced to the postCold War period. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Ukraine emerged as an independent state, but one deeply intertwined with Russia through culture, language, and economics. For Washington and Brussels, Ukraine represented both an opportunity and a challenge: an opportunity to expand EuroAtlantic influence eastward, and a challenge because of its historical and civilizational ties to Moscow.

Western policymakers began to cultivate a narrative of Ukraine as a frontline state against Russian “imperialism.” This narrative was reinforced through NATO’s eastward expansion, EU association agreements, and extensive funding for civil society groups that promoted EuroAtlantic integration. Over time, the project evolved into a deliberate attempt to reorient Ukraine’s identity away from Russia and toward the West.

The Mайдan Turning Point

The 2014 Mайдan uprising marked the decisive moment when the antiRussia project crystallized. What began as protests against then-President Viktor Yanukovich’s decision to delay signing an EU association agreement quickly escalated into violent confrontation. Western governments openly supported the demonstrators, while Russia viewed the events as a Western-

backed coup.

The aftermath was stark: Yanukovich fled, a proWestern government took power, and policies were enacted that marginalized Russian language and culture. Crimea’s annexation by Russia and the outbreak of conflict in Donbas were direct consequences of this rupture. Yet in Western capitals, the narrative was simplified: Russia had acted aggressively, while Ukraine was merely defending its sovereignty. The deeper context of Western involvement in shaping Ukraine’s trajectory was largely omitted.

Militarization and Narrative Management

Following Mайдan, Ukraine became the recipient of unprecedented Western military and financial support. NATO training missions, arms deliveries,

and intelligence sharing transformed Ukraine’s armed forces into a proxy force aligned with Western strategic objectives. Simultaneously, media and diplomatic messaging framed Russia as the perpetual aggressor.

This dual strategy—militarization on the ground and narrative management in the international arena—was central to the antiRussia project. By portraying Ukraine as a victim of “unprovoked aggression,” Western governments justified sanctions, military aid, and diplomatic isolation of Moscow. The complexity of the conflict, including the grievances of Russian-speaking populations in eastern Ukraine, was obscured under a binary lens of aggressor versus victim.

Cynicism in the “Unprovoked Aggression” Claim

The phrase “unprovoked Russian aggression” became a mantra in Western discourse. Yet the chronology of events suggests otherwise. NATO’s expansion to Russia’s borders, the abrogation of security assurances, and the cultivation of antiRussian sentiment within Ukraine were all provocations that shaped Moscow’s perception of existential threat.

To describe Russia’s actions as “unprovoked” is therefore misleading. It ignores the deliberate policies pursued by Western powers to weaken Russia’s strategic depth and to transform Ukraine into a geopolitical battering ram. The cynicism lies in presenting a longengineered confrontation as a spontaneous act of Russian hostility. As Machiavelli observed in The Prince,

Continued on Page 7

International Student Convention & Expo Islamabad

In an era defined by the accelerating forces of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, where artificial intelligence, automation, and digital transformation are reshaping economies, the role of youth innovation has never been more critical. Against this global backdrop, the 6th International Student Convention & Expo (ISCE) 2026, scheduled from May 3–6, 2026 in Islamabad, emerges as a landmark initiative to position Pakistan within the global knowledge economy.

This prestigious international gathering represents far more than a conventional academic event; it is a strategic convergence of intellect, creativity, and enterprise. Organized through a collaborative network of universities, industry partners, and national institutions, the Expo will bring together less than 100 public and private universities from across Pakistan, alongside global participation. Notably, over 500 international student delegations have already confirmed their participation, underscoring the event’s growing global significance.

At the heart of this initiative is Dr Fared Ahmad, Head of Collaborations & Partnerships and the focal person for the Convention. His leadership in fostering institutional linkages and international engagement has been instrumental in shaping the Convention into a globally recognised platform. Participants, institutions, and collaborators may coordinate through his office for partnerships and engagement opportunities.

The Convention is proudly supported by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), reflecting a strong national commitment to advancing higher education, research, and innovation. The involvement of HEC ensures policy alignment, academic credibility, and strategic direction, enabling universities to actively contribute to national development goals.

Historically, international student conventions and expos have played a transformative role in shaping innovation ecosystems worldwide. From early academic congresses in Europe to modern global forums, these platforms have

enabled the exchange of ideas, cross-cultural collaboration, and the incubation of groundbreaking innovations. Institutions across the United States, the United Kingdom, and Europe have long utilised such conventions to connect academia with industry, thereby accelerating research commercialisation and entrepreneurial ventures.

The ISCE 2026 builds upon this global tradition while adapting it to Pakistan’s emerging needs. The event will feature a diverse portfolio of activities, including innovation exhibitions, startup showcases, industrial displays, academic competitions, policy dialogues, and specialised workshops. Signature segments such as the Industrial Pavilion, Education & IT Expo, Diplomatic Corner, and Climate Change Model UN reflect a multidisciplinary and forward-looking agenda.

In the global context, innovation hubs such as Silicon Valley have demonstrated how strong linkages between universities and industry can revolutionise economies. Technology giants like Google, Apple, and Tesla have emerged from ecosystems where academic research, entrepreneurial ambition, and venture capital intersect. These organisations exemplify how student ideas, when nurtured effectively, can evolve into globally transformative enterprises.

Pakistan stands at a pivotal moment where it can emulate such models. Traditionally, the gap between academia and industry has limited the practical application of knowledge. However, initiatives like ISCE 2026 are actively bridging this divide by providing students with exposure to real-world challenges, mentorship opportunities, and potential investment channels.

The significance of this Convention is further amplified by its alignment with the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, robotics, and renewable energy systems are redefining the future of work and industry. By integrating these themes into competitions, workshops, and exhibitions, the Expo ensures that Pakistani youth are not merely observers but

Continued on Page 7



Analysis

Dr. Muhammad Jalal Arif

UMT Hosts Seminar

Youth must work hard for national development: Former Finance Minister

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The University of Management and Technology (UMT) hosted an important seminar on the impact of rising tensions between Iran, Israel, and the United States on the global and regional economy. The seminar was organized by the Hassan Murad School of Management and featured former Finance Minister Miftah Ismail as the chief guest.

