



A Leading National Daily



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Daily The Spokesman



Senior PML-N leaders meet Nawaz Sharif at Jati Umrah

Two senior PML-N leaders met with former prime minister and the party President Nawaz Sharif at Jati Umrah on Saturday. Sources told that the country's as well as the regional situation, the US-Iran war and Pakistan's mediatory efforts came under discussion at Nawaz's meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal.



Ruet-e-Hilal Committee to meet today to decide Eid-ul-Azha date

Ministry of Religious Affairs has summoned the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee to meet on Sunday, May 17, to sight the moon for Zul Hijjah 1447. The session will be held at the Pakistan Meteorological Department in Karachi and chaired by Committee Chairman Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad. Zonal committees will meet simultaneously at provincial headquarters in Lahore, Karachi, Quetta, and Peshawar.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Ziqa'ad 29, Sunday, May 17, 2026

www.dailyspokesman.net

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Daily Spokesman Vol: 20, Issue: 30

Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

Warm Welcome

BAKU: Deputy Minister for Defence Industry Mr Mehman Bakhshiyev receiving the Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and the delegation upon their arrival at Baku



Photo: PID

US congressman hails PM, Field Marshal for 'indispensable' role in US-Iran peace talks



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A senior United States congressman has written to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, and Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, expressing gratitude for Pakistan's role in facilitating ongoing peace negotiations between Washington and Tehran.

Jack Bergman, co-chair of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, said in the letter that Pakistan's partnership had been indispensable to the effort, state-run PTV reported.

Bergman said Pakistan's willingness to leverage its unique position to bring the two parties to the negotiating table was a demonstration of

true statesmanship. He added that the US-Pakistan relationship is of enduring strategic importance.

The congressman said the White House and the US Congress had publicly acknowledged Pakistan's constructive and distinctive diplomatic role. He said he fully echoed those sentiments.

Bergman also said President Donald Trump had achieved what previous administrations had not been able to accomplish.

Addressing both the prime minister and the Field Marshal, Bergman said they had his deep and lasting gratitude. He added that he looked forward to visiting Pakistan soon to further strengthen bilateral ties in person.

Pakistan becoming global information technology hub: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif stated Pakistan is becoming a global IT hub, driven by initiatives like IT and software technology parks, supporting infrastructure, and a tech-savvy workforce, moving towards a complete digital revolution.

Marking World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, themed "Digital Lifelines: Strengthening Resilience in a Connected World," he affirmed alignment with the "Digital Nation Pakistan" vision encompassing digital economy, society, and government.

Key steps include the revolutionary National AI Policy 2025 and the successful, transparent 5G spectrum



allocation, deemed a model for emerging economies by GSMA, significantly boosting telecom facilities to global standards. Spectrum for mobile operators has increased from 274 MHz to 754 MHz, with government commitment to full 5G implementation, fiberization policy completion, and local device manufac-

turing promotion. The telecom sector is a vital economic area attracting foreign investment, creating jobs, and increasing national income.

Pakistan's digital infrastructure is robust, featuring over 234,000 km of fiber optic backbone, six submarine cables, 58,000 cellular towers, and modern data centers, serving 205 million subscribers. Pakistan is emerging as a regional digital hub in South and Central Asia, actively developing the CAREC Digital Corridor.

Initiatives like the MVNO framework promote competition and foreign investment, while progress on satellite regulations aims to expand connectivity to remote areas via Fixed Satellite Services (FSS).

The Universal Service Fund (USF) is

making significant strides in providing voice and broadband in backward areas, along the national highways, and at tourist destinations.

The digital sector is expanding, with annual IT exports reaching \$3.8 billion, credited to proactive policies, skill development programs (DigiSkills, INSPIRE), and National Incubation Centers. Pakistan has achieved Tier-1 Role Model status in the ITU/UN Cyber Security Index and shown marked improvement in the UN's 2024 e-Government Development Index (EGDI) and 2026 Global Outsourcing Talent Index.

The Prime Minister commended the efforts of the Ministry of IT and Telecom, PTA, cellular operators, and all stakeholders in this digital transformation.

DPM/FM Dar, Uzbek FM exchange views on bilateral, multilateral matters



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister / Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Saidov, Saturday, exchanged views on bilateral and multilateral matters of mutual interest, including Pak-Uzbek relations

and regional developments.

The DPM/FM spoke with Foreign Minister Saidov, who also appreciated Pakistan's constructive role in mediation for regional peace and security, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

They agreed to remain in close contact.

Fish, seafood exports cross \$500m milestone for first time: Junaid Anwar Chaudhry

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry on Saturday announced that exports of fish and fisheries products have surpassed the \$500 million mark for the first time calling it a landmark achievement for the mari-

time sector and the blue economy.

Junaid Chaudhry praised coordinated efforts by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, the Marine Fisheries Department and other stakeholders to raise quality standards, modernise the fisheries sector and improve international market access.

He also commended Marine Fisheries Board Director General Dr Mansoor Wasan and his team for meeting the target ahead of schedule.

Highlighting recent gains, the minister said that Pakistani fish and seafood had for the first time gained approval to enter the Russian market. To date, 16

Pakistani companies have been authorized to export seafood to Russia, he added.

He said that access to Russia could pave the way into other Eurasian Economic Union markets and it was estimated that annual seafood exports could climb to \$800 million, with initial exports to Russia

alone projected to bring about \$300 million in revenue.

Junaid Chaudhry noted that seafood would move via sea, air and land routes, adding that overland corridors to Central Asia offered cost-effective opportunities amid rising demand in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

Pakistan advancing gradually toward 'Digital Economy' as cashless market usage expands: Minister

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In line with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision for a modern and digitally connected Pakistan, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Bilal Azhar Kayani Saturday said the country is steadily advancing toward a cashless economy, supported by increasing public adoption of digital payment systems.

While speaking exclusively to

a local media outlet, the Minister stated that under the government's broader digital economy agenda, Pakistan's financial system is undergoing gradual transformation, reinforced by strong momentum in cashless transactions across markets through continued government-private sector collaboration.

He noted that citizens are progressively shifting toward digital payment channels,

including mobile wallets, online transfers and card-based solutions for everyday purchases, reflecting a clear behavioral shift toward convenient and technology-driven financial practices.

He further observed that traders and business communities are increasingly integrating cashless solutions within both retail and wholesale sectors, contributing to improved efficiency, greater transparency, and enhanced financial

formalization across the economy.

The Minister said the government is further strengthening Pakistan's digital financial ecosystem by expanding payment infrastructure and enhancing system capabilities to support secure and seamless transactions nationwide.

He added that these initiatives form part of a comprehensive strategy aimed at modernizing the financial framework and ensuring reliable, efficient, and transparent

economic operations.

He also acknowledged the rising public inclination toward cashless payments in shopping and routine market activities, emphasizing that this growing trend demonstrates increasing trust in digital platforms.

He concluded that this sustained shift in consumer behavior is accelerating Pakistan's transition toward a fully modernized, cashless digital economy.

Pakistan, China to deepen TVET, digital skills cooperation: Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui

News Desk

BELJING: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Saturday called for a transformative Pakistan-China partnership in technical and vocational education, emphasizing that Pakistan's massive youth population can become a globally competitive workforce through modern skills training and internationally recognized certifications.

Addressing the TVET Symposium titled "Building Partnerships for Skills Development and Academia-Industry Collaboration", organized by the Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing,

the minister said Pakistan is preparing to launch a large-scale technical and vocational training programme with the support of China.

The symposium focused on information communication technology and telecom cooperation, bringing together government officials, educational institutions, and industry representatives from both countries.

The minister appreciated Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi and his team for promoting practical, sector-focused cooperation between Pakistan and China in skill development and technical education.

AJK PM Launches Rs615 million Mahmood Gali-Kahuta Road Project to Spur Regional Growth

Bureau Report

HAVELI: The Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, on Saturday, laid the foundation stone of the Mahmood Gali Road project aimed at improving road infrastructure and boosting economic activity in the region.

Under the project, a double-carriageway road will be constructed from Mahmood Gali to Kahuta. In the first phase, a 16-kilometre stretch of the road will be built at a cost exceeding Rs615 million.

The project, once completed, is expected to ease traffic congestion besides promoting tourism, trade and other economic activities in the area.

Addressing the foundation stone



laying ceremony, Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore said that the people's government was committed

to providing basic facilities at the doorstep of the public. He said the Mahmood Gali-Kahuta Road project

would play a vital role in the development of the region by improving connectivity, enhancing business opportunities and promoting tourism.

"It will also provide the people with safe and quality travel facilities," the Prime Minister added.

Meanwhile, during his visit to Haveli, the Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone of the 10-kilometre Lasdana-Sherodara Road project.

Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore received a rousing welcome on his arrival at Mahmood Gali, where a large number of party workers and local residents greeted him enthusiastically. Youth activists raised slogans in his favour and showered flower petals on him.



AJK Minister for Elementary and Secondary Education Mr Dewan Ali Khan Chughtai called on former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan at the Assembly Hostel in Muzaffarabad and exchanged political affairs in the current political scenario.

Revered Kashmiri leader Sheikh Muhammad Hassan passes away; tributes pour in



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ghulam Muhammad Safi, Convener of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Kashmir and Pakistan branch, expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Sheikh Muhammad Hassan, a prominent religious, intellectual, and national leader from Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and former Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir. Safi described the deceased as a highly moral, God-fearing, thoughtful, and dignified personality who dedicated his life to Islam, societal reform, and guiding the Muslim nation, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir. He noted that Sheikh Muhammad Hassan symbolized insight, wisdom, tolerance, sincerity, and moderation, consistently upholding truth despite oppression. Safi highlighted Hassan's unparalleled role in fostering religious awareness and Islamic values among Kashmiri youth, noting his passing leaves a void in the leadership of Jammu and Kashmir. The Hurriyat Conference shares the grief of the family and the Kashmiri nation, expressing solidarity. Safi prayed for Allah to accept Hassan's services, forgive his faults, elevate his status in Paradise, and grant his family patience. He affirmed that Sheikh Muhammad Hassan's intellectual and national contributions will remain an inspiration for future generations, recognizing him as a sincere leader dedicated to truth and the rights of the oppressed Kashmiri people.

