

Federal Minister urges action committee to embrace dialogue over protests for Kashmir progress

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Engineer Amir Muqam, reported holding constructive discussions with the Action Committee representatives regarding the implementation of the agreement signed between the Azad Kashmir government and the federal government.

Muqam highlighted the unprecedented speed of implementing the 37 agreed-upon points, crediting the seriousness of the Azad Kashmir government and the efforts of the Chief Secretary.

He stated that providing resources to Kashmir is a priority and that most points are being rapidly executed, including the withdrawal of 177 FIRs, financial aid dispersal, and resolutions on wheat quota and tax issues.

A constitutional committee,



including Action Committee members, has been formed to address the refugee seats issue, with a meeting scheduled for May 14th.

Muqam urged the Action Committee to resolve matters through dialogue, emphasizing that protests are counterproductive given Pakistan's current positive international standing under Prime Minister

Shahbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir.

Azad Kashmir Finance Minister Chaudhry Qasim Majeed and Education Minister Dewan Ali Chughtai echoed these sentiments, thanking the federal government for support and stressing the importance of continued negotiations.

They noted significant progress on

most agreement points and encouraged Action Committee participation in the upcoming constitutional committee meeting to finalize a way forward.

Muqam concluded by reaffirming that discussions are being held with a full mandate, prioritizing Azad Kashmir's interests while considering the regional situation.

Maraka-e-Haq fundamentally changed the rules of engagement between Pakistan and India

Spokesman Report



ISLAMABAD: Sardar Masood Khan, former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States and the United Nations, has stated that Pakistan's success during Maraka-e-Haq transformed the regional strategic landscape, validated Pakistan's deterrence capabilities, and established the country as a credible military and diplomatic power on the global stage.

Speaking during a televised interview on the evolving regional security environment, Ambassador Khan paid tribute to the martyrs and injured personnel of the Armed Forces and civilian population who sacrificed for the defence of Pakistan. He also praised Pakistan's political and military leadership for what he described as prudent, firm, and strategically sound decision-making during the conflict.

Concluding his remarks, Ambassador Khan stated that while Pakistan should take pride in its accomplishments, the country must now focus on long-term economic resilience, institutional strength, and strategic preparedness to secure lasting peace and national progress.

Heavy Rain Alert Issued for Neelam: Travel Advisory stays Active May 10-13

Bureau Report

NEELAM: According to the Meteorological Department report, the State Disaster Management Authority has predicted heavy rains from May 10 to May 13, 2026. During this time, local and special tourists should avoid all kinds of travel from evening to morning. In this regard, tour operators, hotel owners and jeep drivers are instructed to avoid unnecessary and risky travel. The following instructions should be strictly implemented during the rain.

Precautions during the rainy season

Avoid unnecessary travel, especially during heavy rain. Stay away from low-lying areas, rivers and places with rainwater. Do not touch electric poles, broken wires and damaged electrical appliances. Keep the roofs, gutters and drainage channels of the house clean. Do not let children play in rainwater or rivers. Reduce speed and use headlights while driving. Keep mobile, flashlight, dry food and first aid kit ready.

Monitor weather conditions and government instructions. Be careful due to the risk of landslides in mountainous areas. Do not stand in open fields or high places during thunderstorms.

In an emergency

Immediately move to a safe place. Follow the instructions of the rescue or local administration. The district and tehsil administration, police, highways department and other rescue services are ready to help you. District Emergency Operation Center Neelam.

Leepa Valley Marks One Year Since Victory in Operation Sindhur

City Desk

LEEPA VALLEY: On the completion of one year of the crushing defeat of Indian aggression in Operation Sindhur in the Line of Control, Leepa Valley and the brilliant success achieved by Pakistan Army through the Battle of Haq Bunyan Marsus, the solemn ceremonies organized by the Pakistan Army and the people of the area included Commanding Officer Leepa Guards Brigadier Aamir Farid Khan, Government Spokesperson Shaukat Javed Mir, members of local bodies, political and social business figures, scenes of devotion of the youth to the ideology of stability of Pakistan and the Pakistan Army.



HEC launches fully online, paperless degree attestation system

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan has shifted to a completely online and paperless Degree Attestation System, replacing the existing degree verification process.

Under the new system, applicants can apply round the clock for online attestation through www.eservices.hec.gov.pk. HEC will issue e-Attestation Certificate which can be downloaded by applicant from dashboard and verified at www.hec.gov.pk/site/verification along with the document(s) attested thereunder.

HEC will attest the original degrees and no photocopy of any educational document will be processed for attestation in new system.

The new system is secure, efficient, and user friendly wherein applicants are no longer required to physically visit HEC or to send original documents. The applications of those applicants who have already applied and paid fee of attestation will be processed as per previous method of attestation up to 30th June.

All such applicants are informed to get complete the attestation process by the said date. The applicants who have not paid attestation fee in the previous attestation system are advised to apply through the new system.

The attestations made by HEC before the launch of e-Attestation Certificate will remain valid and can also be verified from www.hec.gov.pk/site/verification.

Goat, Bull and Camel Festival

FAISALABAD: A bull being weighing during the 28th International Goat, Bull and Camel Festival at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) on Monday.

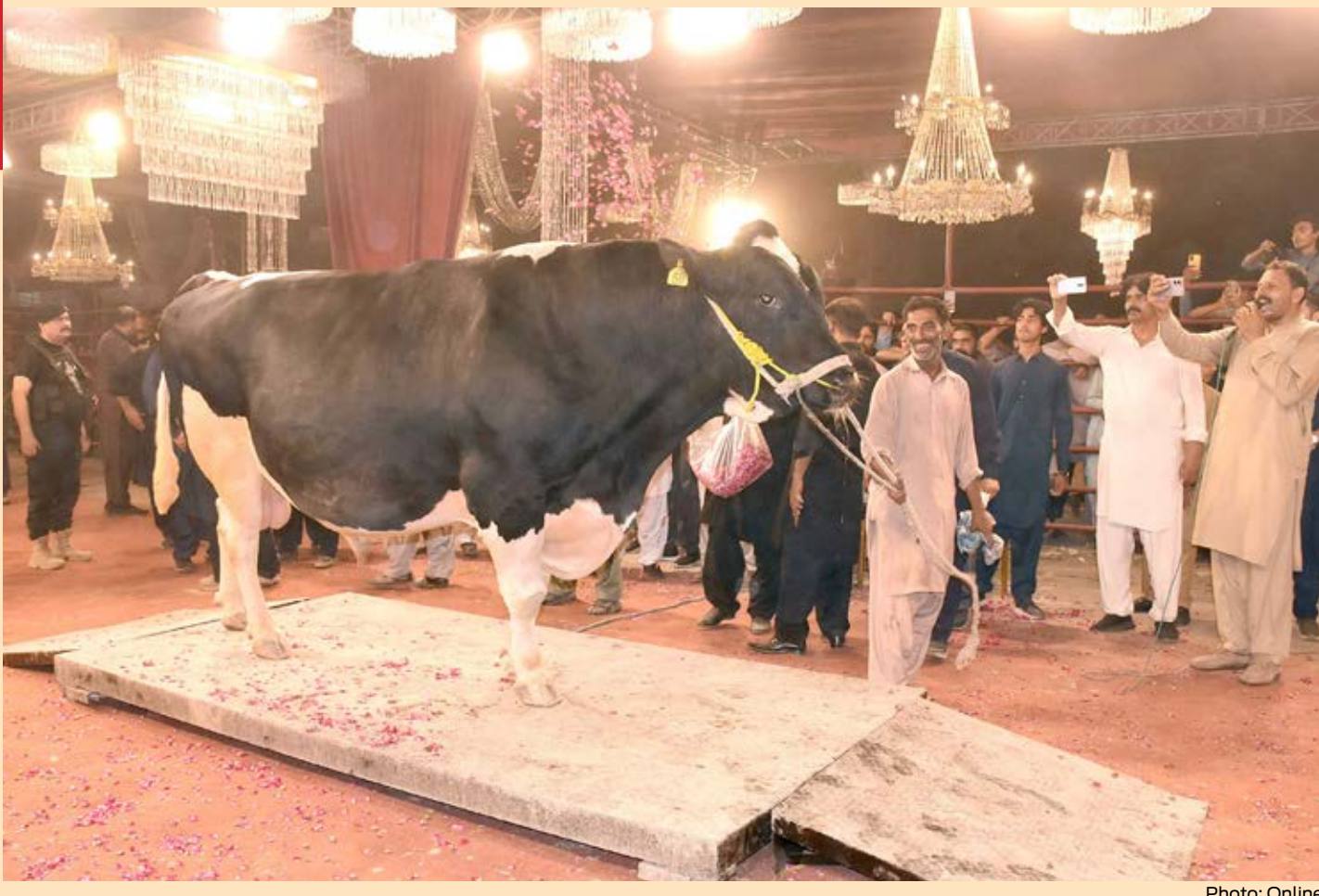


Photo: Online

Muslim Conference formalizes Parliamentary Board for Azad Kashmir elections

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: The All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference has approved a parliamentary board to receive applications for tickets to participate in the general elections of Azad Kashmir in a full-fledged manner.

The President of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, Sardar Atiq Ahmed Khan, exercising the powers vested in him by the General Council under the Constitution, approved the parliamentary board under Article 15 Part "A" of the



Constitution.

The Muslim Conference has decided to invite applications from candidates for the general elections of the Azad Kashmir Legislative Assembly in the coming few days.

A parliamentary board has been formally constituted to invite applications from candidates. Sardar Muhammad Irshad Khan (Pachhiot) will be the Chairman of the Parliamentary Board while Sardar Wajid Bin Arif (Pulandri) will be the Secretary of the Parliamentary Board.