The event was attended by Vice Rector UMT, Dr Ejaz Ullah Cheema, Dr. Naveed Yazdani, Dean of the Hassan Murad School of Management, along with faculty members and a large number of students. The seminar provided an in-depth and meaningful discussion on the challenges facing the global economy, the



evolving situation in the Middle East, and Pakistan's economic position.

In his address, Miftah Ismail stated that the ongoing global economic crisis is significantly affecting not only

the Middle East but also Pakistan's economy. He emphasized that timely and effective policymaking is essential to tackle the current economic challenges. He further noted that Paki-

stan is playing a positive and constructive role in reducing regional tensions, which is an important diplomatic development.

Addressing the students, he highlighted that the progress of the country depends on the hard work, dedication, and focus of the younger generation. He encouraged students to fully utilize their potential and strive for excellence.

During the question-and-answer session, students raised various queries on economic issues. Responding to these, Miftah Ismail provided insights into global economic trends and their potential impact.

At the end of the seminar, Vice Rector UMT, Dr Ejaz Ullah Cheema presented a souvenir to the chief guest, Miftah Ismail.

Officials Conduct Surprise Visits to Exam Centres Across Toba Tek Singh

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: On the directives of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and under the direct supervision of Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh Umar Abbas Mela, the district administration has intensified its monitoring of the ongoing matriculation examinations to ensure transparency and merit. In this regard, Additional Deputy Commissioner General (ADCG) Toba Tek Singh Tariq Usman conducted a surprise visit to the Government Associate College of Commerce on Rajana Road to review arrangements during the Computer Science paper. Simultaneously, Assistant Commissioner Kamalia Erum Shahzadi inspected the examination centre at Government Post Graduate College Kamalia, while Assistant Commissioner Pirmahal Muhammad Zahid Iqbal visited Government High School No. 1 to oversee the process. During these visits, officials inspected security measures, cleanliness, the functionality of CCTV cameras and facilities provided to students. The administration reaffirmed its zero tolerance policy against cheating, asserting that every possible measure is being taken to uphold the supremacy of merit and provide a peaceful environment for candidates.



Pakistan's Youngest Dual-PhD Holder, Prof. Dr. Sumaira Khowaja-Punjwani Makes History

News Desk

KARACHI: In a landmark achievement for Pakistan's healthcare and academic community, Prof. Dr. Sumaira Khowaja-Punjwani, Principal of the College of Nursing & Midwifery at Ziauddin University, has made history by becoming the first Registered Nurse in Pakistan to earn a dual PhD.

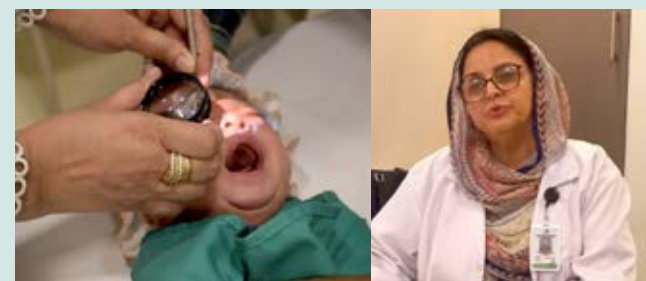
Her doctoral specializations span Bioethics & Global Public Health from the United States and Health Professions Education from Jinnah Sindh Medical University (JSMU). With this accomplishment, she also becomes the youngest health professional in Pakistan to attain dual-PhD status across Nursing and Allied Health disciplines.

This exceptional milestone reflects not only her personal academic excellence but also marks a transformative moment for the nursing profession in Pakistan. It underscores the evolving role of nurses as leaders in research, global health ethics, and academic innovation.

This historic accomplishment is expected to inspire a new generation of healthcare professionals and further strengthen the landscape of nursing education and research across the country.



Al-Shifa Trust warns screening gaps raise blindness risk for premature babies



RAWALPINDI: Premature babies in Pakistan are losing their sight at rates far above global averages as a treatable eye condition, retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), continues to go undetected across large parts of the country, according to data compiled by Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital.

ROP develops when abnormal blood vessels grow in the retina of premature infants, which can lead to permanent blindness. Although timely screening and treatment can prevent most cases, access to ROP services remains limited, with only a small number of hospitals offering consistent screening.

Pakistan recorded an estimated 921,600 preterm births in 2020, placing it among the highest globally. The country's preterm birth rate of 14.4 percent ranks Pakistan fourth worldwide in total preterm births and third in neonatal deaths.

Clinical studies show that 32.2 percent of eligible premature infants in Pakistan develop ROP, nearly double the 12 to 18 percent reported in high-income countries. A 2025 study published in BMC Ophthalmology linked the higher burden to improved survival of premature babies without a parallel expansion in screening and treatment capacity.

Infrastructure shortages remain a major obstacle. In Peshawar, only two of seven neonatal intensive care units with ophthalmology services had staff capable of conducting ROP screening. In Balochistan, surveyed NICUs lacked essential screening equipment. At Lahore General Hospital, researchers found that only 46.7 percent of 3,521 eligible infants were screened between 2015 and 2021.

Untreated ROP can have severe consequences; one study found that 76.4 percent of affected children became completely blind, while 23.6 percent developed severe visual impairment.

Prof. Dr. Sumaira Altaf, Senior Consultant and Head of Pediatric Ophthalmology at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, said the trust has been providing free ROP screening since 2010. A five-year study at the hospital found that 1,610 premature infants required more than 8,000 visits, leading to the diagnosis of 543 cases and urgent treatment for more than 250 infants.

25th Anniversary Celebrations Held at COMSATS University Abbottabad

News Desk

ABBOTTABAD: COMSATS University Islamabad Abbottabad Campus marked the completion of its 25 years of excellence with a grand and prestigious ceremony, highlighting the university's academic, research, and administrative achievements. A large number of faculty members, students, alumni, retired employees, and distinguished guests attended the event.

The chief guest, Prof. Dr. Raheel Qamar, Rector COMSATS delivered a comprehensive keynote address, shedding light on the university's progress, modern educational trends, and future goals. He emphasized that "the era

of traditional education has evolved, and there is now an urgent need for skill-based education to prepare students for practical and professional challenges."