World Hypertension Day

FAISALABAD: Prof Dr Amir Liaquat leading a walk on World Hypertension Day at Faisalabad Medical University.



Photo: Online

AJK Election Commission denies PTI-AJK registration over financial rule violations

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission rejected the registration application for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Azad Jammu and Kashmir (PTI-AJK) following a Supreme Court judgment. An appointed Audit Officer found PTI-AJK violated Rule 121 of the Election Rules regarding financial affairs and accounts. Despite PTI-AJK requesting a re-examination, the Audit Officer upheld the initial objections. After providing PTI-AJK's representatives a full personal hearing, the Election Commission concluded the party failed to meet the requirements of Rule 121. Consequently, the application was denied due to rule violations and failure to fulfill legal requirements concerning accounts. The Commission affirmed its commitment to transparent and equal registration and supervision of all political parties according to the Constitution and law.



Kashmir, Indus Waters Must Anchor Any Pakistan-India Dialogue, Says Masood Khan

Spokesman Report.

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Masood Khan, former AJK President and diplomat, affirmed Pakistan's commitment to dialogue with India but insisted that any engagement must center on the core disputes of Jammu and Kashmir and the Indus Waters Treaty. He stressed that while coexistence is inevitable and dialogue/confidence-building measures should continue, people-to-people contacts cannot replace addressing these central political issues. Khan suggested that international pressure from the US, Gulf, and European nations might be prompting India to reconsider limited engagement, despite hostile rhetoric from some Indian figures. He noted India often pursues parallel tracks: negotiating contentious issues while expanding cultural exchanges. Pakistan must remain cautious, not forgetting the 2019 actions in IOJ&K, and ensure Kashmir and the water treaty remain central to substantive talks, even if easing visa restrictions reduces tensions. Regarding regional bodies, Khan anticipated India's participation in SCO events hosted by Pakistan, warning that boycotts weaken India's regional standing. He also observed China's increasing diplomatic role in Asia, citing its coordination with regional states like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan amidst crises.



DFP bereaved over death former Ameer Jammat, terms his demise as a national loss

Abdul Majeed Tahir.

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of renowned Kashmiri scholar and former Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir, Shaikh Ghulam Hassan, terming his death a national loss.

In a statement issued here today, DFP spokesman Advocate Arshad Iqbal, while extending heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace.



Referring to the deceased leader's multifaceted personality, the spokesman said

that Shaikh Ghulam Hassan would be remembered for his social, political and intellectual contributions to Kashmiri society. Describing him as a man of honesty and integrity, he said that the deceased leader's lifelong struggle and exemplary character would continue to inspire younger generations.

He also paid rich tributes to the former JI leader for his significant role in the ongoing liberation movement. "Despite facing trials and tribulations, he remained a steadfast voice that refused to bow to Indian dictates," the spokesman said.

AJK Leaders meet to review Kashmir movement, praise government development work

Bureau Report.

MUZAFFARABAD: Acting President and PPP Parliamentary Board Member Chaudhry Latif Akbar met with Azad Kashmir Prime Minister's Spokesperson Shaukat Javed Mir to discuss the Kashmir Freedom Movement. They celebrated the first anniversary of Pakistan's victory over Indian aggression in Operation Sindhur under Chief of Defense Forces Hafiz Syed Asim Muneer. Akbar praised the AJK government's performance, highlighting the approval of a 3.5 billion rupee education package, a 25 billion rupee capital beautification plan, solid waste management, and resolving employee issues, deeming the overall performance excellent. Political



matters and potential PPP inductions from Muzaffarabad were also discussed. Latif Akbar stated that Pakistan's key role in the Israel-Iran ceasefire enhances its international standing

and that a strong Pakistan guarantees Kashmir's freedom. He asserted the PPP's unparalleled historical sacrifices for the constitution, democracy, and national dignity. Shaukat Javed

concluded that the PPP's leadership under Bilawal Bhutto would support the Pakistani army in eliminating militancy in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Jahangir Khanzada inaugurates development work at Shadi Khan BHU

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Member of the Punjab Chief Minister's Monitoring Committee and former provincial minister Jahangir Khanzada on Saturday visited the Basic Health Unit Shadi Khan and formally inaugurated the ongoing development project by cutting the ribbon alongside senior local figure Lala Altaf Khan.

A number of local dignitaries, including Behram Khan, Member Aurangzeb, Israr Khan, Wisaal Khan, Afzal Khan, Hammad Khan and Mohammad Roman Khan, were also present on the occasion.

During the visit, Mr Khanzada inspected the ongoing construction and development work at the health facility. Officials from the Buildings Department briefed him on the progress of the project. He directed the authorities concerned to ensure high construction standards and warned that no negligence or compromise on quality would be tolerated.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Khanzada expressed gratitude to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for allocating millions of rupees in funds for various basic health units in the Chhachh area of Hazro tehsil.

He said the initiative would help provide essential healthcare facilities to residents at their doorstep and significantly improve medical services in the area. At the conclusion of the visit, local elders and dignitaries thanked the Punjab chief minister and Jahangir Khanzada for providing funds for the Shadi Khan BHU project and praised their public welfare efforts.



Islamabad

30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:30 am
Zohr 12:04 pm
Asr 4:58 pm
Maghrib 7:02 pm
Isha 8:39 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad 1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police 9266044
Motorway Police 9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance 115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo 9280979
Railway Inquiry 117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi 5555489
CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH 561111
MH 561116
Cantt Hospital 9270907-11
DHQ 5556311-4
RGH 9290301-7
Holy Family 9290322-7
PIMS 9261170-79
Polyclinic 9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666

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

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service
E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8, 9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 9266316
Wapda Islamabad 9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint 119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank
Rawalpindi 0331-5022125

Sindh Hari Committee Intensifies Preparations for 56th Death Anniversary of Hyder Bux Jatoi

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Preparations are in full swing in Hyderabad for the 56th death anniversary of Babae-Sindh Comrade Hyder Bux Jatoi, led by Sindh Hari Committee Central President Comrade Samar Hyder Jatoi. Invitations are being extended to members of the High Court Bar and District Bar Association, including senior lawyers, to attend the anniversary program on May 21. Comrade Samar Hyder Jatoi emphasized that the Sindh Hari Committee remains dedicated to the ideology of Comrade Hyder Bux Jatoi, continuing the struggle for farmers' rights. He highlighted the severe hardships faced by farmers in Sindh due to the agricultural sector's decline and inadequate compensation. Jatoi demanded guaran-

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz to represent Pakistan at World Urban Forum in Azerbaijan

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab government has reaffirmed its commitment to forging

international partnerships for urban development, while Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has stepped onto the global stage to showcase Punjab's flag-



ship projects.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has departed for a historic three-day visit to the Republic of Azerbaijan, where she will represent Pakistan at the international World Urban Forum being held in the city of Baku from May 17 to 20.

During the visit, the chief minister is scheduled to hold an important meeting with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev on May 17. CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz

will attend the forum as a special state guest.

The chief minister will also deliver a keynote address at the World Leaders Summit being held at the Baku Olympic Stadium.

At the forum, CM Maryam Nawaz will present the Punjab government's flagship housing initiative 'Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar' as a model for affordable housing. The project will be introduced

before the international community as Punjab's unique model in the affordable housing sector.

The chief minister is accompanied by Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Information Minister Azma Bukhari, Housing Minister Bilal Yasin, Sports Minister Faisal Ayub, Agriculture Minister Ashiq Hussain Kirmani, Special Assistant Ali Dar, the Chief Secretary Punjab and other relevant officials.

Sacrificial Animal

RAWALPIDI: Sacrificial animals being off loaded from truck at Bhatta Chowk Cattle Market ahead of Eid Al-Adha.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Special cleanliness plan devised on Eid at Toba Tek Singh

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEKSINGH: Under the "Suthra Punjab Programme" led by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Toba Tek Singh has finalized comprehensive arrangements for Eid-ul-Azha to ensure cleanliness and hygienic conditions. Deputy Commissioner Umar Abbas Mela directed a detailed special cleanliness operation plan—covering pre-Eid, during-Eid, and post-Eid phases—detailed by Additional Deputy Commissioner General Dr. Tariq Usman. This plan includes sanitation efforts around 979 mosques, Eidgahs, and imam-bargahs. Collection points will be established for sacrificial waste, with 21 slaughter-



houses and designated sacrifice sites operational. Special cleanliness drives are scheduled for 488 graveyards and 20 parks. To manage waste, 170,000 waste bags and 37,300 kg of lime for disinfection will be deployed. For public convenience, four temporary cattle

markets will feature stalls from essential services like Rescue 1122, Police, and Municipal Committee. District Manager Suthra Punjab Khawar noted that 107 public awareness camps will educate citizens. A total of 1,158 machinery units (dumpers, excavators, etc.)

and 3,580 sanitation workers will execute the operation across the district, with specific deployment numbers in Toba Tek Singh, Gojra, Pir Mahal, and Kamalia. Authorities guarantee timely waste disposal, drainage flow, and disinfection. Dedicated monitoring teams are formed, and a helpline, 1139, has been established, reducing complaint resolution time from 24 to 2 hours during Eid. The Municipal Committee will strictly act against illegal cattle markets, with a formal one set up at Gojra Road Tranda. The administration urges citizens to cooperate by using designated waste areas for a clean Eid in Toba Tek Singh.

Prof. Dr. Sarwar Muhammad Khawaja conferred Sitara-e-Imtiaz



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prof. Dr. Sarwar Muhammad Khawaja, a distinguished British-Pakistani entrepreneur, educationist, and philanthropist, has been conferred the Sitara-e-Imtiaz, one of the highest civilian honours of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, by the President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, at a prestigious investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr (the President House), Islamabad.

The solemn ceremony was graced by the Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, and the Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, alongside members of the federal and provincial cabinets, eminent diplomats, and distinguished representatives from Pakistan's social and business spheres.