Other members of the parliamentary board include Ms. Mehr-un-

Nisa, Raja Muhammad Ilyas Khan. Sehansa (Kotli), Raja Zafar Maroof Khan. Khadi Sharif. (Mirpur), Sardar Mushtaq Nayyar Advocate (Bagh), Waheedul Haq Hashmi, Gujranwala (Jammu), Chaudhry Khizr Hayat, Samahini (Bhimber), Sardar Abdur Zaq Khan, Palandri (Sidhnuti), Syed Azhar Ali Shah, Chhota Gula Rawalakot (Poonch), Raja Waqar Ahmed Khan (Chakar Hattian), Mohtarma Samia Sajid Raja (Wali) and Muhammad Sajid Qureshi Advocate, Murree (Jammu) and others are included in the names.

'Marka-e-Haq - Bunyan-un-Marsoos' is a Shining Example of National Unity, Military Resolve and Patriotism: Ch. Zulfiqar Ali Anjum

Zain Khan Malghani

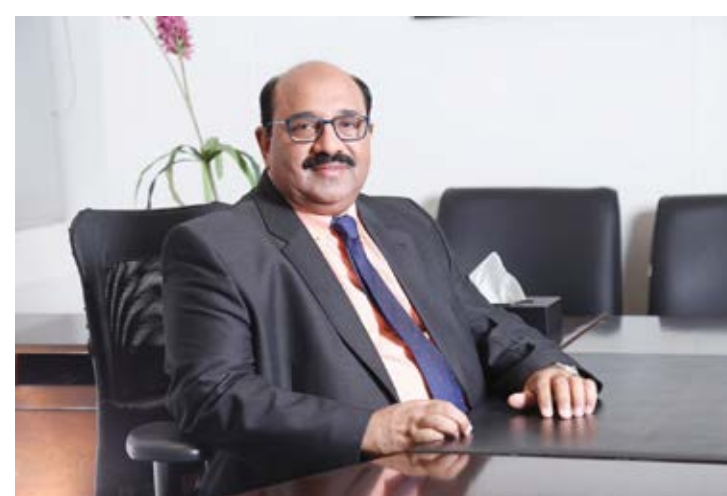
MULTAN: Chairman of SM Group of Industries, Member National Export Development Board and Member Board of Investment, Ch. Zulfiqar Ali Anjum, has said that "Marka-e-Haq - Bunyan-un-Marsoos" is not merely a military success but a remarkable symbol of national unity, courage, sacrifice, and unwavering determination that has infused the entire nation with renewed spirit and enthusiasm.

He stated that the historic moments of May 2025 once again reminded the people of Pakistan that when a nation stands united for its ideology, purpose, and defense, no force in the world can defeat its resolve.

In his emotional statement, Ch.

Zulfiqar Ali Anjum recalled his school days when students were taught about the events of the September 6, 1965 war through history textbooks. Teachers would explain how a cowardly enemy launched a sudden attack on Pakistan under the cover of darkness, violating all moral principles of warfare, but the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder with its brave armed forces and crushed the enemy's malicious intentions.

The prominent industrialist said that six years later, in May 2025, he once again witnessed the same national spirit, passion, and unity that had become the hallmark of the nation during the 1965 war. According to him, Pakistan once again reaffirmed its eternal resolve and responded to



longstanding threats with clarity, strength, and effectiveness.

He said that this success was not limited to the military sphere alone; rather, it rekindled fading hope and patriotism in the hearts of the people. "Marka-e-Haq - Bunyan-un-Marsoos has breathed new life into the younger generation and revived in them the same spirit of love for the homeland, defense of Pakistan, and protection of national dignity that defined their elders," he added.

Ch. Zulfiqar Ali Anjum further stated that at this critical moment, the entire nation stood firmly beside its armed forces and sent a clear message to the enemy that there can be no compromise on Pakistan's sovereignty, security, and ideological frontiers.

He praised the Pakistan Armed Forces for demonstrating extraordi-

nary professionalism, timely strategy, and unmatched bravery in thwarting the enemy's malicious designs. According to him, Field Marshal Asim Munir's wise leadership, courageous decisions, and military foresight played a decisive role in the battle, while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's political strategy and efforts to promote national unity provided strong and effective leadership at the state level.

He concluded by saying that history always remembers those nations which, instead of succumbing to fear during times of trial, choose the path of unity, faith, and perseverance, and that "Bunyan-un-Marsoos" has emerged as a shining symbol of that national character.



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Fajr 3:35 am
Zohr 12:04 pm
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Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad 1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police 9266044
Motorway Police 9270601-20

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

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

Maula Jatt Sets Sights on China: Blockbuster Film Arriving in May 2026

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Another major achievement for the Pakistani film industry as renowned director Bilal Lashari and acclaimed film producer Ammara Hikmat blockbuster film The Legend of Maula Jatt is set to release in cinemas across China on May 21, 2026. Following the announcement of the film's release in China, excitement has spread across Pakistani showbiz circles and among film enthusiasts.

Film producer Ammara Hikmat shared the exciting news on her Instagram page, where she appreciated the efforts of renowned film distributor Nadeem Mandiwilla and thanked him for his contribution.

According to details, The Legend of Maula Jatt has already achieved tremendous success in Pakistan and around the world and is regarded as one of the highest-grossing Pakistani films of all time. The film earned international acclaim due to its unique storyline, breathtaking cinematography, modern action sequences, and world-class production quality.

The movie stars some of Pakistan's leading actors, including Fawad Khan, Hamza Ali Abbasi, Mahira Khan, and Humaima Malik in lead roles. The film's characters and dialogues were also highly appreciated by audiences.

Punjab Cabinet Unveils Sweeping Measures: Summer Holidays, Fuel Subsidies, and New University Approved

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, approved numerous relief, development, and governance measures in its 34th meeting. Key decisions included announcing summer vacations from May 22 to August 24 and approving a targeted fuel subsidy for motorcycle riders and Kisan Card holders. The cabinet launched the "Apna Khet, Apna Rozgar" scheme for Cholistan and riverine residents, directing strict digital monitoring. It also approved the formal establishment of the Punjab General Insurance Company (PGIC) and the expansion of the Quaid-i-Azam Business Park (QABP) by 200 acres. Other approvals encompassed restructuring the Provincial Disaster Management

Authority (PDMA), upgrading the UET sub-campus Narowal to a University of Engineering and Technology Narowal, and including hill torrent projects in Rajanpur and DG Khan in the ADP 2025-26. New initiatives include the Chief Minister Stroke Management Programme and the Punjab's New Energy Vehicle (NEV) Policy. To promote industry, the CM pledged full support for setting up industries and warned officials against unauthorized expenditures. The cabinet also abolished transfer fees for motorcycles up to 150cc, increased benefits for the Chief Minister Minority Card programme, and approved legislation including the Punjab Control of Ghunda and Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2025. Furthermore, it ratified contracts for anti-smog campaigns and established



friendship province relations between Punjab and China's Zhejiang province.

Group photo

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sardar Muhammad Yousuf and Ambassador of Türkiye to Pakistan Dr. Irfan Neziroglu with winners of National Essay Writing Competition 2026 "On His (PBUH) Footsteps" organized by the Counselor Office for Religious Affairs under the auspices of the Türkiye Embassy at the embassy.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

National Essay Writing Competition 2025 Concludes with Prize Distribution Ceremony

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye, in collaboration with the National Book Foundation (NBF) of Pakistan and the Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center, successfully organized the Prize Distribution Ceremony of the National Essay Writing Competition 2025, aimed at university students across Pakistan.

The ceremony was attended by Her Excellency Wajihah Qamar, Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, H. E. Dr. Irfan Neziroglu, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan, Dr. Kamran Jahangir,

Managing Director of the National Book Foundation, senior officials, representatives of academic and cultural institutions, teachers, parents, and students.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Dr. Irfan Neziroglu highlighted that the essay competition was initiated for two key reasons: to celebrate and honor the centuries-old fraternal bond between Türkiye and Pakistan, and to commemorate the sacrifice of two Turkish engineers, Cenk Yakın and Ufuk Arslan, who were martyred during a relief mission in Balakot following the devastating 2005 earthquake.

The Ambassador recalled that during the historic visit of H. E. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Islamabad last year, both countries agreed to establish a "Shura of Fraternity" to strengthen cooperation in social, cultural, and academic fields. He stated that this competition stands as a practical example of that vision in action.

Ambassador Neziroglu paid tribute to the shared heroes and historical figures of both nations, including Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the Ali Brothers of the Khilafat Movement, and Abdurrahman Peshawari, emphasizing the

importance of transferring this shared legacy to future generations through education and awareness. He congratulated all participating students and prize winners for their dedication, creativity, and commitment.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, prizes were awarded to the winning students:

First Prize: Maryam Batool, Akhuwat College for Women, Chakwal

Second Prize: Izza Naeem, University of Management & Technology, Lahore

Third Prize: Muhammad Aariz Zafar, Pakistan Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar

Edhi Foundation Pledges Full Support for Disabled Services in South Punjab



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Mainstream Association Hands ILC's Services for Sisable people in South Punjab are excellent and commendable.

Edhi Foundation will provide its support to Mainstream for the welfare of disabled people, expressed these views during a special meeting with the Mainstream delegation by Faisal Edhi, son of Abdul Sattar Edhi, Chief Executive Edhi Foundation.

Nader Khan, President Mainstream Association apprised Faisal Edhi about the challenges faced by disabled people in South Punjab. Javed Raees Founder DWA Leader Pakistan Disability Movement, while talking,

Said that we are supporting the disabled people of Punjab from Sindh because we believe that wherever there are disabled people, they are our brothers and we all have the same problems.

Faisal Edhi assured all kinds of support from Edhi Foundation. Faisal Edhi's wife Saba Faisal Edhi was also present on this occasion. The delegation included Babar Iqbal, Javed Raees, Nader Khan, Amir Hamza, Asad Malik and a large number of disabled people.