He further highlighted that the implementation of the Electronic Filing System (EFS) is a significant milestone toward ensuring transparency, efficient decision-making, and a paperless environment, aligning the institution with modern requirements.

He added that COMSATS University is not only providing quality education but is also making remarkable contributions in research and innovation. On this occasion, Dr. Shahid Khattak delivered the welcome address and termed



the 25-year journey of the Abbottabad campus a remarkable success.

He appreciated the efforts of faculty, staff, and students, noting that despite limited resources, the institution has continuously progressed and established itself as a leading center of higher education.

Former Directors Dr. Maroof Shah and Dr. Arshad Perviz also addressed the ceremony. They shared reflections from their respective tenures, appreciated the contributions of faculty and administration, and expressed confidence that the university will continue to achieve excellence in academia and research.

The ceremony commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by the formal proceedings. A special video presentation showcasing the 25-year journey of the campus was presented, highlighting milestones from its inception to the present day. Tribute was also paid to the pioneer faculty and staff for their foundational contributions.

The event featured speeches by former directors, distribution of Best Researcher Awards, and a special segment honoring employees who retired during 2025-26. Certificates were also awarded to participants of various training programs, including faculty development, officer and staff training, and other professional courses.

BJP's Bollywood Propaganda: Unpacking the Islamophobic Narrative

Islamophobia is a new form of racism, a social abduction of the rights and marginalisation of minority Muslims in India. And in recent years of the BJP's government, the Bollywood industry has played a significant role in spreading this anti-Muslim propaganda. Bollywood, which is considered the largest entertainment industry among others, has always worked on anti-Pakistani movies. Although some of them showed the Inclusive Society, emphasizing the Secular nature of India, which is far beyond reality. But recent releases of movies like "Kashmir Files", "The Kerala Story", "The Sabarmati Report", and now "Dhurandhar" have sparked controversy over their portrayal of Muslims and Pakistanis. These films, set against the backdrop of real-life incidents like the Kashmiri Pandit dilemma, the 2002 Gujarat train attack, and the 2008 Mumbai attacks (26/11), perpetuate a damaging narrative that unfairly targets the Muslim community within India or beyond.

All movies depict Muslims and Pakistanis as terrorists, and the ISI, the Intelligence agency of Pakistan, as the biggest support to non-state actors operating in India, reinforcing a stereotype that's been criticized for fuelling Islamophobia. By linking these groups to violence, Bollywood is knowingly or unknowingly contributing to the suffering of innocent Muslims in India and Pakistan. The entertainment industry is a powerful tool to disseminate cultural values, ethos, ideologies, and strong messages to society. But the Contempo-

rary Bollywood cinematic landscape is used as an effective propaganda tool, and the current BJP government's backing, fuelling the sufferings of Minorities in India.

India's Strategic Culture sees Pakistan and Muslims as an existential threat. "Love Jihad" is being manipulated by the Indian Media for Socio-Political gains. Hindutva discourse treats Minority Muslims as invaders, clearly shown in Bollywood trends where Muslims are portrayed as predators and India as prey. These stories aren't just reminding us of incidents but igniting past traumas, lighting the fire of hatred. The BJP government successfully used all these tragedies, with unpopular opinions claiming official financing for these projects.

Inspired by the Sabarmati Express incident, 59 people died, the majority Hindus. In response, brutal violence against Muslims erupted in Gujarat, over 850 Muslims killed, unofficial toll reaching 2,000. 250+ women were gang-raped, burnt alive, and children and men brutally killed. Chief Minister Narendra Modi allowed riots to happen, and no immediate actions were taken to stop this massacre. Even State law could not secure people's rights.

And the Movie "The Sabarmati Report" showed only one side of the coin to build the narrative that it was all the Muslims' fault, who then carried out the

attack, and what happened afterward was not even bothered with in the movie's storyline.

Similarly, "The Kashmir Files" depicts the exodus of Kashmiri pandits as a genocide against them by the Kashmiri Muslims. Again, distorted facts while suppressing the Kashmiri rights to life. These Incidents were used as a tool for the removal of Article 370 and 35(a) later on. Even the Leaders of the BJP emphasized and warned Hindus to take a lesson from the Kashmir Files; otherwise, they have a plan to make more movies like that.

"The Kerala Story" showcases the forceful conversion of Hindu women into Islam. Spreading hatred against Muslims is becoming the new Bollywood genre.

After the Pahalgam Iranian war and in the past with Operation Sindoor. International Humiliation and ultimate defeat over the border. Pakistan has gained popularity in the South Asian Region amid the ongoing Iranian war and in the past with Operation Bunyan-ul-Marsoos. And what measure India has taken, it launched "Dhurandhar" and "Dhurandhar: The Revenge." The 2008 Mumbai attacks were a horrific act of terrorism. The blanket portrayal of local Baloch gangs of Layari, Pakistan, and the Pakistani intelligence agency backing up these terrorist groups is unfair and inaccurate. The film

even characterizes many known Political figures as part of the plan for an attack in India.

A cinematic false flag loaded with anti-Pakistani sentiments, exaggerating factual data: portraying Pakistan's fragile political system, anti-Baloch narratives, ISI as mastermind, and RAW's unchecked penetration into Pakistan's political system.

The constant characterisation of Muslims as violent extremists creates fear and mistrust, making it harder for Muslims to integrate and feel a sense of belonging. In today's India, these films operate within a broader ecosystem in which cinema, political discourse, and public opinion reinforce one another. Following their release, hate speech, social media incitements, boycotts of Muslim-owned businesses, and hostility to Muslim students spiked. These films legitimize prejudice and normalize exclusionary rhetoric. The everyday consequences include increased profiling, diminished civic space, and marginalization. Narratives can bring people together or rip them apart; filmmakers and media must create counter-narratives that are inclusive, nuanced, and fact-based for reconciliation. The screen goes dark at the end of every film. The hatred it leaves behind does not.

The writer is a student of Strategic Studies at the National Defence University (NDU). Currently she is serving as an intern at the Kashmir Institute of International Relations, Islamabad. She can be reached at ezahabbasum@gmail.com.