This eminent accolade recognises Prof. Dr. Khawaja's exemplary contributions to education, technological advancement, entrepreneurship, and social uplift, as well as his sustained commitment to enhancing Pakistan's international stature and socio-economic progress.

Surprise visit to Satyana Road, drugstore mart sealed for selling chicken at high prices

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Sub-Divisional Enforcement Officer Para Faisalabad Sadar Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan Irshad paid a surprise visit to Satyana Road. During this, a drugstore mart was checked for selling chicken at high prices, where violation of government rates was found. When the violation was proven, the relevant mart was sealed and legal action was taken against the responsible parties. Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan Irshad clarified that actions will continue to ensure the provision of food items to the public at the fixed government rates.



Muhammad Yaseen Khan, Awarded Sitara-i-Imtiaz

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has conferred the Sitara-i-Imtiaz upon Muhammad Yaseen Khan, Founder and President of Sundas Foundation, in recognition of his outstanding services in the fields of humanitarian work, social welfare, Thalassemia prevention and care for patients suffering from blood-related disorders.



Speaking after the ceremony, Muhammad Yaseen Khan said that this honor truly belongs to the entire Sundas Foundation team, volunteers, generous blood donors, and all those who have supported this mission of serving humanity. He added that the greatest reward for him is the smiles on the faces of children receiving treatment at Sundas Foundation. The prayers of these children and the trust of their parents remain his greatest strength.

Hazara University Mansehra organized a two-day conference on equity, diversity and inclusion

Iram Asim

MANSEHRA: The Department of Sociology at Hazara University Mansehra hosted a two-day conference, "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: Creating Safe and Empowered University Campuses," from May 14-16, 2026.

Endorsed by Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Ikramullah Khan and funded by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, the conference aimed to drive academic and policy discussions on social justice, accessibility, dignity, equity, diversity, and inclusion in higher education.

Its central goal was to develop strategies for creating safe, inclusive, and empowering university environments where all individuals feel respected and able to thrive.

The gathering drew diverse participants, including academics, policymakers, administrators, activists, and students from across Pakistan.



Guests of Honour included National Assembly Member Shahzada Muhammad Gustasap Khan and KP Assembly Member Amna Sardar.

Keynote speakers provided significant insights, emphasizing that equitable campuses foster confident students, ethical leadership, and civic responsi-

bility, all crucial for Pakistan's sustainable development and democratic stability.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Ikramullah Khan stressed that universities must actively embody EDI principles, viewing inclusive education as vital for fostering tolerance and responsible citizenship. Shahzada Muhammad Gustasap Khan commended the inclusive leadership, while Amna Sardar urged academics to actively shape social justice policy, particularly for marginalized groups.

The Vice Chancellor and Dean of Law & Social Sciences, Prof. Dr. Nasiruddin, praised the Department of Sociology and Chief Organizer Dr. Khalil ur Rahman for the vital event, which concluded with a commitment to building safer, more inclusive campuses. The conference's resulting recommendations are expected to influence policy reforms and promote a culture of respect in higher education.

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Trump in Beijing: A Visit of Powerlessness

President Donald Trump's May 2026 visit to Beijing was expected to reset global geopolitics, calm financial markets, pressure China on Iran, secure trade breakthroughs, and perhaps establish a new strategic understanding between the world's two largest powers. Instead, the visit exposed something far more consequential: a visible shift in global leverage from Washington to Beijing. What was projected as a high-stakes diplomatic triumph increasingly appeared to many observers as a journey of strategic desperation, where the United States arrived seeking concessions while China calmly projected patience, confidence, and restraint.

The visit came at perhaps the worst possible moment for Washington. The United States entered Beijing politically exhausted, militarily stretched, economically pressured, and diplomatically weakened after months of confrontation surrounding Iran, the Strait of Hormuz crisis, sanctions battles, and growing instability in global energy markets. China understood this reality fully. Beijing knew that America's military-industrial supremacy, once considered untouchable, had suffered reputational damage after Iran managed to withstand the combined pressure of the United States and Israel without surrendering its strategic posture. The longer the war dragged on, the more global markets, oil routes, and supply chains trembled.

Trump arrived in Beijing hoping to secure Chinese cooperation on several critical fronts. Washington wanted China to pressure Iran into reopening the Strait of Hormuz completely and stabilizing energy shipments. The United States

also sought Chinese compliance with sanctions and shipping restrictions targeting vessels accused of supporting Iran. Another major American objective was to reduce Chinese economic engagement with Venezuela, whose oil exports had increasingly escaped U. S. pressure mechanisms. Simultaneously, Washington expected movement on agricultural purchases, aircraft deals, tariff relief, and broader trade normalization.

Yet despite all the ceremonial grandeur, lunches, tours, dinners, and carefully choreographed hospitality, China committed to virtually nothing concrete on the core geopolitical disputes.

The most sensitive issue of all remained Taiwan. Chinese President Xi Jinping reportedly warned Trump in direct terms that mishandling Taiwan could push both countries toward confrontation or even open conflict. Trump, unusually cautious throughout the visit, avoided public comments about Taiwan while in Beijing. Only after boarding Air Force One did he hint that he may reconsider arms sales to Taipei after hearing Xi's objections.

That hesitation alone sent shockwaves through strategic circles. Taiwan represents the center of China's national reunification doctrine under the "One China" policy. Beijing views Taiwan not as a separate sovereign state, but as a breakaway province destined eventually to return to the mainland—much like Hong Kong returned after decades of British control. China's leadership believes time is now increasingly on its

side. Hong Kong's reintegration demonstrated Beijing's long-term strategic patience, and Chinese policymakers appear convinced that Taiwan's eventual absorption into the broader Chinese system is historically inevitable.

Trump's reluctance to firmly reaffirm military backing for Taiwan revealed how complicated the balance of power has become. America once projected overwhelming confidence in East Asia. Today, Washington appears increasingly cautious about opening another major confrontation 9,500 miles away while already struggling to manage crises in the Middle East.

Equally important was China's silence on the Iran war. Trump publicly claimed that Xi agreed a nuclear-armed Iran would be dangerous and even offered help in ending the conflict. Yet Beijing itself avoided confirming any such alignment. China maintained its carefully balanced diplomatic position, emphasizing only that all parties' concerns should be considered.

That distinction mattered enormously. China has no interest in openly endorsing an American-led strategy that weakened one of Beijing's critical energy and geopolitical partners. Iran remains central to China's Belt and Road ambitions, regional connectivity plans, and long-term energy security. Beijing also deeply resented American efforts to interfere with Chinese shipping, oil imports, and maritime operations linked to Iran. The Chinese leadership clearly signaled that while it favors stability, it will not

become an enforcement arm of U. S. pressure campaigns.

Meanwhile, the economic dimension of the trip produced more headlines than substance. Trump spoke enthusiastically about potential aircraft purchases, suggesting China could buy between 200 and eventually 750 Boeing planes. There were also discussions involving General Electric engines, agricultural products, investment boards, and reciprocal tariff reductions.

But the markets were not impressed. Global investors had expected major breakthroughs—perhaps a concrete trade accord, sanctions relief, maritime understandings, or joint statements stabilizing geopolitical tensions. Instead, what emerged was vague language, future possibilities, and broad diplomatic formulations without enforceable commitments.

Financial markets reacted negatively because traders recognized the gap between optics and outcomes. The world economy today is deeply fragile. Oil prices remain volatile. Shipping insurance costs are elevated. Supply chains are unstable. Fertilizer markets, aviation industries, and industrial production continue facing enormous uncertainty tied to Middle Eastern instability. Investors were hoping for decisive clarity. What they received instead was strategic ambiguity.

The contrast in diplomatic posture between Trump and Xi was also striking. Trump showered Xi with praise throughout the visit, repeatedly describing him as a "great leader," a "friend," and someone with whom America could build a "fantastic future." Xi, by contrast, remained disciplined and

Continued on Page 7

Mediators Are the 'Frontline Solution' to Pakistan's Case Backlog

The International Mediation & Arbitration Centre (IMAC), Ministry of Law and Justice, successfully concluded its 6-Day Internationally Accredited Civil/Commercial Mediation Training Programme at COMSTECH, Islamabad, marking another significant milestone in strengthening Pakistan's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) landscape.

The closing ceremony was graced by the Hon'ble Chief Guest, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb, who highlighted the urgent need to strengthen mediation mechanisms in Pakistan in light of the growing burden on courts and the increasing demand for efficient dispute resolution systems.

Addressing the participants, the Hon'ble Judge emphasized the significant backlog of cases before courts and observed that mediation offers a practical and effective pathway for reducing litigation burdens and ensuring timely justice. He encouraged mediators to dedicate part of their services on a pro bono basis to facilitate access to justice while also emphasizing that professional mediators should be adequately compensated in recognition of the efficiency, expertise, and value they bring to dispute resolution processes.

Justice Aurangzeb observed that mediation is increasingly becoming a highly promising and lucrative professional field globally, reflecting its growing acceptance as an indispensable component of modern justice systems.

Speaking on the occasion, Raja Naeem Akbar, Federal Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice, reiterated the Government of Pakistan's commitment to strengthening mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms across the country. He highlighted Pakistan's significant progress in ADR reforms, including the signing of the Singapore Convention on Mediation, ratification of the IOMed Convention, and the establishment of IMAC under the Ministry of Law and Justice.

During the ceremony, Ms. Aisha Rasool, Project Director IMAC and Senior Consultant, Ministry of Law and Justice, highlighted that the programme, conducted in accordance with internationally recognized standards of CMC (UK), IMI, and SIMI, forms part of IMAC's broader vision to develop a highly skilled national cadre of professional mediators and position Pakistan as a country promoting dialogue, peace-building, and effective dispute resolution. She stated that IMAC is building a new generation of professionals who will serve not merely as mediators, but as architects of peace, dialogue, and a more efficient justice system in Pakistan.

She also expressed gratitude to the Hon'ble Chief Guest and acknowledged the continued support of the Ministry of Law and Justice, ADR-ODR International, COMSTECH, and the dedicated IMAC team for their invaluable contribution towards the successful conduct of the programme.