Dispute Emerges at Hyderabad Arts Council, Legal Notice Served to Ishaq Samejo

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Differences among artists at the Hyderabad Arts Council have intensified after renowned artist Kazbano Asif, through her lawyer Advocate Aslam Laghari, issued a legal notice to Ishaq Samejo alias Ishaq Meerbahar and the Registrar of the University of Sindh. The legal notice seeks a detailed explanation within seven days and demands complete records of all government benefits, funds, and concessions allegedly received by Ishaq Samejo. The notice also calls upon the University of Sindh to provide his official record for the past four years.

According to the notice, if misuse of an official position is established, all salaries, benefits, allowances, and public funds received by the concerned individual should be recovered through legal proceedings.

The notice raises allegations regarding misuse of public office, negligence in academic responsibilities, use of government funds, failure to provide information, and alleged interference in the rights of genuine artists. The notice alleges that powers were exercised without a transparent democratic process and that genuine artists were being ignored.

According to the notice, if the required explanation and records are not provided within seven days, legal action will be initiated before civil, criminal, anti-corruption, NAB, and High Court forums.

JUP-Noorani Group Honors Pakistan Army Victory Against Indian Aggression in Multan Demonstration



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan Noorani Group South Punjab, on the occasion of the completion of one year of the success of Operation Banyan-e-Marsoos, Muarka-e-Haq a rally was held in Multan and a demonstration was held against Indian aggression in which a large number of people participated. The demonstration of gratitude was led by Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan President Muhammad Ayub Mughal, Secretary General Professor Fazal Habib Akbar Harooni, District President Allama Tariq Hashmi, Muhammad Ashfaq Saedi and Provincial Chief Organizer, Allama Maulana Muhammad Sadiq Sirani. The participants expressed complete solidarity with the Pakistan Army. The leaders said that in the Muarka-e-Haq, the brave army of Pakistan gave India a victory that its future generations will also remember. In the Muarka-e-Haq, Allah Almighty granted Pakistan the victory in a short time and it Muhammad Ayub Mughal has taken Pakistan to the heights of honor all over the world. We thank Allah Almighty for this victory. This success was achieved under the leadership of Field Marshal Hafiz General Asim Munir. The entire nation pays tribute to the Field Marshal.

AIOU Holds 77th BASR Meeting; 33 PhD Scholars Present Research Synopses

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) held the 77th meeting of its Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASR) under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood where a total of 33 PhD scholars presented their research synopses.

On the first day of the meeting 16 PhD scholars from the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Social Sciences presented their research proposals. Participants appreciated the scholars' academic standards, research depth and critical thinking abilities.

The meeting was attended by university Deans, Senior Professors, Faculty Members and distinguished external experts from various universities across the country. The agenda of the meeting was presented by Director BASR, Prof. Dr. Irshad Ahmad Arshad.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir



Mahmood urged scholars to focus on innovation, national socio-economic development and international research standards in their studies so that research outcomes could effectively benefit society.

Regarding the allocation of research topics, the Vice Chancellor directed faculties to select themes aligned with

contemporary requirements, national priorities and academic needs to ensure the promotion of quality and impactful research in universities.

Participants emphasized the need to further improve research quality, align it with international standards and promote interdisciplinary research. It was also agreed that quality research

plays a vital role not only in academic progress but also in enhancing the university's positive image at national and international levels.

On the second day of the meeting, 17 research scholars from the Faculty of Sciences and the Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies are defending their research synopses.

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US Power Projection at Arab Expense

When the United States entered into direct military confrontation with Iran in late February 2026, it did so with full knowledge that the battlefield would not be North America, nor would the economic shock primarily devastate the American mainland. The war theater would be the Gulf itself — the territory, airspace, ports, oil routes, and infrastructure of America's Arab allies. More importantly, much of the financial burden associated with maintaining this military architecture would ultimately be absorbed by the Gulf states hosting the very bases used to project American power.

The most alarming aspect for American military planners was not merely the money being spent, but the speed at which strategic inventories were being consumed. Reports indicated that the United States had used nearly half of some of its most expensive missile and precision-guided systems were estimated at up to four years due to production bottlenecks and industrial limitations. Modern warfare had exposed an uncomfortable truth: even the world's largest military-industrial complex struggles to sustain prolonged high-intensity conflict against a technologically capable adversary.

Yet the deeper irony of the war was this: despite these staggering numbers, the Gulf states themselves were still expected to absorb a substantial portion of the broader operational and infrastructural burden. For decades, Washington's military footprint in the Gulf has operated through an interconnected system of host-nation financing, infrastructure sharing, arms purchases, and sovereign investment recycling. Gulf governments provide land, utilities, strategic access, construction financing, logistics

corridors, and maintenance support for American installations. Qatar alone historically covered roughly 60 percent of the costs associated with Al Udeid Air Base, amounting to approximately \$650 million in infrastructure support. Saudi Arabia previously paid nearly \$500 million to offset the deployment costs of American troops stationed inside the kingdom.

The 2026 conflict intensified this financial dynamic dramatically. Iranian retaliatory strikes reportedly caused approximately \$800 million in damage to U. S.-operated facilities during the first two weeks of escalation alone. Reports also suggested that U. S. aerial equipment losses reached as high as \$2.8 billion. Yet much of the reconstruction, repair, and operational continuity costs were expected to be negotiated with Gulf host states rather than borne exclusively by Washington.

In practical terms, the Gulf states found themselves paying for the consequences of a war unfolding on their own soil while the United States retained strategic command and global leverage. This is where the geopolitical equation becomes extraordinarily advantageous for Washington.

First, the United States projects military dominance across the Middle East without carrying the entire financial burden alone. Second, Gulf states continue purchasing massive quantities of American weapons to reinforce their own defenses. Between 2019 and 2023,

Gulf nations accounted for approximately 22 percent of global arms imports, much of it sourced directly from U. S. defense manufacturers. In May 2026 alone, Washington fast-tracked more than \$8.6 billion in new weapons sales to Gulf allies and regional partners.

Third, instability in the Strait of Hormuz indirectly benefits American energy exporters. Washington understood from the beginning that any escalation with Iran would threaten or partially restrict traffic through the world's most important oil chokepoint. The disruption of Gulf energy routes naturally drives global consumers to seek alternative suppliers. As Gulf exports become politically risky or operationally uncertain, American oil and liquefied natural gas gain competitive advantage in Asian, African, and European markets.

Thus, while Gulf states suffer from higher insurance premiums, shipping disruptions, aviation risks, and investor anxiety, the United States simultaneously expands energy influence, increases defense exports, and reinforces its strategic leverage.

This explains why many analysts increasingly describe the arrangement as a "cost externalization model." The geopolitical benefits remain concentrated in Washington, while much of the geographic exposure and economic shock remains localized within the Gulf.

The contradiction is especially painful for Gulf governments because the same military bases intended to provide protection have now become potential targets. Iranian officials repeatedly warned that states facilitating military operations against Iran could face retaliatory strikes.

Continued on Page 7



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Lahore High Court Mandates Equal Access for Women in Key Rural Administrative Posts

The debate over the role of women in Pakistani society is not a new one. In every era, women have struggled for their right to representation, equal opportunities, and social acceptance. At times, this struggle was for the right to education; at others, for employment opportunities, political participation, or simply the recognition of women as equal and empowered citizens. Despite this long journey, there are still many positions in Pakistan that are traditionally viewed as reserved only for men. The office of "Numberdar" is one such example.

In this context, the recent verdict of the Lahore High Court holds immense significance. The court ordered the appointment of Ms. Kulsoom Akhtar as a permanent Numberdar and declared that providing women equal opportunities in public and administrative offices is a constitutional requirement. Justice Raheel Kamran Sheikh, in his detailed judgment, not only declared the reduction of marks on the basis of community and gender as unlawful but also emphasized that no capable woman can be ignored merely because of social prejudice.

At first glance, the case may appear to be an administrative dispute, but in reality, its implications are far broader. The judgment directly challenges the traditional mindset that administrative authority and positions of influence in rural society belong exclusively to men.

The office of Numberdar is not merely ceremonial in Pakistan's rural structure. A Numberdar has historically served as a bridge between the state and the village, playing an important role in land matters, revenue collection, and local administration. As a result, this position has long been associated with power, influence, and social status. In such a setting, the appointment of a woman to this office is not just an administrative decision but a symbol of social transformation.

One of the most important aspects of this case was that despite being on merit, Kulsoom Akhtar was pushed aside merely because of gender and biradari (community-based considerations). According to the court, the Assistant Commissioner had ranked her first after a fresh evaluation, but later the Deputy Commissioner reduced her marks on community grounds. This reflects a troubling reality within administrative systems where personal biases and social pressures often overshadow merit and the rule of law.

The court also laid down a crucial principle by observing that "Numberdari is not a hereditary right but a public responsibility." This statement is, in many ways, a direct challenge to the feudal and hereditary mindset deeply rooted in Pakistani society. Many administrative and political positions in rural Pakistan are effectively treated as family possessions, passed down through generations. By rejecting this notion, the Lahore High Court reinforced the principle that public offices belong to the people and must be filled on merit rather than lineage or influence.

A long war?

Iqra Liaqat

It is becoming increasingly uncertain how long the Iran war, now in its third month, will last. Until recently, it seemed American and Iranian interests aligned in wanting to avoid a protracted conflict, although Israel's didn't. That impression gained strength when they held their first, and so far only, face-to-face talks in Islamabad last month.

After that the peace process faltered and a second round of negotiations proved elusive, despite intense efforts by Pakistan, supported by key regional states. Pakistan's active mediation subsequently involved exchanging messages and negotiating proposals between Tehran and Washington. That process continues.