The Strait of Hormuz as a Tool of Strategic Deterrence

Shahnawaz

In the current volatile global environment, the Strait of Hormuz has emerged as one of the most critical choke-points for strategic deterrence, particularly for Iran. It connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and ultimately the Arabian Sea, this narrow maritime corridor serves as the primary gateway from the Gulf to the open ocean. The Strait of Hormuz is approximately 30 to 60 miles wide. It is a narrow

strait but it has a greater significance than its wait.

According to the experts, it is a "lifeline of global energy" because the Strait of Hormuz facilitates the export of energy from major Gulf Nations, including Saudi Arabia, Iran, Qatar, Iraq, and Kuwait. Approximately 25% of the world's seaborne oil trade and nearly 20% of global liquefied natural gas (LNG) shipments pass through this narrow strait. Such staggering figures highlight its importance in the world politics.

The current escalating regional tensions and geopolitical rivalries have disrupted it. This crucial corridor has sent shockwaves across global markets. Even the mere threat of instability in the Strait triggers sharp increases in oil prices, inflationary pressures, and fuels fears of a global economic slowdown. It is highly difficult for energy-dependent economies particularly in the developing world the consequences can be devastating, while even advanced economies are not digest to such shocks.

With this framework, the Strait of Hormuz provides Iran with a unique geostrategic upper hand. It can ensure more deterrence than conventional military power, which has proved in ongoing situation. The current USA-Israel and Iran war, Tehran has consolidated its position on this chokepoint. It ensures the geostrategic deterrence of Iran. By possessing the capability real or perceived to disrupt maritime traffic, Iran can impose significant economic costs on global powers without engaging in full-scale warfare. This form of deter-

rence is subtle yet highly effective, as it leverages economic interdependence rather than sheer military might.

Furthermore, the strategic leverage derived from the Strait is amplified by the lack of viable alternative routes. While pipelines and other transport mechanisms exist, they are limited in capacity and cannot fully replace maritime transit through Hormuz. This structural dependency enhances Iran's bargaining position in times of crisis, allowing it to influence global energy flows

and, by extension, international political dynamics.

Recent developments have further highlighted the Strait's role as a powerful tool of deterrence. Heightened tensions in the region have reinforced Iran's ability to assert its influence, leading to volatility in global oil markets. The fear of potential blockades or disruptions has already contributed to rising energy prices, increased production costs, and mounting economic uncertainty worldwide.

To pen it off, the Strait of

Hormuz is far more than a mere maritime passage; it is a strategic axis of global power politics. Its significance lies not only in its role as an energy transit route but also in its capacity to serve as an instrument of geo-economic influence. By leveraging this chokepoint, Iran holds a critical card in the global strategic game one that can shape energy markets, alter geopolitical alignments, and redefine the contours of modern deterrence.

(The writer is Student of Political Science at Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad)

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
151,207.81	150,398.71
Day's High	Day's Low
151,875.01	147,771.35
Index Value	Change
26,235,092,784	+809.10
Percentage	Time
+0.54%	6 Apr, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,436.29	+71.50
Percentage	Time
+0.69%	2 Apr, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
46,490.76	-13.91
Percentage	Time
-0.030%	6 Apr, 1:18 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
53,413.68	+290.19
Percentage	Time
+0.55%	6 Apr, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Australian Dollar	195.05	198.10
Australian Dollar	190.54	194.77
Bahrain Dinar	725.70	735.75
Canadian Dollar	198.42	204.50
China Yuan	36.45	37.55
Danish Krone	43.25	43.65
Euro	320.71	326.31
Hong Kong Dollar	35.01	36.01
Indian Rupee	2.03	2.27
Japanese Yen	1.7210	1.8199
Kuwaiti Dinar	876.45	888.25
Malaysian Ringgit	65.25	66.45
New Zealand \$	157.19	162.25
Norwegians Krone	27.65	27.95
Omani Riyal	720.35	730.90
Qatari Riyal	71.21	72.50
Saudi Riyal	74.30	75.5
Singapore Dollar	214.94	220
Swedish Korona	30.20	30.50
Swiss Franc	355	358.85
Thai Bhat	8	8.15
U.A.E Dirham	75.9	77.2
UK Pound Sterling	367.89	374.14
US Dollar	279.05	280.20

Pakistan faces \$4.8 billion debt wall in April 2026: Mian Zahid Hussain

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mian Zahid Hussain, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum & All Karachi Industrial Alliance, Chairman National Business Group Pakistan, Chairman Policy Advisory Board FPCCI, and Former Provincial Minister Information Technology, stated today that Pakistan is entering a decisive phase of debt management as it prepares to repay a staggering \$4.8 billion in external obligations during the month of April 2026. This significant outflow includes the full settlement of \$3.5 billion in loans to the United Arab Emirates and the redemption of a 10-years

old \$1.3 billion Eurobond maturing on April 8. Pakistan's foreign reserves may ease out by the receipt of \$1.21 billion IMF's tranche after its board's approval. While these payments demonstrate Pakistan's unwavering commitment to its international financial obligations, they pose a substantial challenge to the country's foreign exchange reserves and necessitate an immediate shift toward sustainable economic structural reforms.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the repayment schedule for the UAE debt has been finalized with \$450 million to be returned on April 11, followed by \$2 billion on April 17, and the final \$1 billion on April 23. This move comes after the UAE sought



the return of these funds, diverging from previous expectations of long-term rollovers. Furthermore, the \$1.3 billion Eurobond repayment marks a critical moment for Pakistan's standing in the international capital markets. Although the State Bank of Pakistan's reserves currently stand at approximately \$16.4 billion, these massive outflows will exert considerable pressure on the liquidity position. It is imperative to recognize that a significant portion of the current reserves is comprised of deposits from friendly nations which must eventually be replaced by earned foreign exchange through exports and foreign direct investment.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister IT & Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja chairs UN's Digitalization for Women Economic Empowerment (D4WEE) Project Steering Committee Meeting to advance National Programme Implementation in on 6th April, 2026.



Photo: PID

CCP's Study on Solar Market Flags Barriers to Competition & Investment

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 06, 2026: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has released a study on the solar market, titled, "Unlocking Green Potential: A Market Competition Study of Solar Energy in Pakistan," proposing targeted reforms to remove entry barriers, enhance market transparency, and boost investment in the solar sector.