The programme brought together a diverse group of participants, including parliamentarians, judges, judicial officers, legal practitioners, government officials, and professionals from various sectors, thereby further strengthening Pakistan's emerging ADR ecosystem.

The ceremony concluded with a renewed commitment from all stakeholders to continue promoting mediation as a faster, more efficient, and collaborative mechanism for dispute resolution across Pakistan. Certificates were distributed among successful participants upon completion of the internationally accredited programme.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Ashraf Al-Accat)

The Affiliation Trap: How Pakistani Institutes Filled Classrooms but Emptied Minds

Pakistan's higher education system is caught in a strange and painful paradox. On one hand, you have the main campuses of well-established universities buildings with modern libraries, fully equipped physics and chemistry laboratories, preserved specimens for zoology and botany, and faculty members holding foreign PhDs. On the other hand, you have affiliated colleges scattered in every district and town, often with broken furniture, no lab equipment, no qualified teachers, and classrooms so crowded that students sit on window ledges and floors. Yet, the main campuses are nearly empty for core subjects like Engineering, Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany, and even Social Sciences, while the same subjects in affiliated colleges are bursting with students. This is the affiliation trap: a system that promised to spread higher education to every corner of the country but ended up filling classrooms while systematically emptying young minds of real knowledge, skills, and critical thinking.

Let us first understand the reality of a main campus. Take a typical public university in a medium-sized city of Punjab or Sindh. The Department of Physics has a well maintained lab with oscilloscopes, spectrometers, and laser equipment. The Chemistry department has fume hoods, analytical balances, and chemicals for organic synthesis. Zoology has preserved animal specimens, microscopes, and a small museum. Botany has herbarium sheets, plant

growth chambers, and slides of plant tissues. The faculty includes professors who have published research in international journals and completed post-doctoral fellowships from reputable universities abroad. These teachers are ready to supervise research projects, guide students in laboratory techniques, and prepare them for competitive exams or higher studies abroad. Yet, walk into any lecture hall of that main campus for a morning class in Physics or Botany, and you will see only twenty to thirty students in a room designed for one hundred. Many of these students are there because they lost their scholarship or because their parents insisted. The rest of the seats remain empty. The university has invested millions of rupees in infrastructure, but the return on that investment is shockingly low.

Now turn your attention to an affiliated college in the same city or in a nearby small town. This college carries the name of that very same university. Its degree says the same thing. But walk into its Physics lab. There are no oscilloscopes. There might be two or three old multimeters that do not work. One or two dusty glass beakers sit on a shelf. The Chemistry lab has no fume hood and no distilled water. Students have never seen a titration performed properly. In Zoology, there are no preserved specimens; students learn from a dog-eared chart on the wall. Botany is taught through blackboard drawings. For Social Sciences like Sociology, Economics, Education or Political Science, there is no library with recent books or journals only a few old textbooks from

the 1990s. The Chairman of the Higher Education Commission must notice this pattern urgently. It is not enough to set quality standards for main campuses. The affiliation system must be completely overhauled. Specifically, policy formulation for the affiliation of important subjects and main campuses of universities must be given top priority for admission. First, enrollment shall be ensured at the main campuses for core science and social science disciplines. Only after main campus seats are filled and only in those affiliated colleges that fully meet the prescribed criteria for laboratories, qualified permanent faculty, library resources, and mandatory attendance shall admission be permitted at the affiliate level. Admissions to any affiliated college that fails to meet these standards must be stopped immediately, especially at the BS level. Colleges that cannot provide basic labs, qualified permanent faculty, and mandatory attendance should be disconnected from the affiliation system without delay. Furthermore, degrees from main campuses and affiliated colleges should be clearly distinguished, with formal recognition given only to those who earn their credentials through genuine academic work. Until then, Pakistan will continue to fill classrooms with bodies while emptying the nation of truly educated minds. The affiliation trap is not just an administrative failure; it is a quiet national crisis.

The writer is Associate Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Education at Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology (KFUEIT), Rahim Yar Khan.

Bowing the Giant

Oshaque Ali Buledi

In the volatile landscape of South Asian geopolitics, the discourse on kinetic conflict has migrated from the romanticism of cavalry charges to the calculated mathematics of "Network-Centric Warfare." The short-lived but intense confrontation in May 2025—sparked by India's "Operation Sindoor"—did more than just rattle the region; it fundamentally redefined the technological hierarchy of the subcontinent. While New Delhi sought to establish a new "pre-emptive" norm, Islamabad's response showcased a lean, integrated, and technologically superior defense apparatus that delivered a decisive strategic shock.

The Precision Revolution: Beyond Conventional Arms
 Pakistan's current military posture is defined by the doctrine of "Quid Pro Quo Plus," a calibrated strategy of disproportionate retaliation within a localized window. The core of this capability lies in a pivot toward qualitative superiority, specifically designed to negate the adversary's numerical advantage.

The 2025 engagements became a live-fire laboratory for this philosophy. While the induction of the Rafale was long touted as a "game-changer" for the Indian Air Force (IAF), the reality on May 7th proved far more complex. Utilizing the J-10C "Vigorous Dragon" and JF-17 Block III platforms, Pakistan demonstrated a masterclass in Beyond-Visual-Range (BVR) combat. Leveraging the PL-15 long-range air-to-air missile, Pakistani pilots effectively challenged the Rafale's invincibility. Reports from the four-day standoff suggest that as many as six Indian Rafale jets were neutralized. The failure was not one of hardware alone, but of a profound underestimation of the PAF's kinetic range and electronic warfare (EW) synchronization. By engaging from distances exceeding 180 kilometers—territory the IAF assumed to be safe—PAF assets secured multiple "kills" before the Indian formation could achieve a radar lock.

Network-Centric Warfare and the Drone Factor

Beyond the air superiority battle, the "Drone Revolution" has matured into a cornerstone of Pakistan's A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area Denial) strategy. The integration of Turkish-origin Akinci and Bayraktar TB2 platforms with the indigenous Shahpar-II has created an "attrition-free" battlefield for Islamabad. In the 2025 skirmishes, these unmanned systems allowed for high-precision strikes against mobilization hubs without the political risk of captured pilots. This capability, backed by the indigenously developed Fatah-II missile system, ensures that any "Cold Start" attempt is met with a lethal, automated response.

The Temporal Reality: The 15-Day Threshold
 Logistically and economically, a full-scale war between nuclear neighbors in 2026 is an obsolete concept. Modern high-intensity conflict consumes precision-guided munitions (PGMs) and fuel at a rate that mandates a short duration.

Logistical Depletion: High-intensity operations would likely reach a logistical "peak" within 14 to 20 days. Beyond this point, the exhaustion of high-end assets and the staggering daily cost—running into billions—would necessitate a ceasefire.

The Nuclear Ceiling: The presence of a "Full-Spectrum Deterrence"—ranging from the battlefield-denying Nasr to the MIRV-capable Ababeel—acts as a definitive regulator. Any conventional breach that threatens sovereign survival forces international powers to intervene within 72 to 96 hours to prevent global escalation.

Final Assessment: The Burden of Prestige
 The events of 2025 have solidified a recurring theme: in the modern South Asian theater, hardware is secondary to the "software" of strategy. Pakistan's ability to bow a technologically superior force in a matter of hours has turned high-cost prestige platforms like the Rafale into strategic liabilities.

Pakistan's defense is no longer about planting a flag; it is about the mathematical certainty that the cost of aggression will always exceed the gain. In the Information Age, the most potent weapon in Islamabad's arsenal is not the missile in the silo, but the strategic clarity that has turned South Asia into a theater of "Mutually Assured Stalemate."

Uzbekistan envoy visits Al-Shifa

Pakistan and Uzbekistan discuss regional ophthalmology cooperation

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: The Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan visited Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital to explore a potential partnership in eye care, including telemedicine, medical training, and institutional referrals for Uzbek patients.

Ambassador Alisher Tukhtaev, accompanied by Second Secretary Ravshan Jumanov, met Al-Shifa Trust leadership including President Maj Gen (Retd) Rehmat Khan and Administrator Dr Khalid Yazdani Shah. The delegation was briefed on the Trust's nationwide network and specialised services, including corneal treatment facilities led by Prof Dr Wajid Ali Khan, Chief of Medical Services.

Discussions identified several areas for future cooperation including telemedicine links, short-term internships for Uzbek healthcare professionals, exchange of medical technologies, hospital management systems, vocational education, and joint workshops and specialised training programmes.

Both sides also discussed collaborative outreach programmes in underserved communities and a proposal for a future presidential-level engagement aimed at formalising



healthcare cooperation between the two countries.

The talks come as Al-Shifa Trust expands its international outreach beyond Pakistan. In FY2024-25, it treated 5,632 patients and conducted more than 400 cataract surgeries in Somalia, part of a broader expansion targeting underserved regions including Afghanistan

and East Africa.

The Uzbekistan engagement marks Al-Shifa's first structured healthcare outreach into Central Asia, where specialised ophthalmology services remain limited outside major urban centres, particularly in corneal treatment, diabetic retinopathy screening, and paediatric eye care. Globally, cataract, refractive error, glau-

coma, and age-related macular degeneration remain among the leading causes of preventable blindness, with lower-income countries facing the largest treatment gaps.

If formalised, the arrangement could reduce treatment costs for Uzbek patients seeking specialised eye care abroad while opening medical training and

healthcare service export opportunities for Pakistan's healthcare sector.

Ambassador Tukhtaev praised the hospital's patient-focused infrastructure and adherence to international clinical standards.

Head of Marketing AST Raja Sabeeh Shamim and Pakistan's representative to the Uzbekistan embassy Hamid Mehmood were



also present in the meeting.

Officials said expanding bilateral cooperation in medical services and education could open a new chapter in regional healthcare collaboration. They

said Al-Shifa Trust operates Pakistan's largest eye care outreach network through seven hospitals and thousands of medical camps, providing free treatment to nearly 80 to 90 percent of its patients.

Overseas Leader Congratulates ANF Punjab Commander on Tamgha-e-Imtiaz

Anwar Chohan

KHARIAN: Overseas Leader Chaudhry Rizwan Mukhtar Ahmed has extended heartfelt congratulations to Commander Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Punjab, on being conferred the prestigious "Tamgha-e-Imtiaz" by the Government of Pakistan in recognition of his outstanding services to the nation.