The ceasefire has held, which is positive. But it is a precarious truce in a volatile environment. The hardening public postures of both sides have impeded the search for an off-ramp from the crisis. President Donald Trump has oscillated between threatening to restart military operations and signalling openness to talks.

This has made it difficult to ascertain what he really wants. It is one thing to use threats to mount pressure, but quite another when actions such as aggressive US enforcement of the blockade heighten the risk of renewed military confrontation. It also doesn't help when he makes disingenuous claims such as Iran telling him it is in a "state of collapse". Trump turned down the Iranian offer of a three-step plan to end the war as it sets aside the nuclear issue at the start to be addressed later. He has also rejected Tehran's revised proposal.

Meanwhile, Iran has used its leverage of control of the Strait of Hormuz to raise the costs of the war for the US, its Gulf allies and for the global economy. It has demonstrated it can wage an effective asymmetric war and absorb a high degree of pain from US-Israeli military strikes.

Both the US and Iran are reluctant to demonstrate flexibility lest the other side construes that as weakness and a 'win' for itself. This is a recipe for the diplomatic impasse to persist and presents an obstacle for a swift way out of the conflict. If both sides perceive they have more to lose in showing accommodation than by continuing with the present fraught situation this diminishes chances of an early end to the war.

Washington and Tehran have given different time frames for ending the war. President Trump has often declared it would end in a few weeks, even days. But more recently, he ruled out an "early" end, saying four weeks of war is nothing compared to the long conflicts in Vietnam and Iraq. Iranian leaders have said they are prepared to end the conflict but want guarantees against future aggression. So, while both say they want the war to end, they have set terms the other side has so far found unacceptable.

It can also be argued that Iran believes time is on its side and by holding out, roiling global energy markets and raising the political and economic costs for Trump, it can secure a better deal in negotiations down the road. A prolonged conflict will, however, compound Iran's economic troubles. Inflation is already at a record level. While its threshold for pain may be high Iran's declining capability to export oil will cost it dearly.

As for the US, Trump believes Iran can be forced to agree to a deal on his terms by prolonging the blockade. He has repeat-

edly said he intends to continue this for months as it will compel Iran to negotiate. This would rule out an early end to the conflict.

Washington's assumption is that gunboat diplomacy would economically strangle Iran, prevent it from exporting oil and create shortages of everyday commodities. Tehran will then have no choice but to capitulate to US demands. But dragging out the blockade will be contrary to Trump's key goal of keeping fuel prices and inflation down at home.

The economic consequences of a protracted conflict will be far-reaching for the global economy and countries across the world, especially in the Global South. Energy markets have been in turmoil from what is described as "the biggest oil supply shock in history". Oil prices have surged amid concerns of prolonged supply disruption and dwindling of global stockpiles. Shortage of liquefied natural gas has driven up prices.

The US economy is not immune to the economic fallout of prolonged conflict. Fuel prices have already risen to create inflationary pressures while slower growth is forecast. This ahead of mid-term Congressional elections can exact a political price for Trump whose public approval ratings have plunged in the wake of cost-of-living anxieties. Only 30 per cent of voters approve his handling of the economy while the latest Washington Post-Ipsos poll found 61pc of people believe attacking Iran was a mistake.

One of the immutable lessons of history is that wars are easy to start but hard to end. The Iran crisis is the latest testimony to that.

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

When Conscience Fails Above, It Fades Below

Societies do not collapse all at once. They do not shatter like glass, they wear down over time like stone, almost imperceptibly. The first sign will not be seen in the streets or through the unrest among people. Rather, the signs are rooted in decisions made in the high places of authority, that have consequences on countless lives, and where those responsible pay no price for being wrong.

While we admire, trust, respect and judge leaders at all levels based on what we see, their outward image, ambitious claim or vision they articulate in the public eye. But the true assessment of leadership happens behind closed doors where the leader's true character can really be seen; the choices they make between collective well-being and personal gain; the compromise they make from their ambition in pressure moments; and their ability to betray principles quietly. The real measure of a leader can be found through these areas, far away from the public's eyes where the moral foundation of society is either strengthened or weakened.

Leadership is not merely an authority to make decisions or exercise of power, it means embracing accountability for decisions, showing what's possible, and leading others by example. They shape perception, often without ever saying it, what is acceptable, forgivable and worthy of imitation. When the leader leads with integrity, it lends dignity to the collective, encouraging people to do what is right rather than advantageous. If the leader is morally compromised, damage is widespread which may not be immediately apparent.

We have seen that history repeat itself and offers lessons, but without reflection and change, those lessons become irrelevant or forgotten. When leaders and others who have authority begin to excuse themselves from the standards they have proclaimed as their own; a subtle shift takes place. Hypocrisy and falsehood, once met with disgust, becomes accepted; when accepted, it becomes expected; and when expected, it then becomes normal-

ized or an instruction. Institutions of every kind, no matter what role they serve, begin to lose their moral weight when the people within them fail to uphold it. The rule book remains written, however its intent and spirit begin to fade.

This insidious moral erosion is agreed upon collectively. An office worker sees that conscientiousness and effort is disregarded while manipulation is rewarded. A citizen observes that influence has a far greater effect on bending the rules than does truth. A child grows up understanding that success has much less to do with merit and much more to do with maneuvering and game of visibility. The lessons are not formally taught in traditional institutions; but rather they are absorbed from the surroundings. So, without any announcement, the ethical culture of society begins to change. In that trickle-down setting, the conscience is no longer a moral imperative; it is simply an obstacle to overcome. Instead of asking "Is it the right thing to do?", society begins to ask "How will it benefit me?". The difference in viewpoint between the two questions represents the difference between a principled society and one that is product-driven; which inevitably leads to either societal cohesion or every man for himself scenario.

The erosion of ethical culture reaches beyond public institutions and individual conscience, creates "monkey see, monkey do" environment. Families become unwitting carriers of mimetic desires. Children inherit not just wealth or education, they also inherit desires, ambitions, values and beliefs from parents. When children witness that success is often attained through compromise instead of character, they will adopt an understanding of the world which prioritizes "appearance" rather than "substance".

As a result, the lack of integrity demonstrated by leaders does not immediately lead to chaotic consequences, but rather leads to something more enduring,

Continued on Page 7

CISS hosts launch of book Marka-e-Haq on first anniversary of Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos

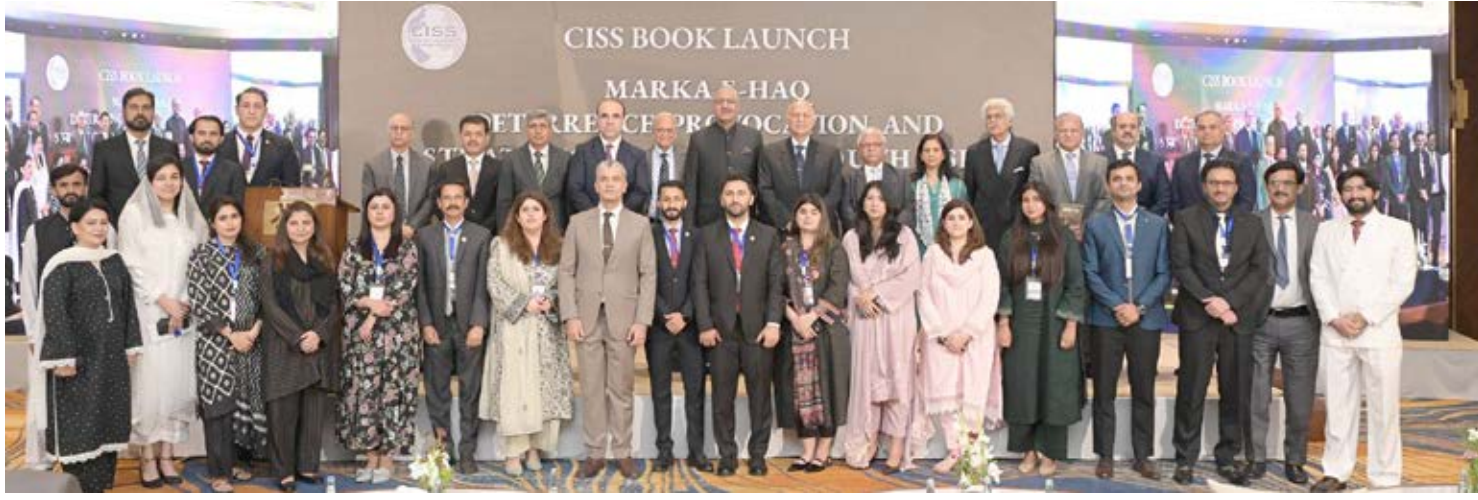
City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Leading strategists, military experts, diplomats and academics on Monday warned that strategic stability in South Asia was becoming increasingly fragile amid rapid technological changes, disinformation campaigns, unresolved disputes and what they described as India's attempts to normalize limited warfare under a nuclear overhang.

The remarks were made at a ceremony hosted by the Centre for International Strategic Studies (CISS), Islamabad, during the launch of the book *Marka-e-Haq: Deterrence, Provocation, and Strategic Maturity in South Asia*, marking the first anniversary of Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos as part of Marka-e-Haq.

The publication brings together contributions from prominent scholars, diplomats and retired military officials, examining deterrence stability, crisis management, regional security dynamics and evolving strategic doctrines in South Asia. Organizers described the book as a timely scholarly effort aimed at analyzing the challenges arising from Indian aggression, escalating military posturing and shifting regional security dynamics.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi, Executive Director of CISS, said South Asia's strategic environment had become increasingly volatile due to India's belligerent posture and aggressive strategic signaling. He



emphasized the importance of responsible statecraft, sustained dialogue and credible deterrence for preserving regional peace.