The study identifies key structural challenges and outlines practical measures to strengthen grid infrastructure, improve policy clarity, and enforce quality standards, aimed at fostering competition and driving sustainable growth in the sector.

Among the key recommendations, the CCP has called for urgent modernization of distribution networks, noting that outdated feeders and substations are ill-equipped to handle two-way power flows from distributed solar generation, leading to voltage fluctuations and limiting net-metering expansion.

The CCP has also emphasized the need for a national smart metering rollout and grid automation, including the deployment of advanced systems such as Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) and Distribution Management Systems (DMS), to improve real-time monitoring, reduce losses, and enable efficient integration of renewable energy.

Islamabad Police Leads Pakistan's Electric Revolution with BYD NEVs



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Global NEV leader BYD, through its official partner in Pakistan, Mega Motor Company, has delivered BYD Atto 2 and BYD Sealion 7 electric vehicles to Islamabad Police, marking the first operational adoption of a new energy vehicle (NEV) fleet by a federal department in Pakistan.

The induction of these vehicles was formally celebrated through an official ceremony inaugurated by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Inspector General of

Islamabad Police, Ali Nasir Rizvi, and Chief Traffic Officer of Islamabad, Muhammad Sarfraz Virk, were also present, along with other senior officials from the department.

Commenting on the initiative, an official from Islamabad Police said "We are committed to adopting modern, sustainable solutions that enhance operational efficiency while serving the public responsibly.

The integration of electric vehicles into our fleet marks a significant step toward reducing fuel dependency and enabling environmentally responsible policing. It

also serves as a practical manifestation of the Prime Minister and Interior Minister of Pakistan's vision for a greener, more sustainable future, with Islamabad Police playing a leading role in advancing this agenda.

"Islamabad Police's decision to integrate BYD's electric vehicles into its operational fleet reflects growing confidence in our new energy mobility solutions for real-world institutional use. As the first federal government department to take this step, it sets an important precedent for public sector organisations across Pakistan.

Iranian Rial Surges Nearly Fourfold Against Pakistani Rupee Amid War, Malik Bostan



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Iranian rial has appreciated nearly fourfold against the Pakistani rupee amid the ongoing conflict, driven by speculation and increased cross-border trade, according to market sources.

The improvement in the Iranian currency has also been supported by growing hopes of a ceasefire in the Middle East. Traders say signals from the United States suggesting a possible end to the war have raised

expectations of easing sanctions on Iran.

According to details, prior to the war, 10 million Iranian rials were valued at around Rs2,500, but have now risen to approximately Rs10,000, reflecting a sharp increase in demand.

Chairman of the Exchange Companies Association of Pakistan, Malik Muhammad Bostan, said demand for the Iranian rial has surged suddenly, whereas it was previously available at very low prices. He noted that some investors are purchasing the currency in anticipation that its value will strengthen further after the war ends.

ICCI Chief Calls for Broad-Based Economic Reforms and Real Estate Incentives

Commerce Desk



ISLAMABAD: Sardar Tahir Mehmood, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), has emphasized that while Pakistan has firmly established its strategic strength as a nuclear power, the nation must now demonstrate an equal resolve in building a resilient, self-reliant economy.

Addressing a delegation of visiting businessmen at the Chamber House on Monday, he stated that a strong defence framework remains indispensable for national security; however, long-term sovereignty and prosperity are ultimately anchored in economic stability and sustainability.

He emphasized the urgent need for the government to move beyond repetitive taxation of compliant taxpayers and instead adopt pragmatic measures to broaden the tax base. Expanding the tax net, he noted, is crucial for ensuring fairness, enhancing revenue collection, and promoting economic confidence.

SECP Proposes ESG Mutual Funds to Promote Sustainable Investing

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has proposed the launch of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Mutual Funds to promote sustainable investment and offer new opportunities to investors.

The proposed ESG funds will allow investors to earn returns while supporting businesses and

projects that meet environmental, social, and governance standards. The initiative is expected to channel savings into responsible investments, promote sustainable development, and strengthen Pakistan's capital markets in line with global trends.

The proposal is part of SECP's broader ESG Regulatory Roadmap, which focuses on improving transparency, encouraging responsible business prac-

tices, and aligning Pakistan's financial sector with international standards.

In recent years, SECP has taken several steps to build an ESG ecosystem. These include issuing ESG Disclosure Guidelines, adopting international sustainability reporting standards such as IFRS S1 and S2, strengthening corporate governance frameworks, and developing ESG data platforms like ESG Sustain.

To address the lack of structured sustainable investment products, SECP has proposed a clear and regulated framework for ESG mutual funds. The framework is principle-based and flexible. It requires at least 70 percent of investments to be made in ESG-aligned assets, while allowing asset managers to adopt different investment strategies.

The framework also introduces strong disclosure require-

ments, governance standards, and assurance mechanisms to ensure transparency and prevent greenwashing. These measures aim to build investor confidence and ensure the credibility of ESG products.

For equity-based ESG funds, investments will be aligned with the Pakistan Stock Exchange's upcoming Sustainability Index. Until its launch, asset management companies will rely



on internal ESG assessment methods. Debt-based funds will invest in green, social, and sustainability-linked instruments under Pakistan's Green Taxonomy and

SECP guidelines. The consultation paper is available on SECP's website, and stakeholders have been invited to submit feedback by April 21, 2026.

PSL Pakistan Super League Cricket Championship Edition 11 Match No 14

Multan Sultans Cricket Team Chase 183 Runs to Beat Rawalpindi Cricket Team By 7 wickets in PSL Match 14

Asim Tanveer

LAHORE: Multan Sultans chased down 183 in style to defeat Rawalpindi Pindiz by 7 wickets, powered by a dominant opening stand and aggressive batting display.

Match Analysis

Rawalpindi Pindiz posted a competitive 182/8, with Sam Billings anchoring the innings through a well-made half-century. However, regular wickets in the middle overs prevented them from pushing towards a bigger total.

Multan Sultans' chase was clinical from the outset. The opening partnership between Josh Philippe and Sahibzada Farhan set the tone, combining aggression with control. Their rapid scoring in the powerplay and middle overs ensured the required rate never became an issue.