In his congratulatory message, Chaudhry Rizwan Mukhtar Ahmed termed the award a proud moment and a well-deserved recog-

nition of Brigadier Sikandar Hayat Chaudhry's unwavering commitment, exceptional leadership, and remarkable contributions in the fight against narcotics. He said that under Brigadier Sikandar Hayat Chaudhry's leadership, ANF Punjab has played a significant role in combating drug trafficking, protecting communities, and safeguarding the youth from the devastating impacts of narcotics.

He further stated that Brigadier Sikandar Hayat Chaudhry has demonstrated exemplary

professionalism, integrity, and dedication throughout his service, making valuable contributions toward strengthening law enforcement efforts and promoting a safer society. According to him, the conferment of the Tamgha-e-Imtiaz reflects the Government of Pakistan's acknowledgment of his distinguished performance and tireless efforts in serving the country.

Chaudhry Rizwan Mukhtar Ahmed added that individuals like Brigadier Sikandar Hayat Chaudhry serve as an inspi-

ration for future generations through their patriotism, discipline, and devotion to duty. He expressed confidence that Brigadier Sikandar Hayat Chaudhry will continue to serve the nation with the same passion and commitment in the years ahead.

He also extended his best wishes to Brigadier Sikandar Hayat Chaudhry, his family, colleagues, and the entire ANF fraternity on this prestigious national honor, praying for his continued success and further achievements in the service of Pakistan.



The Eternal Flame of Sacrifice: A Message for All Humanity

There are moments in human history so luminous, so absolute in their moral clarity, that they cease to belong to any single age or civilization. They become the inheritance of all mankind — stories not written in ink alone, but engraved upon the conscience of humanity itself. The story of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and his son Hazrat Ismael (AS) is one such moment. It is the story of a father, a son, a mountain, and a love for the Divine so total and so pure that it shattered the boundaries of time — and continues to echo, fourteen centuries later, in the hearts of billions across every corner of the earth.

Eid-ul-Azha, the Festival of Sacrifice, is far more than a religious observance. It is a universal conversation — between the finite and the infinite, between the self and the soul, between what we cling to and what we are called to release. Every year, as millions across the globe turn their faces toward the sky in prayer and bow their heads in remembrance, this ancient story pulses with fresh, urgent meaning for a world that has never needed its message more.

The Man Who Walked Through Fire — Literally and Figuratively

Hazrat Ibrahim (AS), known to the faithful as Khalilullah — the Friend of Allah — did not arrive at greatness through ease. His life was a sustained confrontation with trial. He was cast into flame for challenging the idols of his society. He was exiled from his homeland for speaking truth to power. He wandered across deserts and built a civilization in barren wilderness through sheer faith and divine trust. Every chapter of his life is a testament to one truth that transcends religion and culture alike: that genuine greatness is not bestowed; it is forged — in the crucible of suffering, surrender, and unwavering conviction.

Yet of all the trials Ibrahim (AS) endured — and they were many and severe — nothing could compare to what came as the ultimate test. The command arrived not from any earthly

authority, but from the Source of all existence: to offer his beloved son, Ismael (AS), in sacrifice. For a father who had waited decades for a child — who had prayed through years of longing and solitude — this was not merely a sacrifice. It was the surrender of his most precious human attachment, the letting go of everything that the human heart holds dearest.

And yet — he did not waver.

A Son Who Met His Father's Tears with Courage

What makes the story of sacrifice immortal is not simply the obedience of a father. It is the extraordinary response of a son.

When Ibrahim (AS), his heart heavy with love and sorrow, informed his young son Ismael (AS) of the divine command, the world held its breath. Here was a child standing at the edge of his own ending, looking into the eyes of a grieving father. What would he say?

O my father! Do as you are commanded; you will find me, if Allah wills, among the steadfast. — Holy Quran

These words are among the most magnificent ever spoken by a human being. In them there is no trembling. No self-pity. No negotiation with fate. There is only a young man, his face turned toward heaven, his hand placed gently in his father's — offering not only his life, but his willingness, his peace, his trust. Ismael (AS) did not merely submit to sacrifice; he chose it, consciously, spiritually, completely.

What Is Really Being Sacrificed?

The ritual of Qurbani — the sacrifice of an animal — is a beautiful and powerful act of remembrance. But Islam itself is explicit on the matter.

The Holy Quran declares: "It is not their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah; it is your piety that reaches Him."

Every year, the real invitation of Eid-ul-Azha goes unheard beneath the noise of festivity. The invitation is this: What will you sacrifice? Not only the lamb or the goat — but the habits that diminish your humanity. The pride that walls you off from others. The greed that narrows your world to what you can possess. The indifference that allows you to walk past suffering without flinching. The ego that cannot forgive, cannot bend, cannot serve.

True Qurbani is the sacrifice of the inner tyrant — the part of us that hoards when others are hungry, that judges when others stumble, that speaks when wisdom demands silence, and that stays silent when justice demands speech.

In this sense, the festival of sacrifice is not uniquely Islamic. It speaks in a language that every human heart, regardless of faith or geography, already knows. Every great spiritual tradition has understood that the self must be surrendered before the soul can fully live. The message of Ibrahim (AS) and Ismael (AS) is a message written not only in Arabic — it is written in the universal grammar of the human condition.

The World That Needs This Message Most

We live in an era of extraordinary paradox. Humanity has never been more technologically connected — and never more spiritually isolated. We have built systems of extraordinary sophistication, yet millions sleep hungry while others discard food without thought. We have constructed entire philosophical architectures around individual rights, yet the most basic right of the poor — the right to dignity — is routinely denied.

Across the world today, families

huddle in the dark because they cannot afford electricity. Parents skip meals so their children do not. Patients forgo treatment because the cost is beyond reach. Children sit in classrooms with empty stomachs, their minds struggling to learn what their bodies cannot sustain. These are not statistics. They are people — neighbors, perhaps, to those who celebrate.

The spirit of Eid-ul-Azha speaks directly into this reality. The tradition of distributing sacrificial meat — one-third to the poor, one-third to neighbors, one-third to family — is not merely a custom. It is a system. A divinely designed mechanism for redistributing joy, for ensuring that the celebration of the fortunate reaches the table of the forgotten.

This is Islam's vision of social justice, expressed not in theory but in practice — on the streets, in the neighborhoods, in the hands of those who give and the hearts of those who receive.

Ismael's Legacy for the Youth of Today

Every generation of young people inherits the world at a moment of crisis — and believes, not without reason, that theirs is the most difficult era to navigate. Today's youth face a landscape of relentless pressure: the noise of social media constructing impossible ideals of beauty and success; economies that make security elusive; institutions that have lost the trust of those they were built to serve; and a moral marketplace where competing voices make it difficult to know what is true, what is good, what is worth becoming.

Into this landscape, the figure of Ismael (AS) steps quietly and offers something invaluable: a model of youth who is neither naive nor cynical. He is not reckless with his courage, nor is he broken by his circumstances. He is clear. He knows who he is, what he values, and whom he trusts. He can look at the most terrifying moment of

his life and meet it with grace.

This is not weakness disguised as submission. This is the rarest form of strength — the strength that does not need to dominate or destroy, but only to stand — upright, faithful, unafraid.

The Sacrifice That Sustains Society

There is a kind of sacrifice that does not announce itself. It does not arrive on a sacred day or wear the garments of ceremony. It happens in kitchens before dawn, in hospital corridors at midnight, in classrooms on ordinary Tuesday mornings.

A mother who suppresses her own dreams so her children might dream more freely. A teacher who stays after the bell for the student who finally understood something. A doctor in a resource-starved clinic who chooses, again and again, to show up. A worker who performs their labor with integrity when dishonesty would go undetected and unpunished.

These are the living inheritors of Sunnat-e-Ibrahimi. They may not use that language. They may belong to different faiths or none at all. But the essence of what they practice is the same truth that Ibrahim and Ismael embodied on that sacred mountaintop: that the measure of a human life is what we give, not what we gather.

This is the sacrifice that sustains civilization — not the dramatic gesture performed in public, but the quiet offering made in private, again and again, because it is right.

A Nation Cannot Rise on Ritual Alone

The Muslim world today stands at a crossroads. Rich in faith and history, it faces deep challenges — poverty, political instability, educational inequality, and a crisis of moral leadership. These are not solved by observance alone. They are solved by the transformation of individual character, multiplied across millions of hearts.

The legacy of Ibrahim (AS) is ultimately a call to moral courage in civic life. It asks: will you be honest when dishonesty is more convenient? Will you serve the public good when private interest tempts you otherwise? Will you protect the weak when power

stands against them?

The real Sunnat-e-Ibrahimi for nations is the willingness to build institutions of justice, to educate every child, to care for every citizen, to refuse corruption even when the whole structure around you has been built on it. It is the sacrifice of short-term comfort for long-term integrity.

A civilization worthy of its heritage is not one that slaughters the most animals on Eid. It is one that has slaughtered the inner idols of injustice, arrogance, and indifference — and built something better in their place.

The Flame That Does Not Die

Thousands of years have passed since a father and son walked together up a mountain in an act of total surrender. Empires have risen and fallen. Languages have been born and died. Civilizations have transformed beyond recognition.

And still — every year — billions remember.

They remember because the story is not finished. It continues in every human heart that chooses love over fear, generosity over hoarding, truth over convenience, service over self-interest. The sacrifice of Ibrahim (AS) and Ismael (AS) was completed in a single morning. But the spirit of that sacrifice is renewed every time a human being chooses to live for something greater than themselves.

This is the eternal flame of Eid-ul-Azha. It does not belong to one people, one century, or one creed. It belongs to all of humanity — to every person who has ever stood at the edge of what they most love and heard, in the silence of the soul, the quiet call to let it go.

May we all, in our own ways and in our own times, find the courage to answer.