Introducing the book, editor Dr Zafar Khan, Executive Director of the Balochistan Think Tank Network, said the publication sought to document evolving patterns of coercion, deterrence and crisis behavior in South Asia. He noted that the book highlighted Pakistan's strategic restraint while examining risks stemming from India's unilateral actions and disinformation warfare.

Delivering the keynote address, General Zubair Mahmood Hayat (Retd.), former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, underscored the

importance of strategic maturity and institutional preparedness in maintaining deterrence stability. He observed that future conflicts would increasingly involve hybrid warfare, cyber capabilities and narrative manipulation alongside conventional military means.

Other contributors to the book also shared their perspectives on emerging regional security challenges.

Ambassador Zamir Akram (Retd.), Advisor to the Strategic Plans Division (SPD), argued that India's evolving strategic posture had intensified regional insecurity and undermined long-term stability. He said growing militarization and the absence of meaningful dialogue continued to deepen mistrust between the two nuclear-armed neighbors.

Dr Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, Vice Chancellor of Quaid-i-Azam University, warned that state-sponsored destabilisation and covert operations posed serious threats to regional peace and called for stronger international mechanisms to counter cross-border terrorism and hybrid warfare.

Dr Rizwana Abbasi, Professor at National University of Modern Languages, highlighted the connection between unresolved political disputes and emerging resource insecurities. She cautioned that the weaponization of water and continued tensions over Kashmir could heighten nuclear risks in the region.

Lieutenant General Mazhar Jamil (Retd.), Advisor Development at the

National Command Authority (NCA), said India's evolving offensive doctrines required Pakistan to maintain a calibrated and cohesive deterrence posture while avoiding escalation.

Brigadier Dr Zahir Kazmi (Retd.), Arms Control Advisor at SPD, observed that modern deterrence extended beyond conventional military capabilities, encompassing strategic communication, political resolve and cognitive resilience.

Brigadier Dr Naeem Salik (Retd.), Executive Director of the Strategic Vision Institute, warned that future crises in South Asia could escalate rapidly because of compressed decision-making timelines and technological advancements. He stressed the

need for effective crisis management mechanisms and sustained diplomatic engagement.

Lieutenant General Khalid Ahmed Kidwai (Retd.), Advisor to the National Command Authority (NCA), said recent developments had exposed both the strengths and vulnerabilities of deterrence stability in the region, emphasizing the importance of responsible nuclear stewardship and strategic restraint.

Lieutenant General Sarfraz Sattar (Retd.), Advisor Development to the NCA, said regional crises underscored the importance of understanding adversarial strategic behavior and maintaining credible deterrence through coordinated political and military signaling.

In his concluding keynote address, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman of the Pakistan-China Institute, emphasized the importance of intellectual discourse, regional engagement and strategic prudence in addressing emerging security challenges. He noted that think tanks and academic institutions had a critical role in fostering informed debate and policy-oriented research on South Asian stability.

The event was attended by diplomats, academics, researchers, students, senior civil and military officials and foreign diplomats who engaged in discussions on the evolving regional security environment and the future of deterrence stability in South Asia.

Faisalabad Commissioner Announces Plan to Relocate Grain and Wholesale Markets Outside City

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Commissioner Faisalabad Musrat Jabben has indicated that the grain market and wholesale market will be shifted outside the city limits, in which the relevant traders will be taken on board. Delegations of the Anjuman Tajran Saka Group and the Supreme Anjuman Tajran Railway Road held separate meetings with the Commissioner Faisalabad. President Anjuman Tajran Khwaja Shahid Razak Saka and President Anjuman Tajran Railway Road Muhammad Aslam Bhali, former MNA Mian Abdul Manan and traders of the markets participated. Welcoming the trader organizations, the Commissioner said that providing a conducive environment to trad-



ers associated with the grain market and wholesale business is a priority. In

this regard, measures will be taken by reviewing the relevant places outside

the city. He said that the standard beautification of Kachhari Bazaar is almost complete and in the next phase, beautification of Aminpur and Jhang Bazaar will be done. The campaign against encroachments is going on with full legal force. He said that the concerns of the traders regarding the fees of advertisement boards will be removed and communication with the traders will be made more effective. Former MNAs Mian Abdul Manan, Muhammad Aslam Bhali, Khawaja Shahid Razak Sakka, Syed Tanveer Hussain Zaidi and others thanked the Commissioner Faisalabad for taking a keen interest in solving the problems and assured their full cooperation for the construction, development and beautification of the city.

Experts for planned response to climate-induced displacement in Punjab

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Experts at a webinar stressed the need for planned climate mobility strategies, improved data collection and coordinated policy measures to address the growing challenge of climate-induced displacement in the Punjab and other parts of Pakistan.

The webinar on "Climate Induced Displacement in Punjab, Pakistan," was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Monday.

Maryam Shabbir Abbasi, Associate Research Fellow SDPI and Advisory member to Environmental Justice Council Vermont USA, said climate-induced displacement is often reported in Pakistan as "climate migration," though the terminology varies according to context. She said heavy monsoon rains and unprecedented downpours in 2025 displaced large populations

and now National Disaster Management Authority has projected another spell of abrupt rainfall in the Punjab, seeking authorities to adopt preemptive measures.

Shabbir said around 523,000 people were displaced during the 2025 floods in six districts of Southern Punjab, which were among the country's climate change hotspots facing recurring floods, droughts and heatwaves. She identified Muzaffargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan, Jhang and Rahim Yar Khan among the worst affected districts.

Mehak Masood, Programme Officer at International Organization for Migration, said the term climate mobility better captured the complexity of the issue. Elaborating that planned movement is considered migration while forced movement due to disasters amounted to displacement, she said climate-induced migration, environ-

mental migration and climate mobility were interconnected concepts reflecting the realities faced by vulnerable communities.

Masood said droughts and floods were accelerating displacement across Pakistan and making climate change and migration increasingly interlinked issues. Citing World Bank projections, she said as many as 260 million people globally could be internally displaced by 2050 due to climate impacts.

Zulfqar Kumbhar, Environmental journalist, said climate migration remained an underreported issue in Sindh despite repeated disasters since 2010.

He said recurring abnormal rainfall, pluvial flooding, sea intrusion and other climate shocks had created various categories of migrants, including flood, heatwave, cold wave and coastal migrants.

Kumbhar said nearly 160,000

climate migrants were living in settlements spread along a 10-kilometre stretch of the Super Highway in Sindh that links Karachi to Peshawar yet remained invisible on paper.

Dr. Amber Raheel, Director Environment and Climate Change Research EP&CCD, Punjab described climate-induced migration as an emerging challenge requiring an interdepartmental response.

Dr. Shafiqat Munir Ahmed, SDPI Deputy Executive Director (Policy), said climate migration had remained a major agenda item in international climate negotiations for at least two decades.

He said the Punjab government's participation at COP30, led by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, reflected growing official recognition of recurring climate shocks in Southern Punjab, including droughts and heatwaves.

All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association Rejects Early Summer Vacations

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Dr. Abrar Hussain Malik, Central President of the All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association, has rejected the Punjab government's decision to announce early summer vacations, calling it harmful to students' future. He said prolonged holidays increase laziness, screen time, and non-academic activities among children.

Dr. Malik stated that over 25 million children in Pakistan are already out of school, and frequent holidays further worsen the education crisis. He added that Pakistan ranks 156th out of 193 countries in educational standards and urged authorities to focus on improving education instead of increasing vacations. He suggested adjusting school timings from 7:00 AM to 10:00 or 11:00 AM during extreme heat to help complete the syllabus and provide children with a better educational environment.



Riphah University hosts Open House & Job Fair 2026 to connect talent with industry



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Faculty of Computing at Riphah International University successfully hosted its flagship event, Open House and Job Fair 2026, aimed at fostering stronger collaboration between academia and the IT industry.

The event was formally inaugurated by Wahaj Siraj, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of Nayatel, alongside Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmed, Vice Chancellor of the university. The ceremony marked the beginning of a vibrant platform connecting students with leading industry stakeholders.

Approximately 25 prominent organizations from the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi participated in the event. Notable companies included MTBC, Inara Technologies, Funsol Technologies, EBRYX, ITSOLERA, Synergy IT, and several other emerging technology firms. The event provided students with valuable exposure to current industry trends, networking opportunities, and direct recruitment pathways.

The event's primary focus was to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry requirements, while streamlining hiring processes and enabling companies to identify and recruit talented graduates. Students showcased innovative projects, reflecting the growing capabilities of Pakistan's young IT professionals.

Following the event, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmed hosted Mr. Wahaj Siraj for a meeting at his office, where both leaders discussed strategies for expanding employment opportunities and strengthening industry-academia collaboration. Emphasis was placed on nurturing not only technical expertise but also the psychological and professional development of students to prepare them for impactful roles in society.

Al-Shifa Trust helps 140 children beat eye cancer

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: For hundreds of families bringing their children to Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, the biggest fear is not only cancer, but whether delayed treatment has reduced the chances of saving their child's eyesight and recovery.

Doctors at the hospital's Cancer Unit said nearly 140 children treated over the past three years are now free of cancer, a milestone they described as significant in a country where childhood eye cancer is often diagnosed at advanced stages.



tered 620 cancer patients and conducted 3,952 chemotherapy sessions since the unit became operational. Many patients came

from low-income and rural families where awareness, transport costs and delayed referrals remain major barriers to treatment.

Pediatric oncologist Dr Tanzeela Farah said many parents fail to recognise early warning signs of eye cancer, including a white glow in a child's eye in photographs or poor eye contact. "If detected early, many children can survive and even retain their vision," she told reporters.

She advised parents to use a mobile phone torch to check newborns and infants for unusual white reflections in the

pupil, medically known as leukocoria, which can indicate retinoblastoma, the most common eye cancer in children.

Doctors at the hospital also warned that cousin marriages can contribute to inherited eye

diseases and some childhood cancers in Pakistan, where consanguineous marriages remain common.