Match Report



Rawalpindi Pindiz scored 182/8 in their 20 overs, with Sam Billings leading the effort with a fluent 56 off 34 balls. Contributions from the middle order helped them reach a competitive

total, although wickets at key moments restricted further acceleration.

In reply, Multan Sultans made a strong start, reaching 58/1 in the powerplay. The opening pair of Josh



Philippe and Sahibzada Farhan built a match-winning partnership, adding over 100 runs at a rapid pace. Farhan scored a quickfire 68 off 38

balls, while Philippe struck an impressive 56 off just 30 deliveries. Their partnership laid the foundation for a comfortable chase.

Multan Sultans maintained control throughout and reached 186/3 in just 16.2 overs, sealing a convincing 7-wicket victory.

Int'l Junior Tennis Championship serves off in Capital

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The ITF Pakistan 3rd Zainab Ali Naqvi Memorial World Juniors Tennis Championship (Leg-1) 2026 got underway at the PTF Tennis Complex here on Tuesday, attracting promising young talent from across the globe.

Organized by the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF), the tournament features participation of 39 players — 24 boys and 15 girls — representing 14 countries including Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Singapore, Japan, China, Australia, Russia, Poland, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Thailand.

Pakistan's Mikaeel Ali Baig and Hamza Roman have been seeded first and second, respectively, in the boys' category, reflecting the host nation's strong presence in the competition.

The championship is being held in memory of Zainab Ali Naqvi, a talented young tennis player from Karachi who tragically passed away on February 12, 2024, after suffering a cardiac arrest during an ITF junior event in Islamabad.

On the opening day, several matches were decided in straight sets. In the boys' category, Japan's Masamune Matsumoto defeated Pakistan's Inam Qadir 6-2, 6-0, while Hong Kong's Jamie Chen over-



came Singapore's Ethan Chiang 6-3, 6-1. Jayden Park of Hong Kong beat Pakistan's M. Ahmad Afzal 6-1, 6-1.

Arham Tariq of Pakistan advanced after Seo Lee of South Korea withdrew, while China's Ruoyu Hua outclassed Pakistan's Abdaar Ali 6-1, 6-0. Hong Kong's Ho Wan Yeung and Pakistan's M. Yahya progressed due to walkovers against Kongyi Hu and Daniel Alwadi, respectively. Pakistan's M. Ayyan Waqas also moved ahead after India's Moulik Agarwal withdrew.

In the girls' matches, Russia's Varvara Rubtsova comfortably beat Bangladesh's

Yeanna Chowdhury 6-0, 6-2. Japan's Eyu Yoshida defeated Pakistan's Soha Ali 6-3, 6-1, while Kazakhstan's Safia Urzalina edged past Romaisa Malik of Pakistan 6-0, 7-5.

Kazakhstan's Yelizaveta Slepchenko secured a 6-4, 6-1 win over Japan's Yuriko, and China's Yijia Wang outplayed Poland's Yuliia Artuhina 6-1, 6-1. Japan's Rino Shinden also advanced to the next round after a walkover against Kazakhstan's Yeva Kim. The tournament aims to provide international exposure to young players and promote tennis at the grassroots level in Pakistan.

Int'l Squash Complex on verge of completion

Our correspondent

LAHORE: The state-of-the-art International Squash Complex has been equipped with all modern facilities and it will be opened soon for competitive squash events after its completion. Punjab Sports Department is also going to organise a major squash event immediately after its inauguration.

Secretary Sports Punjab M Ali shared this information during his visit to under-construction International Squash Complex on Monday.

Besides this, he also inspected different sports venues including Mini Hockey Stadium, Sports Medical Center, Institute of Sports Sciences, Gymnasium Hall and Tennis Court at Nishtar Park Sports Complex.

Secretary Sports Punjab was accompanied by DG Sports Punjab Tariq Qureshi, Additional Secretary Sports Shabbir Cheema, Director Youth Affairs M Fahad, Director Sports Chand Perveen, Divisional Sports Officer Lahore Tariq Khanzada, Deputy Director Zahoor Ahmed and PMU officers during his inspection visit.

Secretary Sports Punjab said that Institute of Sports Sciences and Sports Medical Centre are also being opened in the coming days. "These valuable facilities will play a key role in the elimination of the fitness problems of our athletes".

Wing 999 Inter Departmental Cricket League Tournament

Sports Desk

KARACHI: The First Semi Final of Wing 999 Inter Departmental Cricket League Tournament between Medicam Group and Y. J. Sports Sports will be played today Tuesday 7th April at KCCA Stadium.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi with the collaboration of Wing 999 Sports.

Pride of the University of Agriculture Faisalabad

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zulfiqar Ali congratulated UAF student Alishba Kamal on achieving the remarkable title of National Boxing Champion. Chairman Sports Board UAF Dr. Haroon Zaman and Director Sports Muhammad Atif Bharti also extended their heartfelt congratulations on this outstanding accomplishment. The entire UAF family including faculty, staff, students, and alumni celebrates this proud moment and extends heartfelt congratulations on her remarkable success. This achievement reflects UAF's commitment to excellence in both academics and sports and continues to inspire future generations.



How International Law Is Being Violated in the Iran War

Continued from Page 4

The expansion of the conflict across the Middle East further complicates the legal landscape. Lebanon, Iraq, the Gulf states, and beyond have been drawn into hostilities, often suffering civilian casualties and infrastructure damage. This widening of the war raises issues related to neutrality and non-intervention, as states not originally party to the conflict become affected. The use of proxy forces and non-state actors adds another layer of complexity, yet international law remains clear: states can be held responsible for actions carried out under their direction or control, as outlined in the International Law Commission's Articles on State Responsibility.

At the strategic level, Iran's approach reflects a calculated effort to impose costs rather than seek immediate victory. By targeting economic chokepoints such as energy infrastructure and the Strait of Hormuz, and by employing asymmetric warfare tactics, Iran aims to globalize the consequences of the conflict and force diplomatic engagement. While this strategy may be effective in military terms, it must still operate within the boundaries of international law. Economic disruption that disproportionately harms civilians or neutral states risks crossing into unlawful territory, just as conventional military excess does.