The Author is a distinguished academic and scholar. He served as Professor and Head of the Department of Entomology at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad. His writings bridge the worlds of science, faith, and social thought, exploring how timeless spiritual principles guide modern human life.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
165,596.07	166,498.83
Day's High	Day's Low
166,924.48	165,291.53
Index Value	Change
12,645,893,676	-902.76
Percentage	Time
-0.54%	15 May, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,195.37	-177.56
Percentage	Time
-1.77%	15 May, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
49,609.87	-453.59
Percentage	Time
-0.91%	15 May, 3:22 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
61,409.29	-1,244.76
Percentage	Time
-1.99%	15 May, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	198.36	202.25
Bahrain Dinar	731.47	742.75
Canadian Dollar	201.53	205.46
China Yuan	40	41.05
Danish Krone	43.35	43.75
Euro	324.32	328.95
Hong Kong Dollar	35.06	36.03
Indian Rupee	2.50	2.75
Japanese Yen	1.7423	1.8424
Kuwaiti Dinar	879.28	889.06
Malaysian Ringgit	65.25	66.20
New Zealand \$	162.10	165.35
Norwegians Krone	27.70	28
Omani Riyal	722.05	732.85
Qatari Riyal	74.65	75.55
Saudi Riyal	74.35	75.35
Singapore Dollar	216.55	220.95
Swedish Korona	30.35	30.65
Swiss Franc	352.69	357.68
Thai Bhat	8.50	8.70
U.A.E Dirham	75.75	76.85
UK Pound Sterling	372.17	377.30
US Dollar	279.05	279.70

Finance Minister says Pakistan's Entry into China's Capital Market Marks New Era of Financial Cooperation

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, has said that Pakistan's inaugural Panda Bond issuance marks a transformational step in the country's financial landscape and opens a new chapter in Pakistan-China economic cooperation by enabling Pakistan to access the world's second-largest and second-deepest capital market for the first time.

In an interview with China Global Television Network (CGTN) following the official Panda Bond Issuance Ceremony in Beijing, the Finance Minister stated that the successful issuance reflects the growing confidence of Chinese institutions and global investors in Pakistan's macroeconomic stability, reform agenda, and economic direction.

Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb emphasized that the Panda Bond issuance is not only significant for Pakistan's financing strategy but also contributes towards the internationalisation of the Renminbi (RMB). He noted that nearly one-quarter of bilateral trade between Pakistan and China is already being settled in RMB and Chinese Yuan (CNY), highlighting the increasing financial integration and expanding economic partnership between the two countries.

Discussing the broader trajectory of Pakistan-China economic cooperation, the Finance Minister observed that while the first phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) largely focused on infrastructure development under the Belt and



Road Initiative (BRI), the second phase is increasingly centered on business-to-business collaboration, industrial cooperation, and monetisation of infrastructure assets.

He stated that the strategic priorities of Pakistan and China remain closely aligned in promoting connectivity, trade, investment, and sustainable economic growth.

CFO Conference

Group photo of the senior delegates at the Islamabad edition of the ICAP CFO Conference 2026, themed as "The New Playbook — Adapt, Innovate, Elevate".



BYD's Great Pakistan Adventure Uncovers the Beauty of Pakistan Through Four Cinematic Journeys

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: BYD, the world's No.1 NEV brand, launched The Great Pakistan Adventure (GPA), a first-of-its-kind cinematic travel series exploring Pakistan's diverse landscapes, cultures, and untold stories enabled by the BYD Shark 6, Pakistan's most powerful PHEV pickup.

Ayesha Janjua, VP Marketing at BYD Pakistan - Mega Motor Company (MMC), sharing the vision of the campaign said, "Pakistan is a country of extraordinary landscapes, people, and untold stories. Through The Great Pakistan Adventure, we wanted to shine a light on communities and experiences that often go unseen, yet reflect the resilience, warmth, and spirit of the nation."

Talking with the media, Syed Haider Mujtaba, GM

Marketing at BYD Pakistan - MMC, highlighted, "At the heart of The Great Pakistan Adventure is cinematic storytelling in its rawest and most authentic form, capturing the capability of BYD Shark 6 across diverse terrains."

Directed by acclaimed filmmaker Zohaib Kazi, The Great Pakistan Adventure follows four distinct expeditions featuring adventurer Abrar Hassan tracking the elusive snow leopard in Hushe Valley, storyteller Maryam Raja exploring Sindh's living traditions and wildlife, content creator Bilal Hassan (Mystapaki) journeying through the deserts of Cholistan and Bahawalpur, and Nadir Nahdi discovering surf culture and the local community along the coastlines of Karachi and Balochistan.

FPCCI Establishes Pakistan-USA Business Council to Strengthen Bilateral Trade and Investment Cooperation

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, will lead a high-powered business delegation to the United States in August 2026. Under his leadership, the Pakistan-USA Business Council has been formally established to institutionalize and expand bilateral trade, investment, and private-sector cooperation between Pakistan and the United States.

The first meeting of the Pakistan-USA Business Council of FPCCI was held at the FPCCI President Office in Islamabad. The meeting was convened by Mr. Malik Sohail Hussain, Chairman Pakistan-USA Business Council.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the U. S. Embassy Islamabad, including Mr. Jay Kim and Mr. Ayan Ali Khan from the Economic and Trade Section. FPCCI Vice President Mr. Tariq Khan Jadoon, Director Pakistan-USA Business Council Mr. Karim Aziz Malik, Ms. Samina Fazil, Mr. Jabbar Raheem, Syed Hasnain Kazmi, Mr. Sikandar Khan, along with other members of the Council,



were also present.

FPCCI will organize a high-powered business delegation to the United States in August 2026. In continuation of these initiatives, the Pakistan-USA Business

Council will collaborate with Mr. Farooq Mirza, President 4th Pillar, New York, to commemorate Marka-e-Haq in New York alongside business networking engagements.

Karandaaz and PBA Accelerate Shift Towards Impact Finance in Pakistan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Karandaaz Pakistan, in partnership with the Pakistan Banks Association (PBA) and supported by the Ministry of Finance, held the two-day "Impact Finance Training (IFT) 2026: From Value to Vision" workshop in Karachi on May 14-15, 2026.

The event convened senior professionals from banks, DFIs, and investment firms to integrate impact finance principles into lending and investment decisions, led by Alex MacGillivray of the Joint Impact Model Foundation.

Speakers underscored the critical role of mobilizing private capital for sustainable growth and climate resilience in Pakistan.

Thomas Burge of the British Deputy High

Commission noted the need for a financial sector equipped with skills to deliver high-impact investments. Adnan Pasha Siddiqui, Advisor to the Finance Minister, stressed that mobilizing outcome-linked private capital is vital for Pakistan's socio-economic and climate goals, mentioning the government's development of a supportive policy framework for impact investing.

Syed Salim Raza, Chairperson of Karandaaz Pakistan, emphasized that impact finance is an evolution in assessing risk and value, requiring institutions to direct capital toward measurable social, economic, and environmental outcomes, which the training facilitates through practical integration frameworks.

Haji Saleem Raza Butt of "Bao Ji Murgh Pulao" Passed Away



Commerce Desk

RAWALPINDI: Renowned business and social figure of Rawalpindi and Vice Chairman of Rawalpindi Restaurant Caterer Sweet & Baker Association, Haji Saleem Raza Butt, has passed away. His demise has been deeply mourned across business, social, and trade circles, where people have expressed profound grief and sorrow over the loss.

The funeral prayer (Namaz-e-Janaza) will be offered on Sunday, 17 May 2026 at 10:00 AM at Fatima Mosque, House No. 169, Street No. 01, Bahria Town Phase 7. The family has requested all friends, relatives, and members of the business community to attend the funeral and pray for the forgiveness of the deceased.

President of the Association Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry, Chairman Mumtaz Ahmed, and Patron-in-Chief Chaudhry Muhammad Naem, along with other business and social leaders, expressed deep sorrow over his passing, terming it a great loss. They said that the late Haji Saleem Butt was a noble, sincere, and dignified personality whose services will always be remembered. May Allah Almighty grant the deceased the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous and give patience to the bereaved family. Ameen.

NDMS commences dredging at Port Qasim marking new era

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dredging is a critical prerequisite for efficient port operations. However, due to non existence of indigenous dredging capability, the capital dredging at Pakistan's Ports had not been undertaken since 1980 restricting the port's ability to accommodate larger vessels.

Consequently, dredging activities had to be outsourced to foreign companies leading to a substantial outflow of valuable foreign exchange.

Recently the Government of Pakistan decided to establish National Dredging and Marine Services (NDMS) company. As a joint initiative, NDMS company brings together the expertise of National Logistics Corporation (NLC), Karachi Port Trust (KPT), Port Qasim Authority (PQA) and Gwadar Port Authority (GPA). This partnership reflects a unified national effort to strengthen institutional capacity and enhance maritime infrastructure.

NDMS company has formally commenced



dredging operations at Port Qasim marking the beginning of a new era in indigenous port maintenance capabilities.

Launching ceremony of dredging operations was held at Port Qasim. Chairman Port

Qasim Authority Rear Admiral Syed Moazzam Ilyas (Retd) was the chief guest on the occasion. Chairman KPT, senior officials of port terminals and Pakistan Customs also attended the ceremony.

Fatima Sana Shatters Women's T20I Record with Lightning-Fast Fifty

Asim Tanveer

LAHORE: Pakistan women's cricket captain Fatima Sana etched her name into the history books on Saturday, 16 May 2026, by smashing the fastest half-century in Women's T20 International cricket. The explosive batter achieved the feat in just 15 balls during the third T20I against Zimbabwe at a venue in Pakistan, helping her side complete a dominant 3-0 series white-wash.

Sana, leading from the front, reached her fifty in a mere 15 deliveries — breaking the previous world record of 18 balls jointly held by New Zealand's Sophie Devine, Australia's Phoebe Litchfield, and India's Richa Ghosh. She eventually remained unbeaten on a blistering 62 off just 19 balls, studded with 10 boundaries and 2 sixes at a staggering strike rate exceeding 326. Her innings powered Pakistan to a formidable total of 223 for 4 in their 20 overs.