Studies show many retinoblastoma patients reach hospitals in advanced stages because of delayed diagnosis, lack of awareness and financial hardship.

Global data shows survival rates for retinoblastoma exceed 99% in high-income countries with early screening and specialised care, but can fall to nearly 50% in poorer countries because children arrive late for treatment.

To reduce costs for poor families, Al-Shifa said it partnered with institutions including

the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology and Combined Military Hospital for diagnostic tests and radiotherapy support. Several deserving patients also received radiotherapy free of cost.

For many families, doctors said, timely treatment meant saving both eyesight and life. "Eye cancer in children is treatable," Dr Tanzeela said. "The real danger is delayed diagnosis."

Al-Shifa Trust runs seven hospitals across Rawalpindi, Sukkur, Kohat, Muzaffarabad, Chakwal, Gilgit, and Haveli Lakha while Asia's biggest eye hospital is being constructed at Lahore.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
170,506.31	171,115.82
Day's High	Day's Low
171,304.10	169,583.44
Index Value	Change
19,308,818,447	-609.51
Percentage	Time
-0.36%	11 May, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,269.43	+36.36
Percentage	Time
+0.36%	11 May, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
49,626.75	+17.59
Percentage	Time
+0.035%	11 May 1:22 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
62,417.88	-295.77
Percentage	Time
-0.47%	11 May, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	199.92	207.33
Bahrain Dinar	731.95	742.93
Canadian Dollar	202.38	208.38
China Yuan	40	40.65
Danish Krone	43.30	43.70
Euro	327.39	331.71
Hong Kong Dollar	35.08	36.08
Indian Rupee	2.50	2.70
Japanese Yen	1.7580	1.8590
Kuwaiti Dinar	880.42	891.34
Malaysian Ringgit	65.30	66.80
New Zealand \$	163.75	167.70
Norwegians Krone	27.65	27.95
Omani Riyal	722.50	737.59
Qatari Riyal	74.75	76.75
Saudi Riyal	74.35	75.05
Singapore Dollar	218.32	222.85
Swedish Korona	30.30	30.60
Swiss Franc	355.92	360.65
Thai Bhat	8.5	8.7
U.A.E Dirham	75.95	76.95
UK Pound Sterling	378.55	383.05
US Dollar	279.10	279.85

Mian Zahid Hussain Welcomes Haroon Akhtar Khan's Appointment As Adviser to Prime Minister on Industries

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Mian Zahid Hussain, representing various Pakistani business and intellectual forums, highly praised the promotion of Haroon Akhtar Khan to Adviser to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production, viewing it as a strategic move toward industrial stability and professional governance.

Hussain emphasized that Khan, an actuary and industrialist, possesses the critical technical and political skills needed for the current economic climate, noting that the appointment comes as the industrial sector begins a tentative recovery despite enduring structural inefficiencies and high operational expenses.

Hussain strongly endorsed Khan's past achievements, particularly his role as Federal Minister for Revenue (2015-2018), during which the tax-to-GDP ratio peaked at 11.2% in FY 2017-18 through growth-oriented federal budgets that expanded the tax base responsibly.



Hussain believes this fiscal discipline is essential for aligning tax policies with manufacturing incentives to benefit local industries. While acknowledging positive signs, such as 6.48% LSMI growth between July and March, driven by the auto (over 61% surge)

and apparel (6.6% growth) sectors, Hussain cautioned that this recovery is fragile, pointing to weaknesses in mining and cotton due to substantial input costs and fragmented policies.

Although the Quantum Index Number (QIM) showed an 11.09% year-on-year rise in March 2026, the 5.19% month-on-month decline underscores fragility.

Hussain urged the new Adviser to focus immediately on resolving the energy circular debt and implementing the National Industrial Policy, asserting that the high cost of doing business, compounded by poor Human Capital Index figures (0.41) and uncompetitive energy tariffs, severely hampers exporters. He expressed confidence that Khan's leadership will foster collaboration between government and industry, accelerating the shift to advanced manufacturing, including EVs, thereby positioning Pakistan as a regional manufacturing powerhouse.

Parking Plaza

ISLAMABAD: A view of Parking Plaza at Bule area in the Federal Capital. A multi-storey parking plaza, accommodate approximately 950 vehicles to support a new 800-metre car-free pedestrian zone, still waiting to operational. The facility will.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

FCCI Traffic Committee Tours Safe City Center, Tackles Market Traffic Woes



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Members of the FCCI Traffic Committee led by Haji Muhammad Abid visited the Safe City Control and Command Center. On this occasion, a comprehensive briefing was given by DSP Aamir Sultan and his dedicated team. While the amazing project of the Punjab government for the safety of citizens was praised. Haji Muhammad Abid

identified traffic problems in eight markets and also discussed parking. He also stressed the importance of connecting the markets inside the eight markets with Safe City cameras. On this occasion, PSCA (PRO) Aisha Liaquat, President Supreme Anjum Tajran Haji Aslam Bhali, Chairman Power Loom Honors Association Waheed Khal-iq Ramey, Aftab Butt, Malik Shahid Rasool, and others were also present.

Zong and Mashreq Bank Pakistan Join Forces for Digital Banking Integration

Commerce Desk

Zong, a major Technology Service Enterprise in Pakistan, has partnered with Mashreq Bank Pakistan to integrate Zong's telecom services directly into Mashreq's digital banking platform.

This collaboration allows Mashreq customers to conveniently access essential telecom services such as mobile recharge, bundle subscriptions, and payments via the Mashreq mobile app, ensuring real-time, secure, and seamless transactions through a single digital interface.

Zong's Executive Director Sales and Distribution, Faheem Durrani, stated that the partnership expands digital access and enhances customer experience, aligning with Zong's goal as a technology-driven enterprise.

Muhammad Hamayun Sajjad, CEO of Mashreq Pakistan, emphasized the commitment to simplifying services, noting



that the integration with Zong provides customers with easy and secure access to growing mobile service demands.

This strategic alliance highlights the

growing convergence between financial services and telecommunications in Pakistan, fostering more integrated and interoperable digital solutions nationwide.

Factory Manager Murder in Karachi Sparks Industry Outrage and Security Demands

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Lasbela Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) has strongly condemned the murder of a factory manager at Sera-e-Noor Factory in Hub Industrial Area, who was shot dead by unidentified assailants, and has called on the provincial government and law-enforcement agencies to arrest the perpetrators without delay.

The LCCI president and executive committee, in a statement issued on Monday, expressed deep grief and shock over the killing, warning that such incidents generate a pervasive sense of fear and insecurity among industrialists,

investors, management staff, workers and all others associated with industrial activity in the region.

Ismail Suttar, former president of the LCCI and chairman of its Law and Order Committee, reiterated his longstanding proposal for the establishment of a dedicated, professionally trained industrial security force for the Hub Industrial Trading Estate (HITE). He said such a force must be equipped with modern surveillance infrastructure, rapid-response capability, effective patrol mechanisms and strict monitoring of all entry and exit points to prevent unauthorized access to the industrial zone.

inDrive sparks national conversation by "cancelling" Mother's Day



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: inDrive, a global mobility and urban services platform, recently launched a disruptive campaign that challenged traditional Mother's Day norms. By briefly "cancelling" the holiday across major cities, the platform urged Pakistanis to move beyond social media posts and expensive gifts, focusing instead on alleviating the daily mental load and unspoken longings of mothers through tangible actions.

The campaign kicked off with billboards in Lahore, initially stunning passersby with the bold message that Mother's Day was being cancelled. This provocative narrative quickly transitioned to reveal inDrive's true intent of replacing a day of hollow words with a day of actual service.

Commerce minister discuss tariff structure, industrial facilitation with steel complex

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of National Steel Complex Limited met Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan to discuss issues relating to industrial competitiveness, tariff rationalization, value-added manufacturing and operational challenges being faced by the steel and engineering sectors.

During the meeting, the delegation briefed the minister on concerns arising from the existing duty structure applicable to raw materials, intermediate goods, and products processed through Export Processing Zones (EPZs), said a release issued here on Monday.

Xinjiang Development Model Showcased at 75th China-Pakistan Relations Anniversary Seminar

Adnan Yaqoob

ISLAMABAD: Diplomats and officials marked the 75th anniversary of China-Pakistan relations with a seminar focusing on Xinjiang's socio-economic transformation as a model for regional stability and economic integration under

CPEC. Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong stressed that Xinjiang's industrial growth offers Pakistan enhanced border trade and connectivity, linking its prosperity to regional success. Pakistan's Special Assistant Zafar Uddin Mahmood noted the shift toward high-tech exchange

and sustainable industrialization in the "New Horizons" of cooperation. Speakers from academic and defense sectors emphasized Xinjiang's model of "Ethnic Harmony" as key to its progress, alongside its impressive developmental indicators, including rising disposable income and strides



in green energy. The consensus was that Xinjiang's develop-

ment, resting on ethnic diversity, offers valuable lessons for

strengthening the China-Pakistan "Iron Brotherhood."

D-8 member states hold high-level consultation on visa facilitation

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Secretariat of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) convened a high-level virtual meeting to discuss matters relating to visa arrangements aimed at facilitating mobility, enhancing connectivity, and deepening economic cooperation among the D-8 member states.

The meeting, chaired by the People's Republic of Bangladesh, brought together D-8 Commissioners and senior representatives of Member States to deliberate on proposals for easing travel arrangements among participating countries, said a press release issued on Monday.

D-8 member states hold high-level consultation on visa facilitation. In his remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Secretary-General of the D-8 Organization, emphasized that improved mobility and streamlined travel procedures were essential for advancing economic integration, strengthening institutional cooperation, and promoting greater private sector engagement across the D-8 region.