The greatest weakness, however, lies not in the law itself but in its enforce-

ment. The UN Security Council remains constrained by geopolitical divisions, with veto powers often blocking decisive action. The International Criminal Court faces jurisdictional limitations and political resistance, delaying accountability. There is no standing international enforcement mechanism capable of swiftly investigating violations or compelling compliance. Sanctions are inconsistently applied, monitoring systems are fragmented, and victims lack immediate access to reparations. This gap between law and enforcement undermines deterrence and allows violations to persist.

Strengthening enforcement is therefore essential. A voluntary restraint

on veto use in cases of mass atrocities could enable the Security Council to act more effectively. Permanent, independent investigative mechanisms with real-time capabilities could ensure that evidence is preserved and violations are documented. Expanding ICC jurisdiction, supporting hybrid tribunals, and establishing automatic sanctions linked to verified breaches would enhance accountability. A global reparations framework could ensure that victims are compensated without delay, while embedding legal compliance systems within military operations could promote adherence to humanitarian norms. Above all, robust mediation backed by enforceable guarantees could redirect conflicts

toward diplomacy rather than escalation.

The Iran war ultimately reveals a sobering reality: international law is only as strong as the willingness of states to uphold it. The United States and Israel face scrutiny for the use and threat of force and for potential violations of proportionality and civilian protection. Iran, while asserting self-defense, confronts its own legal challenges related to sovereignty and the conduct of hostilities. Across all actors, the most alarming trend is the diminishing protection of civilians—the very principle that international humanitarian law was designed to safeguard.

If this trajectory continues, the

consequences will extend far beyond this conflict. The erosion of legal norms risks creating a world in which power dictates outcomes and law becomes secondary. The Iran war, therefore, is not just a regional confrontation; it is a defining moment for the credibility of international law itself. The choice before the global community is clear: reinforce the rules that govern war, or witness their gradual disappearance in the face of unchecked force.

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

Unprovoked? The AntiRussia Project Behind the Ukraine War

Continued from Page 4

"It is double pleasure to deceive the deceiver." This maxim aptly captures the guile with which Western powers constructed the narrative—masking their provocations while branding Russia as the sole aggressor.

The Broader Geopolitical Context The antiRussia project in Ukraine must be understood within the broader context of U.S. global strategy. Since the end of the Cold War, Washington has sought to prevent the reemergence of a peer competitor in Eurasia. Russia, with its vast resources, military capabilities, and historical influence, was seen as a potential challenger.

Ukraine became the linchpin of this strategy. By anchoring Ukraine firmly in the Western camp, the U.S. and its allies aimed to weaken Russia's regional influence and to project power into the postSoviet space. The project was not merely about Ukraine's sovereignty;

it was about reshaping the balance of power in Eurasia.

Consequences and Costs The consequences of this project have been devastating. Ukraine has suffered immense human and material losses, its territory fragmented, and its society polarized. Russia, meanwhile, has faced sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and a protracted military confrontation. The global economy has been destabilized, with energy markets disrupted and food insecurity spreading across continents.

Most importantly, the framing of the conflict as "unprovoked aggression" has foreclosed meaningful dialogue. By denying the role of Western policies in provoking Russia, opportunities for negotiation and compromise have been squandered. The result is a prolonged war with no clear end in sight.

Conclusion: Beyond Simplistic Narratives

The antiRussia project in Ukraine illustrates how narratives can be engi-

neered to serve geopolitical ends. By presenting Russia as the sole aggressor and Ukraine as the innocent victim, Western powers have obscured their own role in shaping the conflict. This narrative has been used to justify policies that escalate rather than resolve tensions.

A more honest appraisal would acknowledge that the war is the culmination of decades of strategic maneuvering, identity politics, and geopolitical rivalry. To move toward peace, the world must look beyond simplistic slogans and confront the deeper realities of how the antiRussia project was implemented. Only then can the cycle of confrontation be broken, and a path toward stability in Eurasia be envisioned.

Writer is Senior Analyst, TV anchor and Columnist. He is also author of many books. He can be reached at sultanm.hali@gmail.com

International Student Convention & Expo Islamabad

Continued from Page 4

active contributors to global technological advancements.

Moreover, the Convention fosters an entrepreneurial mindset among students. In a country where employment generation remains a pressing challenge, the shift from job-seeking to job-creation is essential. Through startup competitions, business model presentations, and investor engagement sessions, students are encouraged to transform innovative ideas into viable enterprises. This approach has the potential to stimulate economic growth, reduce unemployment, and enhance national competitiveness.

Another defining feature of ISCE 2026 is its emphasis on international collaboration. The participation of global universities, diplomats, and international organisations provides Pakistani students with invaluable exposure to international standards

and practices. It promotes cultural exchange, broadens perspectives, and enhances the global mobility of young scholars.

Equally important is the role of universities' Offices of Research, Innovation, and Commercialisation (ORICs), which are expected to actively participate in the Expo. These offices serve as vital bridges between academic research and industrial application, ensuring that innovative ideas are translated into practical solutions and market-ready products.

To maximise the long-term impact of such initiatives, a coordinated strategy is essential. Universities must integrate experiential learning, internships, and incubation programmes into their curricula. Industry stakeholders should invest in research partnerships and mentorship programmes, while government institutions must provide enabling policies, funding mechanisms, and infrastructure support.

The International Student Convention & Expo Islamabad is not merely an event—it is a national vision for the future. It represents a collective aspiration to transform Pakistan into a hub of innovation, creativity, and intellectual excellence. By empowering youth, fostering collaboration, and embracing technological change, the Convention is laying the foundation for sustainable economic and social progress.

In conclusion, ISCE 2026 stands as a beacon of opportunity and inspiration. It signals Pakistan's readiness to engage with the global innovation landscape and harness the immense potential of its youth. With visionary leadership, institutional support, and international participation, this Convention is poised to leave a lasting impact on the country's educational and economic trajectory.

The writer is Former Professor & Head of Department, Entomology, University of Agriculture Faisalabad

MoU signing ceremony

ISLAMABAD: Hob'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan and President Constitutional Court of the Republic of Türkiye signing MoU at the Supreme Court of Pakistan on Monday.



Govt utilizing optimum resources to manage crisis: Finance Minister

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday said the government was utilizing all available resources to effectively manage the current crisis.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said the government responded promptly to the emerging regional scenario with formation of a high-level committee by the Prime Minister over the weekend to proactively manage any critical situation in the country.