The hosts then dismantled Zimbabwe's batting lineup with clinical efficiency, securing a massive 133-run victory to sweep the series 3-0. The win not only underlined Pakistan's superiority in the short format but also highlighted the growing depth and firepower in their women's team under Sana's captaincy.

This record-breaking knock comes as a significant morale booster for Pakistan cricket. Fatima Sana's innings was a masterclass in aggressive batting, blending clean striking with fearless intent from the very first ball. Fans and experts alike hailed the performance as one of the most destructive in recent women's T20 history.

With this milestone, Sana has joined an elite list of batters who have redefined the boundaries of power-hitting in the shortest format of the game. Her achievement is expected to inspire a new generation of young cricketers across Pakistan, especially girls



dreaming of representing the green and white at the highest level.

Pakistan's comprehensive series victory against Zimbabwe further strengthens their position in women's cricket rankings and builds momentum

ahead of bigger challenges in the international calendar. Fatima Sana's record will undoubtedly be talked about for years to come as a shining example of Pakistan's rising prowess in women's T20 cricket.

Malmo Launches Nutritious Whey Drink, Expands Healthy Beverage Options for Consumers

News Desk

LAHORE: As consumers increasingly shift towards healthier and more functional food and beverage choices, protein-rich and whey-based drinks are rapidly gaining popularity worldwide for their nutritional value, convenience, and ability to support active lifestyles. Recognising this growing demand in Pakistan, Malmo has officially launched its new Whey Drink at its in Lahore, marking a significant step in the brand's expansion into the health and wellness beverage segment.

The newly introduced Malmo Whey Drink is designed to offer consumers a refreshing beverage that combines taste with nutritional value. Developed with a whey-based formulation, the drink provides a convenient option for individuals seeking flavorful beverages that can complement busy and active daily routines. The product

particularly caters to students, working professionals, fitness-conscious consumers, and people looking for healthier grab-and-go refreshment choices.

The launch event attracted customers, media representatives, influencers, and members of the local community. Guests participated in product sampling activities, customer engagement sessions, and exclusive promotional experiences organised to celebrate the product introduction.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Kashif Jabbar, GM Malmo, said the launch reflects the company's long-term vision of introducing innovative products aligned with evolving consumer preferences.

"Consumers today are becoming increasingly conscious about what they eat and drink. With the launch of Malmo Whey Drink, we wanted to introduce a product that not only



offers refreshing taste but also aligns with modern lifestyle needs. This launch represents our commitment to innovation, quality, and creating better beverage experiences for our customers," he stated.

The company believes the launch comes at a time when Pakistan's

beverage market is witnessing changing trends, with consumers showing growing interest in products that offer nutritional benefits alongside convenience and flavor. Industry experts note that whey-based beverages are increasingly being recognised globally for their protein content and

suitability for active lifestyles, post-workout recovery, and daily nutritional supplementation.

Building on this growing awareness, Malmo aims to strengthen its position in Pakistan's expanding health-focused beverage market by introducing products that respond directly to consumer

needs and lifestyle shifts.

According to company representatives, the Whey Drink has been carefully developed to serve multiple consumption occasions, including daily refreshment, post-workout hydration, and on-the-go nutritional intake, while maintaining the brand's focus on taste and quality.

The strong public response at the launch event further highlighted increasing consumer interest in innovative and health-oriented beverage products in Pakistan. Malmo stated that it will continue investing in product development and customer-focused innovation as part of its broader growth strategy in the lifestyle and beverage sector.

The launch of the new Whey Drink marks another milestone for Malmo as it continues to diversify its portfolio and expand its footprint in Pakistan's evolving consumer market.

Caught in the Crossfire: How the U. S.-Iran War Impacted Pakistan

Zarlish Ali

While negotiations offer hope abroad, we, the ordinary citizens of Pakistan are already paying the price at home. Fuel costs have surged, rising inflation, and the burden of IMF loans—subsidy arrangements and structural adjustment policies are felt nationwide. Pakistan has always been instrumental in regional diplomacy; this is not new. Yet, while our strategic importance is clear, we must also shift our focus to strengthening and stabilizing the economy at home. This is where we are falling behind. Yes, Pakistanis can take pride in our diplomatic role, but the nation also needs tangible leverage at home.

Why a distant war feels immediate at home. According to the report of Al Jazeera, Pakistan imports 80% of its imports through the Gulf Region; authorities have failed to roll out alternative measures for conserving fuel, causing an economic crisis for years. Particularly, as

a university student, I faced three weeks of online mode with rising fare prices of indrive and yango charging double to triple on our usual prices. Still, we have Fridays on online mode with chances of complete lockdown in upcoming weeks. Meanwhile, rising inflation has pushed the prices of fruits, vegetables, meat, and chicken sharply upward, multiplied by factors such as monsoon rains. While the government apparently announced free public transport in the last few days to now with the news of complete shutdown of local transport, hidden behind the cover of security for upcoming second round of negotiations or maybe reducing consumption of fuel. Beforehand, local transport fares here continued to rise unchecked.

Apparently, a ceasefire announcement will not let the oil prices go down easily. In particular, we need to understand the dynamics of how imports and exports work. Companies that bought fuel at high prices cannot instantly lower costs, and global supply chain disruptions have increased freight, insurance, and shipping costs. According to recent

survey data, Pakistan faces some of its sharpest increasing prices of fuel with half of respondents citing inflation as a major concern. Bangladesh, India and Pakistan import almost two third of their local LNG supplies via strait of Hormuz. Signaling its not only about national but at regional level too. In 2024, gas fired generation plants dominated roughly half of the power sector of Bangladesh and one quarter for Pakistan. Disrupted LNG supplies would threaten electricity supply security in those price sensitive markets and could lead to price hikes and production mismanagement for fertilizers. Pakistan is a resilient country, but the fallout affects governance, fiscal policies, bureaucratic structures, and institutional capacity. Ceasefire may bring short term relief in petrol and oil prices but instant relief is not possible, supply chain disruptions and market adjustment shows positive immediate relief is unlikely. In a world of changing scenarios, distant conflicts can impose immediate and lasting costs on countries that played no role in initiating them.

For Pakistan, true growth and stability will require not only becoming relevant in the international realm but also strengthening strong domestic policies to buffer against global shocks. The country must prioritize diversifying its energy sources and adopting long-term policy reforms to ensure sustainable growth. It should also pay focus to domestic factors affecting citizens well being nowadays like HIV outbreak in Taunsa due to domestic level negligence to farmers protest. While Pakistan has performed well in safeguarding national security and strategic interests, economic resilience must come first, working hand in hand with security to protect the wellbeing of its citizens. Policymakers should recognize that peace alone is not enough; unless the economy at home is shielded from external shocks, otherwise ordinary citizens will continue to bear the cost of wars they had no part in. Pakistan should recognize the fact that its strategic achievements should translate into tangible benefits at home too.

The writer is student of National Defence University, Islamabad

Taha Mehmood hits ton in Regional Inter District Senior (Karachi Region) Cricket Tournament

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Zone-I defeated Zone-II by 102 runs in the last Group Match of the Regional Inter District Senior (Karachi Region) Cricket Tournament at KCCA Stadium. Zone-I 1st Innings 145, and started their 2nd Innings overnight Score 327/8 and declared 355/9 in the 2nd Innings. Taha Mehmood 151 not out with the help of 20x4 1x6, Farmam Ali 45, Muhammad Umar Sheikh 38, Wahab Zafar 27, Rehman Ghani 25, Zubair Khan 22, Ali Shanwari 3/51.

Zone-II 1st Innings 127 and 2nd Innings Chasing a target of 374 and were all-out for 271 in 75 overs. Ali Shinwari 76 7x4 5x6, Ali Hassan 66 8x4 1x6, Farooq 54 7x4, Syed Shaheer Ali 51 7x4, Muhammad Mubashir 3/58, Bahadur Ali 2/32.

Trump in Beijing...

Continued from Page 4

restrained. He offered polite gestures, symbolic hospitality, and carefully measured compliments, but avoided emotional reciprocity. This imbalance itself became symbolic. To many analysts, it reflected a reversal of psychological positioning between the two powers. America appeared eager for accommodation; China appeared comfortable waiting. Trump openly admired Xi and praised China's hospitality, while Beijing calmly held its ground on virtually every critical issue—from Taiwan to Iran, sanctions, shipping, and strategic competition.

Even more significantly, China now understands America's vulnerabilities far better than before. Beijing witnessed how quickly American stockpiles of precision-guided weapons were consumed during the Iran conflict. It saw how difficult and expensive prolonged modern warfare had become. It also saw that despite enormous military expenditures, Washington failed to decisively bend Iran to its will or secure uncontested dominance over the Strait of Hormuz.

China now increasingly believes that economic resilience, technological advancement, industrial capacity, and strategic patience can gradually outlast American pressure.

The tariff war itself reinforced this conclusion. Washington expected tariffs to severely damage China's economy. Instead, many American

farmers suffered as China reduced agricultural imports and diversified suppliers. Soybean producers, meat exporters, and farming communities across the United States felt the consequences sharply. Beijing endured the tariffs while maintaining industrial production and export competitiveness.

By the end of the visit, Trump appeared to be requesting renewed Chinese purchases more than dictating terms. The broader geopolitical message of the Beijing summit was therefore unmistakable: the global order is shifting from bipolar dominance toward strategic multipolarity, with China increasingly acting not as a challenger seeking acceptance, but as a confident superpower shaping the rules of engagement.

The visit achieved little in concrete terms. There was no major Taiwan understanding, no Iran breakthrough, no Hormuz settlement, no sanctions resolution, and no transformational trade agreement. Yet paradoxically, the trip may still prove historic—not because of what was signed, but because of what it revealed.

It revealed an America struggling to preserve leverage it once took for granted, and a China increasingly convinced that history is moving in its direction.

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

Governor Punjab's Two-Year Tenure Reflects Commitment to Public Welfare

Malik Faisal Munir

In Pakistan's political landscape, there are certain personalities who are not confined merely to political offices but establish their identity through public service, social welfare, and practical initiatives. Sardar Saleem Haider Khan is among those figures who, during his two-year tenure as Governor of Punjab, undertook notable initiatives across various sectors. A review of his performance clearly shows that he not only worked to improve administrative affairs but also played a practical role in the fields of public welfare, education, healthcare, and social service.