The Secretary-General added that streamlined visa and travel arrangements would contribute directly to stronger trade and investment links, accelerated project implementation, enhanced institutional coordination, and increased people-to-people contacts across the D-8 geography.

Highlighting the growing importance of 'soft connectivity', Ambassador Sohail Mahmood noted that this proposed approach aligned with the priorities set out in the D-8 Decennial Roadmap 2020-2030, particularly the Organization's objective to expand intra-D-8 trade and deepen economic integration.

The meeting reviewed the implementation status of "Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for the Businessmen of the D-8 Member States"; noted existing bilateral arrangements for visa exemption for holders of Diplomatic and Official/Service passports; and considered way to facilitate the accredited business-persons.

Member States exchanged views on the legal, technical, and operational aspects of the subject, while underscoring the importance of developing practical and mutually-beneficial arrangements that would contribute to greater mobility, connectivity, economic cooperation, and P2P linkages.

The Secretary-General reaffirmed the readiness of the D-8 Secretariat to continue facilitating consultations and providing technical coordination support to advance the process.

The Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) comprises Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Türkiye, and Azerbaijan, and is dedicated to promoting economic cooperation, trade expansion, and sustainable development among its member states.



Ambassador of Indonesia H.E Lt Gen (R) Chandra Warse-nanto Sukotjo called on Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters Islamabad on Monday.

Zone-VI and Zone-I Wins in Regional Inter District Senior (Karachi Region) Cricket Tournament

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Zone VI and Zone-I beating their opponents before tea on the 2nd day of the 6th round of the three day matches of the Regional Inter District Senior (Karachi Region) Cricket Tournament on Monday at the various Grounds of the City. The Tournament is being organized by Pakistan Cricket Board.

The highlights of the 2nd days was brilliant Century 172 by Farmanullah and deadly bowling by offering Spinner Saifullah Capturing 5 wickets for 39 and in the 9 wickets for 56, off Spinner Abdur Rafay 5/40, Slow left arm spinners Aarish Ali Khan 4/16, Rehman Ghani 4/20, Medium Pacer Bahadur Ali 4/34, Khafid ul Nabi 4/42, Najeeb Rehman 4/58.

The Following are the Summarized Scores Close of Play 2nd Day: At KCCA Stadium Zone-VI beat Zone-IV by 8 wickets and got 9 points in the match. After this Victory Zone-VI Total Points 38. Zone-IV 1st Innings 164 and 107 allout in 32.3 overs in the 2nd Innings. Moosa Azad 40 8x4 1x6. Saifullah (ob) 5/39, Aarish Ali Khan (sla) 4/16.

In reply Zone-VI 1st Innings 164 and 2nd Innings 89/2 in 23.2 overs. Kashif Ali 58 6x4 1x6, Muhammad Arbaz Khan 29 both not out. At Baqi Cricket Ground Zone-I beat Zone-VII by an innings and 7 runs. Zone-VII 1st Innings 110 and 2nd Innings 138 allout in 38.2 overs. Muhammad Abdullah 30, Asif Ali Shah 27, Sabeh Siddiqui 24, Rehman Ghani (sla) 4/26, Bahadur Ali (mf) 4/33, Muhammad Umar 2/42.

In reply Zone-I 1st Innings 255 allout in 66 overs. Farmanullah 172 20x4 2x6, Muhammad Umar 33. Khafid ul Nabi (sla) 4/42, Najeeb Rehman (mf) 4/58.

At UBL Sports Complex Zone-V 1st Innings 279/5 and 2nd Innings 196 allout in 53.2 overs. Muhammad Shoaib 87 12x4 1x6, Muhammad Hussain 66 8x4 1x6. Abdul Rafay (ob) 5/40, Abdul Hadi 2/40, Israr Ahmed 2/58.

Zone-III 1st Innings 207 allout in 61.4 overs. Obbaiss ullah 87 10x4 1x6, Fahad Ansari 49 7x4, Abdullah Tausif 42 5x4 1x6. Muhammad Abiss (sla) 3/35, Sahil Iqbal (mf) 3/39, Saifullah Khan 2/60.

Zone-III resume their 2nd Innings Chasing a target of 269 runs tomorrow last day of the Match.

PTF, Westminster School signs MoU

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) and Westminster School have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) here on Monday with an aim to provide professional tennis coaching to the students. Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, President of PTF, and Mr. Raheel Sajjad Khan, Director of Westminster School, signed the MoU during a ceremony held in Islamabad, said a press release. Under the PTF's RTS Program, the federation will provide professional tennis coaching to the students of Westminster School and help develop young talent by bringing promising players into the national tennis circuit. Speaking on the occasion, Qureshi said that the initiative aims to promote tennis at the grassroots level and provide young students with opportunities to excel in the sport at both national and international levels. Maj. Suleman Junaid, NYDD PTF, was also present on the occasion.

Marka-e-Haq Victory Rekindles Hope in IIOJK: Asif Luqman Qazi, APHC Leader Altaf Ahmed Bhat

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan's Foreign Affairs In-charge Asif Luqman Qazi has said that after the success of Marka-e-Haq, the Kashmir issue has once again gained global attention and is echoing across the world.

He added that the people of Pakistan will continue to support the Kashmir freedom movement until its logical completion and the achievement of the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination.

Asif Luqman Qazi further said that the Kashmiri people have been rendering unparalleled sacrifices for decades for their freedom and right to self-determination, sacrifices that are deeply respected across the Muslim Ummah. He expressed hope that the day is not far when the people of Jammu and Kashmir will achieve their destination of freedom.

He expressed these views during a visit to the residence of senior leader of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference and Chairman of the Jammu Kashmir Salvation Movement, Altaf Ahmed Bhat, to offer condolences on the demise of his mother. He was accompanied by Ata-ur-Rehman. Mayor of Bagh Azad Kashmir Major (R) Abdul Qayyum



Baig, pro-freedom Kashmiri leader and Jamaat-e-Islami occupied Kashmir leader Sanaullah Dar, and Abdul Ghani Sameem were also present on the occasion.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the regional and international situation, particularly the Kashmir freedom movement, the changing political environment in the region, and ongoing Indian atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Speaking on the occasion, Altaf Ahmed Bhat said that Pakistan's success in Marka-e-Haq has shattered India's arrogance and pride, while this victory has infused the people of IIOJK, particularly

the youth, with renewed courage, determination, and hope.

Altaf Ahmed Bhat paid glowing tributes to former Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, Qazi Hussain Ahmad, stating that he still lives in the hearts of the Kashmiri people. He said Qazi Hussain Ahmad's services for the Kashmir freedom movement were unforgettable and that he strongly advocated the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination at every international forum.

The participants said that baseless allegations against renowned institutions such as Siraj-ul-Uloom Shopian are part of a conspiracy to destroy the educational future of Kashmiri youth and must be

condemned globally.

During the discussion, a detailed review of the past, present, and future of the Kashmir freedom movement was carried out. It was emphasized that the sacrifices of the Kashmiri people will never go in vain and that despite Indian repression and oppression, the movement for freedom will continue with greater strength and resilience.

Speaking about the health and release of detained Hurriyat leaders including Massarat Alam Bhat, Yaseen Malik, Shabbir Ahmed Shah, Zaffar Akbar Bhat, Aasiya Andrabi, Khurram Perwaiz, and others, Altaf Ahmed Bhat said that imprisoned Hurriyat leaders, Human Rights defenders, Journalists in occupied Kashmir are being denied adequate medical facilities.

He noted that in the past, leaders such as Syed Ali Geelani and Ashraf Sehrai lost their lives after not receiving timely medical treatment.

At the conclusion of the meeting, special prayers were offered for the departed soul of Altaf Ahmed Bhat's mother, for the martyrs of Kashmir and the martyrs of Marka-e-Haq Bunyan-un-Marsoos, as well as for the peace, stability, and prosperity of Pakistan and the freedom of the Kashmiri people.

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif steps to promote educational development

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is taking historic steps to promote educational development and modern sciences, including contemporary fields such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other advanced education systems in Punjab.

These views were expressed by Regional Director of Nawaz Sharif School of Eminence Rawalpindi, Syed Naveed Abbas, Director General Cantab Publisher Dr. Naem Khalid, District Education Officer Attock Saima Iram, education expert Dr. A. Q.

Khan, Assistant Director Atif, Principal Anila Shahid, and other speakers while addressing an awareness seminar held at Sheikh Jee Market.

Hundreds of students, parents, local dignitaries, education experts, and people from different walks of life participated in the seminar.

Addressing the gathering, Regional Director Syed Naveed Abbas said that the Nawaz Sharif School of Eminence is a special project of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, who is giving it personal attention. He stated that the institution would provide education aligned with modern global stand-

ards, equipped with excellent infrastructure and state-of-the-art buildings.

He further informed that four campuses are being established under the project, including Attock, Fateh Jang, Pindigheb, and Shakargarh campuses. The awareness seminar was organized to inform parents about the Attock campus and to explain the teaching methodologies that would be adopted, which would be completely modern and technology-oriented to ensure high-quality education for students.

He added that the primary objective of the project is to improve the public and weaker education system and

provide quality education to every child, especially by ensuring modern educational facilities for students from rural and underdeveloped areas.

Director General Cantab Publisher Dr. Naem Khalid, while giving a detailed briefing, highlighted that the current educational system has become outdated and stressed the need to modernize it according to contemporary educational principles. He said that the Nawaz Sharif School of Eminence is designed to incorporate all modern educational standards.

Participants were also given an opportunity to ask questions, which

were answered positively by the relevant authorities. Speakers remarked that the school would bring an educational revolution in Attock.

They stated that the institution would offer facilities such as smart classrooms, computer labs, science and STEM labs, digital learning, English communication, dedicated sports areas, activity-based learning, and personality development programs.

According to the speakers, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision is to establish a model school in every tehsil that reflects high educational standards, discipline, modern

technology, and quality teaching practices.