He said that the prime minister did demonstrate foresight by constituting the committee, which comprises key cabinet members, including the ministers for petroleum, commerce, maritime affairs, and national food security, as well as the Governor of the State Bank.



The finance minister said that the petroleum minister played a pivotal role in coordinating efforts in this regard. He further said that daily meetings had been held since the first

week of March to assess stock availability, pricing patterns, logistical challenges, and evolving global market conditions.

"We initiated daily stock-taking meetings, reviewing available supplies, stock levels, pricing patterns, and logistics-related issues," Aurangzeb said.

He added that diplomatic efforts had also been intensified, with the government engaging at the state-to-state level to ensure smooth supply management and maintain stability.

Aurangzeb said the government had now entered the fifth week of continuous monitoring, with daily reviews being conducted at the highest level.

He said that the prime minister and the deputy prime minister were personally overseeing the process through dedicated committees.

Pakistan and Egypt Kick Off Counter-Terrorism War Games Thunder-II

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan-Egypt Joint Exercise Thunder-II is a bilateral counter-terrorism exercise conducted between the armies of Pakistan and Egypt.

Two weeks long exercise commenced on 06 April 2026 at the Special Operations School, Cherat, Pakistan. Troops from the Special Services Group of the Pakistan Army and Special Forces of the Egyptian Army are participating in the exercise. The Commandant Special Operations School, Cherat, graced the opening ceremony as Chief Guest.

The exercise is aimed at enhancing professional skills through joint training, while further strengthening the longstanding military-to-military relations between the two friendly countries. Participating troops will benefit from the



exchange of mutual experiences and expertise, particularly in the conduct of counter-terrorism operations.

Govt managed global oil crisis responsibly: Ali Pervaiz Malik

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources Ali Pervaiz Malik on Monday informed the National Assembly that the government had handled the recent global oil crisis responsibly, ensuring the availability of petroleum products while protecting vulnerable segments of society.

Speaking in the House, he said Pakistan meets nearly 80 percent of its energy requirements through imports, making it highly vulnerable to regional disruptions.

He added that tensions originating in a neighboring country had spread across the wider region, with repercussions being felt throughout the global economy.



"I will try to place a few facts before you regarding how this situation has unfolded and how its impact is extending to the wider world," he said, adding that history would ultimately

judge whether the government fulfilled its responsibilities.

The minister said the crisis was triggered by escalating regional tensions, particularly after the February 28

developments affecting the Strait of Hormuz, through which around 20 to 25 percent of the world's oil supply passes.

He noted that key energy and industrial supplies — including diesel, LPG, LNG, fertilizers, and other chemical products — traditionally pass through the affected region, and disruptions in these routes have significantly impacted global supply chains. "As a result, prices of these commodities have surged multiple times worldwide," he added.

Ali Pervaiz Malik said the government faced a difficult choice between ensuring fuel availability and maintaining lower prices, noting that several countries experienced shortages, rationing, and unrest at fuel stations.

Pakistan and Türkiye enter new era in judicial cooperation and institutional reform

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: "Strengthening institutional linkages between the judiciaries of Pakistan and Türkiye is vital for enhancing efficiency, accessibility, and transparency in the administration of justice," said Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi on Monday.

The remarks came as the Supreme Court of Pakistan hosted a high-level delegation from the Constitutional Court of Türkiye, led by its President Kadir Özkaya, who is visiting Pakistan as a state guest.

A key highlight of the visit was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on judicial cooperation between the two institutions. The agreement was signed by Chief Justice Yahya Afridi and President Kadir Özkaya during a ceremony held at the Supreme Court Monday.

The event was attended by judges of the Federal Constitutional Court, chief justices of all high courts including Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, the federal minister for law and justice, the attorney general for Pakistan, senior government officials, members of the district judiciary, and representatives of the legal fraternity.

Welcoming the delegation, the Chief Justice emphasized that such engagements play a crucial role in improving judicial performance and strengthening institutional cooperation.

In his remarks, President Özkaya appreciated the warm hospitality extended to the delegation and underscored the importance of sustained judicial dialogue and knowledge sharing between the two countries.

DPM, UK minister discusses regional situation



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar spoke Monday with UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister of State) Hamish Falconer. They discussed the evolving

regional situation.

Falconer appreciated Pakistan's efforts to promote dialogue and diplomacy in support of peace and stability in the region.

Both sides reaffirmed the strength of Pakistan-UK relations and agreed to remain in close contact.

Five Pakistani migrants drown in Libya boat tragedy



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Five young men from Hafizabad drowned after a migrant boat capsized off the coast of Libya, in a tragic incident highlighting the risks of illegal migration routes to Europe.

The victims — identified as Mazhar Hussain, Atif, Haroon, Hamza, and Jafar — had left Pakistan four months ago in pursuit of better job opportuni-

ties abroad. They had reportedly sold their savings and livestock to finance the journey.

According to family members, each individual paid between Rs4.5 million and Rs5 million to agents to facilitate travel to Europe via Saudi Arabia and Libya, with Italy as the intended destination. The boat carrying the migrants overturned in rough waters near Libya, leading to their deaths.

Naqvi orders major reforms in passports and immigration system

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Monday ordered sweeping reforms in Pakistan's passport and immigration system, tasking newly appointed Director General Muhammad Ali Randhawa with implementing changes at all levels.

According to directives issued by the interior minister, the entire passport and immigration system is to be made fully digital and paperless across the country. Emphasizing efficiency and service delivery, Naqvi stressed that public convenience must remain the top priority in the system.

The reforms come shortly after administrative changes were introduced by the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports regarding

office timings. The department had recently revised working hours to facilitate citizens, restoring a five-day workweek for passport offices.

Under the updated schedule, all field formations and passport offices will now operate from Monday to Friday as per routine practice.

Earlier, working days had been reduced to four per week under an austerity plan introduced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, amid rising tensions in the Middle East and energy conservation measures. As part of that policy, 50 percent of staff had been allowed to work from home.

However, authorities have now withdrawn that decision and reinstated the previous schedule to ensure that citizens do not face difficulties in obtaining passports.