When he assumed the office of Governor of Punjab two years ago, the universities of Punjab were facing administrative and legal complications. Appeals pending for nearly two years had created difficulties for teachers, students, and university administrations. However, the Governor took the matter seriously and introduced effective measures to resolve these pending cases. As a result, several universities in Punjab are now achieving better positions in the global QS Rankings, marking a positive

development in the field of education.

Social welfare projects hold special importance in the Governor's two-year performance. Organizing collective marriages for daughters of underprivileged and low-income families is an initiative that is always appreciated in society. Arranging the marriages of 166 girls in Lahore and Fateh Jang, District Attock, was not only a welfare activity but also a remarkable expression of social responsibility. Moreover, the announcement of collective marriages for another 100 girls in Pindi Gheb has further expanded the scope of this service. According to an official statement issued by the Governor Punjab, appeals pending for three years with the Provincial Ombudsman were also resolved.

The transgender community was also given special attention in his policies. Distribution of health cards worth up to five hundred thousand rupees, laptops, and ration bags at the Governor House Lahore set a positive example of supporting a marginalized segment of society. Similarly, the distribution of laptops among students in the remote and underdeveloped tehsils of District Attock,

with the support of philanthropists, can be regarded as an important effort to connect the younger generation with modern technology and education.

During natural disasters, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan also played a role in helping affected communities. Providing ration supplies to flood victims in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through the Pakistan Red Crescent Society demonstrated that the public was not left alone during difficult times. Likewise, large gatherings in celebration of Eid Milad un Nabi were organized at Governor House Lahore, attended by thousands of people. On the occasion of Eid Milad un Nabi, Umrah tickets were distributed last year and 76 this year. A solar system was also installed at the shrine of Bibi Pak Daman Shrine in Lahore. The people-friendly policies, humble nature, close relations with the public and political leadership, ideological maturity, and continuous struggle of Sardar Saleem Haider Khan have made him an admirable and exemplary personality. His political wisdom, sincerity, and spirit of public service serve as a guiding light for the younger generation. He is recognized not only as a seasoned politi-

cian but also as a genuine representative of the people.

Another significant aspect of Governor Punjab's performance relates to developmental thinking and the promotion of investment. He repeatedly emphasized that Pakistan offers immense opportunities for investment and that restoring investors' confidence is essential. His support for amendments to Punjab's traffic fine laws, as well as his advocacy for local government elections and the revival of student unions, reflects a democratic mindset.

His stance on political and constitutional matters has also remained clear and consistent. Overall, the two-year performance of Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan prominently highlights achievements in education, healthcare, welfare services, social development, and administrative reforms. Although criticism and differences of opinion regarding any government figure are part of the democratic process, it remains a fact that various public welfare initiatives have become a defining feature of his tenure. If this continuity is maintained in the future, there is every hope for further improvement in Punjab's welfare and educational sectors.

Final Match

KARACHI: First Lady Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari attended the final match of the series between Pakistan Women and Zimbabwe Women at the National Stadium, on Saturday.



Photo: PID

Palestinians attend funeral of Hamas military wing chief



Xinhua

Palestinians attend the funeral of Izz al-Din al-Haddad, a senior commander in the al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, and his family members killed in an Israeli airstrike, in Gaza City, May

16, 2026. The death of Izz al-Din al-Haddad was confirmed as preparations for his funeral began on Saturday. Al-Haddad was killed by an Israeli airstrike on Friday evening. The death of Izz al-Din al-Haddad was confirmed as preparations for his funeral began on Saturday.

Naqvi arrives in Tehran to 'facilitate' US-Iran peace talks

Monitoring Desk

TEHRAN: Pakistan's interior minister arrived in Tehran on Saturday "to facilitate" the peace talks between Iran and the United States that have stalled despite a fragile ceasefire, Iranian media reported. "Mohsin Naqvi arrived today in the Islamic Republic of Iran on an official two-day visit as part of Pakistan's ongoing efforts to facilitate talks and promote regional peace," the Tasnim News Agency reported.

Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni received Naqvi, whose visit to Tehran comes days after that of Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir. In April, Field Marshal Munir, along with a Pakistani delegation including



Naqvi, paid a three-day visit to Tehran, where he met Iranian civil and military leadership as part of Islamabad's mediation efforts to end the US-Israeli war on Iran. During his stay, he met

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian in Tehran and Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters Commander Major General Ali Abdollahi. Field Marshal Munir had also held separate meet-

ings with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Iran's Parliament Speaker Ghalibaf, who were part of the delegation that held direct talks with a US delegation in Islamabad last

month.

In today's meeting with Naqvi, Momeni appreciated Field Marshal Munir's efforts to help resolve tensions with the US, Iranian media reported.

Islamabad has been actively mediating in the peace talks between Iran and the US, and last month hosted a high-stakes meeting between delegations from both sides.

A ceasefire that began on April 8 has largely halted the fighting that erupted when US and Israeli forces attacked Iran on February 28.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday that Tehran had received messages from Washington indicating that President Donald Trump's administration was willing to continue negotiations.

Ishaq Dar visits Data Darbar, reviews development projects

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar visited Data Darbar in Lahore and reviewed ongoing development projects. On his arrival, Secretary Auqaf Dr. Ehsan Bhutta and Administrator Data Darbar Mohammad Ali Khan accorded a warm welcome to Ishaq Dar.

Later, presiding over a special meeting, Ishaq Dar directed to provide the best facilities to be provided to Zaireen and devotees.



Addressing the participants, Mohammad Ishaq Dar said that Data Darbar is a symbol of cultural and spiritual heritage.

Member Central Board of Revenue Nabeel Javed said that all the development projects are underway in a professional manner.

Secretary Auqaf Dr. Ehsan Bhutta said that we are taking all measures to provide the best and secure environment to devotees.

Extraordinary arrangements are being finalized to best host the pilgrims on the occasion of the Ghul program.

'Cocaine Queen' empire crumbles: 24 arrests including 11 Africans

City Desk

KARACHI: Law enforcement agencies have arrested 24 people across Pakistan following disclosures made by Anmol alias Pinky, widely dubbed the "Cocaine Queen," the alleged kingpin of a sprawling drug network stretching from Karachi to Lahore.

Among those arrested are 11 African nationals who, according to investigators, smuggled cocaine into Pakistan and supplied it to Pinky.

Investigators said the African nationals had married Pakistani women, apparently to facilitate their operations. Arrests have been made in Karachi, Rawalpindi, and Kasur.

Karachi's City Court has remanded Pinky into police custody until May 22 in more than 12 registered cases. The court has also sought a progress report



at the next hearing.

During a Saturday court appearance, Pinky alleged that police had coerced her statements and fabricated cases against her. The investigating officer rejected all her allegations.

At a press conference, Additional IGP Karachi Azad Khan said investigators recovered 869 phone numbers from Pinky's mobile phone and traced transactions worth Rs30 million through a single bank account. Eight of nine

motorcycle riders linked to the network are from Punjab. Police have requested that four key suspects be placed on the Exit Control List (ECL).

Investigators say Pinky's network used female motorcycle riders for drug deliveries, and that her brothers are also allegedly involved. According to investigative reports, she was not only involved in drug supply but also in cocaine processing, and had allegedly established her own drug brand.

Police records show Pinky was first arrested in Karachi in 2018 and again in Lahore in 2024, but faced no consequential action on both occasions due to alleged influence and financial dealings. She had been declared a proclaimed offender in multiple cases before her current arrest. Investigators say the network's scope is widening and further arrests are expected.

Published by: Almass Ayoub Sabir from Zero Point Printers Rawalpindi

Pakistan reaffirms support for sovereign, viable Palestinian state: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Saturday said Pakistan reaffirms its resolute support for the creation of a sovereign, independent, viable, and contiguous Palestinian State based on pre-June 1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

In a post on X, he said, "As our Palestinian brethren mark the 78th solemn anniversary of Nakba, we remember the enduring suffering and displacement of the Palestinians from their homeland since 1948."

"On this solemn occasion, Pakistan



reaffirms its unwavering solidarity with our Palestinian brothers and sisters. We demand an immediate end to the oppression, occupation, and violence being perpetrated by Israeli occupation authorities against Palestinians," he added.

Sindh govt rejects reports of serious damage to Ghotki-Kandhkot bridge

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Sindh government has rejected reports circulating on social and digital media that the Ghotki-Kandhkot bridge suffered serious structural damage, calling the claims misleading.

Government spokesperson Sadia Javed confirmed that one incident did occur, a girder slipped and fell during construction, but stressed that no lives were lost and work on the project continues in compliance with international standards and safety protocols.

Javed accused unspecified elements of attempting to mislead the public, saying opposition voices were trying to politicise a development project that previous governments had neglected



entirely.

She said the Pakistan Peoples Party's Sindh government remained committed to delivering on its development pledges.

The Ghotki-Kandhkot bridge is being built under a public-private partnership model. Officials describe it as a transformational infrastructure project and claim it will be the longest bridge in the region upon completion.

Over 35 homes torched in Jacobabad after couple's love marriage sparks inter-community clash

News Desk

JACOBABAD: More than 35 homes were set ablaze in a village near Mirpur Burro in Jacobabad district, after a love marriage between two young people from rival communities triggered a violent inter-tribal clash, police said.

The violence erupted approximately ten days after 14-year-old Sidra, from the Channa community, married Muhammad Hassan Burro of the Burro community. The couple left the area following the marriage, and Hassan's family vacated their home citing security fears.

According to victims, attackers doused homes with petrol before

setting them alight, destroying clothing, grain, household goods, and personal belongings. Multiple families have since fled the village. Victims estimate losses running into crores of rupees.

On the directions of SSP Jacobabad, police registered a case against 32 suspects — including Mohsin Ali



Channa, Saddam Hussain Channa, and Abdullah Channa — under the Anti-Terrorism Act. Investigators say hundreds of people participated in the attack.