They further said that the project aims not only to provide textbook education but also to develop leadership qualities and modern skills among students. The Attock campus will be a modern, state-of-the-art educational institution and a step toward a successful and brighter future.

The seminar also included special awareness sessions regarding admission test preparation, modern teaching methods, digital curriculum, classroom systems, and comprehensive student guidance. #

US Power Projection at Arab Expense

Continued from Page 4

As missiles and drones targeted facilities linked to American operations, Gulf policymakers were forced to confront a difficult question: are these bases security guarantees, or are they magnets for escalation?

The debate has become increasingly visible inside United Arab Emirates and other Gulf capitals where strategists now openly question whether permanent dependence on external military umbrellas truly serves long-term regional stability. Some Gulf scholars and officials have gone so far as to describe the foreign military presence as a "burden rather than a strategic asset."

At the same time, Gulf sovereign wealth funds remain deeply

integrated into the American economy. Collectively managing roughly \$5 trillion in global assets, these funds hold significant stakes in U.S. infrastructure, technology, Treasury securities, banking, real estate, and defense-linked industries. More than one-third of Gulf sovereign investments are estimated to be tied directly to the United States.

This creates a circular financial system unlike any other in modern geopolitics. Gulf oil wealth flows into the American economy through investments and arms purchases. American military power protects Gulf regimes and trade routes. Regional instability then increases demand for American weapons and alternative American energy exports. The cycle continuously reinforces itself.

For the United States, it becomes an extraordinarily efficient mechanism of global power projection. For the Gulf states, however, the equation is becoming increasingly expensive, politically risky, and strategically uncomfortable.

The 2026 conflict may therefore be remembered not merely as another Middle Eastern war, but as the moment Gulf nations began reassessing whether the costs of hosting global power rivalries now outweigh the security guarantees they once promised.

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

When Conscience Fails Above, It Fades Below

Continued from Page 4

cynicism. Once rooted in a society, cynicism is much more difficult to address than resolving economic, structural, and technological decline. Rather than encouraging individuals to accept immoral behaviour, cynicism discourages individuals from acting in a way that is right or just.

Nonetheless, decline does not mean destiny.

While Moral failure may be passed down to us, moral renewal can also come through ethical leadership. Accountability and morality cannot just be words or abstract concept to be publicly debated; they must be lived out in the quiet, unobserved moments when character is actually developed. Just as moral compromises at the highest levels adversely affect the conscience of a society, so too can the moral integrity of one person at a time begin to

restore that broken conscience within the whole society. Renewal begins with individuals who make conscious choices in accordance with what is right, even when there is no reward, recognition, or immediate benefit.

Renewal will take longer to accomplish and be far less visible and celebrated than decline. It does not happen through large-scale reforms or announcements, but rather through numerous small, consistent acts of honesty, accountability and self-restraint. When a worker or an individual values the truth above his or her convenience, or parents, through their behaviour, models substance rather than appearance, these small, consistent actions are what will restore that which has been lost through erosion.

Over time, these conscious choices and actions will continue to accumulate, changing our expectations, rebuilding trust,

and showing that integrity and morality is not a liability but rather a benchmark. The conscience that has been diminished will be revived not through legislation already existing, but through example.

A Society does not heal itself entirely at once and likewise does not fall apart all at once; rather, it will change course when enough people choose to act upon principle rather than self-serving interests, causing the reversal. What had been a deterioration now can begin to be rebuilt and grow upwards again through hard work, determination, and above all, integrity.

Dr. Huma Balouch is a science and programme management professional with over 18 years of experience working across the Global South on science and technology initiatives. Trained as a biotechnologist, she brings a research background alongside her work in international development and climate-related efforts.

Called on

ISLAMABAD: U.S. Chargé d'Affaires, Natalie A. Baker called on the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, at MoFA, on Monday.



Photo: PID

DPM/FM Dar, US Charge d'Affaires discuss regional situation, Pak-US ties

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: US Charge d'Affaires Natalie A. Baker, Monday, called on Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar to discuss the evolving regional situation and the broader Pakistan-US bilateral relationship.

The DPM/FM highlighted Pakistan's role in facilitating communi-

cation between US and Iran, while expressing hope that ongoing diplomatic efforts would contribute to peace and stability in the region and beyond.

He also appreciated ongoing US assistance in the repatriation of Pakistani and Iranian seafarers through Singapore, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

DPM/FM Dar, Saudi FM discuss evolving regional situation



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, on Monday, discussed the evolving regional situation and matters of mutual interest.

The DPM/FM spoke with the Saudi foreign minister. The Saudi foreign minister appreciated Pakistan's constructive role and reiterated

support for Islamabad's efforts aimed at promoting regional peace and stability, particularly in the context of ongoing engagement between Iran and the United States, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

Both leaders also exchanged views on the importance of safeguarding maritime security, including in the Strait of Hormuz, and agreed to remain in close contact on regional and international developments

Aurangzeb vows transparent, technology-driven tax system

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said here Monday that the government would carefully review the proposals submitted by Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) representatives during the ongoing budget formulation process while remaining committed to a transparent, technology-driven and facilitative tax system aimed at promoting economic growth, documentation and institutional effectiveness.

Talking to ICAP delegation during a meeting, the minister emphasized the importance of continued engagement with profes-

sional bodies and industry stakeholders to ensure that economic and taxation policies remain responsive, practical, and aligned with the country's broader reform objectives.

He shared the government's ongoing efforts to transform the tax administration system through reforms centered around people, processes, and technology and underscored the importance of institutional modernization, process simplification, and enhanced automation to improve transparency, reduce unnecessary human intervention, and facilitate taxpayers.

In this context, he highlighted the operationalization of the Tax Policy Office under the Finance Division as an important institutional reform



aimed at strengthening policy formulation and improving coordination between tax policy and administration.

Aurangzeb noted that AI-led production monitoring and technology-driven oversight mechanisms introduced across various sectors are helping improve documen-

tation, strengthen compliance, and reduce leakages within the system.

The meeting also covered the growing role of technology and digital systems in strengthening compliance, enforcement, and revenue administration.

Earlier, the delegation

presented a range of proposals and recommendations relating to documentation, group taxation structures, export-oriented services, and harmonization of tax treatment across sectors.

Discussions also focused on measures aimed at improving competitiveness, facilitating investment, strengthening ease of doing business, and supporting effective revenue mobilization alongside broadening of the tax base.

The delegation was led by President ICAP, Samiullah Siddiqui and included Vice President ICAP, Jehanzaib Amin; Vice President ICAP, Ahmed Raza Mir; and Council Member ICAP and Chairman Economic Advisory Committee, Zeeshan Ijaz.

Govt ensuring gas supply to all major sectors: Ali Pervaiz Malik

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik on Monday informed the National Assembly that the government had started issuing pending gas connections and was working to expand the gas supply network as domestic production and availability improve.

Responding to questions during the Question Hour, the minister said that around 200,000 gas connections had already been provided under the ongoing phase.



He said that the next stage would focus on network expansion as exploration activities increased and locally

produced gas became more available for public consumption. Ali Pervaiz Malik informed

the House that nearly 36 new exploration block concessions had been awarded during the past one and a half years to improve indigenous gas production.

Addressing concerns regarding low gas pressure, he said that a significant portion of Pakistan's gas supply was linked to LNG imports from Qatar, which had been affected during the past two months due to disruptions in shipping routes through the Strait of Hormuz.

He said that the first LNG cargo since the disruption

was expected to reach Karachi port shortly, which would help improve supply conditions.

The minister said that the government was currently ensuring gas supply to all major sectors, including power generation, fertilizer production and domestic consumers, amid rising summer electricity demand. He said that gas supply to domestic consumers was presently being ensured during three peak meal timings, while uninterrupted supply would gradually be restored once overall availability improved.

Federal Minister Sheikh Meets Chinese Counsellor Yang Guangyuan to Enhance Investment Cooperation under CPEC Phase-II

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Mr. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, held an important meeting with His Excellency Mr. Yang Guangyuan, Chinese Counsellor, at the Board of Investment to discuss various avenues for enhancing bilateral investment cooperation under CPEC Phase-II.

The meeting focused on the future roadmap of CPEC Phase-II, with particular emphasis on attracting tangible investment from Chinese private sector companies in manufacturing and industrial development. Both sides reviewed the progress of ongoing Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and explored strategies to transform them into successful models of industrial growth.



The Federal Minister highlighted the importance of private sector engagement, stating that CPEC Phase-II offers significant opportuni-

ties for Chinese enterprises to invest in Pakistan's industrial sector. He emphasized that achieving meaningful investment outcomes requires stronger coordi-

ination, improved communication, and enhanced trust among stakeholders.

Mr. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh stated that both sides agreed to further work on addressing information gaps and security concerns to remove barriers to investment.

Chinese Counsellor Mr. Yang Guangyuan appreciated the efforts of the Board of Investment and noted that addressing the information gap is essential for attracting Chinese investors. He remarked that while multiple delegations visit Pakistan, the conversion into tangible investment remains limited. He emphasized that the Board of Investment, in collaboration with the Chinese Embassy, can play a key role in raising awareness and facilitating effective linkages between investors and relevant authorities.

Chairman Senate condemns Bannu terror attack

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani Monday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on Fateh Khel Police Station in District Bannu, which resulted in the martyrdom of police personnel.

He paid tribute to the brave police officers who embraced martyrdom in

the line of duty and stated that the sacrifices of Pakistan's security forces and law enforcement agencies would never be forgotten.

He expressed heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs and prayed for the elevation of their ranks and early recovery of the injured.

Chairman Senate said that such cowardly acts cannot weaken the nation's resolve against terrorism.

He reaffirmed that the entire nation stands united with its security institutions in the fight against terrorism and extremism.

