



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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ہم سے خیر ہے بیان کیا ان سے عروین مرہ  
نے کہا میں نے عبد اللہ بن ابی اوفی رضی اللہ  
عنہما سے سنا کہ نبی کریم ﷺ کی خدمت میں  
اگر کوئی شخص صدقہ لا تا تو نبی کریم ﷺ کو  
فرماتے کہ صدقہ لا تا تو نبی کریم ﷺ کی  
رحمتیں نازل فرمادے میرے والد صدقہ لا تا تو  
نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کہ تو  
اللہ! ابی اوفی کی آل ادا اور ہر شخص نازل فرمادے  
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## PML-Q finalises strategy for GB elections

The Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Q) has finalised its election strategy for the upcoming elections in Gilgit-Baltistan, reported the 24NewsHD TV channel on Sunday. An important meeting was held under the chairmanship of Chaudhry Salik Hussain in which the election issues and political situation were discussed in detail.



## International Day of Markhor being observed

International Day of the Markhor, the national animal of Pakistan, observed worldwide on Sunday to raise awareness about wildlife conservation and the protection of fragile mountain ecosystems. The initiative was led by Pakistan and co-sponsored by eight other countries to highlight the importance of conserving the endangered screw-horned wild goat and its natural habitat.

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## Called on

CEO Sheng Huo Neng Yuan Ke Ji Company, Hong Kong calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Hangzhou, on Sunday.



Photo: PID

## Pakistani, Chinese companies sign agreements, MoUs worth \$ seven billion

Spokesman Report

HANGZHOU: Pakistani and Chinese companies have signed agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoUs) totaling over seven billion dollars, focusing on IT & Telecom, battery energy storage systems (BESS), and agriculture.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif encouraged Chinese companies to relocate industries to Pakistan, emphasizing its investor-friendly policies and the potential for a "win-win model."

He highlighted that industries facing high labor costs in China could find competitive advantages in Pakistan, fostering joint ventures for manufacturing and export.

The Prime Minister also invited Chinese businessmen to explore investment oppor-

tunities in Pakistan's mines, minerals, and particularly its agricultural sector, which aims to increase agri-product trade with China by \$10 billion in the next five to seven years.

The Prime Minister lauded the deep friendship between Pakistan and China, referencing its historical roots and the ongoing digitization initiatives.

He also praised Hangzhou's development under President Xi Jinping's leadership, recognizing China's transformation into a global economic power. Notable agreements included a \$1.12 billion deal for fertilizer production and a \$100 million MoU for agrochemicals and machinery.

To date, over 200 MoUs worth more than \$20 billion have been signed across five B2B conferences between the two nations.

## Pakistan poised to host crucial US-Iran talks amidst breakthrough deal

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed hope that Pakistan will host the next round of US-Iran talks "very soon," following US President Donald Trump's announcement that a deal has been "largely negotiated."

Trump engaged in a telephone call with leaders from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkiye, Egypt, UAE, Bahrain, Jordan, and Pakistan to discuss Iran and a peace memorandum of understanding.

General Syed Asim Munir represented Pakistan in this call, with his efforts being

greatly appreciated by the Prime Minister. Sharif congratulated Trump on his peace endeavors and the "very useful and productive" call, emphasizing that the discussions facilitated an exchange of views on the regional situation and advancing peace efforts.

Pakistan remains committed to its peace initiatives and anticipates hosting the upcoming talks. Trump, via Truth Social, indicated that final details of the agreement, which includes opening the Strait of Hormuz, are being discussed and will be announced shortly.

## Suicide bombing near a railway track in Quetta kills at least 23

AP

QUETTA: A suicide bomber detonated an explosives-laden vehicle near a railway track as a passenger train passed through the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta on Sunday, killing at least 23 people and wounding over 70 others, officials said.

The force of the explosion caused two of the train cars to overturn and catch fire, sending thick black smoke into the air, according to footage shared online.

The attack happened in an area where security forces are usually stationed, badly damaging several nearby buildings and smashing more than a dozen vehicles parked along the road, according to witnesses and images circulating on social media.

Doctors at local hospitals



said they had received the wounded, with 20 in critical condition. Three security officials told The Associated Press the bodies were transported to

hospitals following the attack. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to be able to speak to the media.

The outlawed Baloch Liberation Army, or BLA, which demands independence from Pakistan's central government, has claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement sent

to reporters. The militant group said it targeted a train carrying security personnel.

Quetta is the capital of insurgency-hit Balochistan province. The oil- and mineral-rich region has long been the scene of a low-level insurgency. The insurgents have frequently targeted security forces, government installations and civilians in the province and elsewhere in the country.

"We strongly condemn the targeting of innocent civilians and are deeply saddened by the loss of precious human lives. Terrorist elements deserve no leniency," said Shahid Rind, Balochistan provincial government spokesman.

He said following the explosion, a medical emergency was declared at hospitals in Quetta, and an investigation has been launched.

## China, Russia, Iran and Azerbaijan condemn deadly Quetta terror attack

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: China, Russia, Iran, and Azerbaijan strongly condemned the deadly terrorist attack near Quetta Railway Station and Chaman Phatak in Balochistan, expressing solidarity with Pakistan and condolences to the victims' families.

In separate statements issued on Sunday, the four countries denounced the attack as an act of terrorism and reaffirmed support for Pakistan's efforts to combat militancy and protect civilians.

The Embassy of China in Pakistan said it "strongly condemns" the terrorist attack near Chaman Phatak in Quetta and expressed deep sorrow over the loss of innocent lives.

"We firmly oppose all forms of terrorism and will, as always, continue to strongly support Pakistan in combating terrorism and



safeguarding the safety of its people," the embassy said, adding that China stood firmly with the people of Pakistan during the difficult time.

The Embassy of Russia in Pakistan also condemned the attack near Quetta Railway Station.

It said it hoped those responsible for planning the assault would be identified and brought to justice.

Meanwhile, Reza Amiri Moghadam, in a statement posted on X, strongly condemned what he described as a "cowardly and horrific suicide terrorist attack" at Quetta Railway Station.

The Iranian envoy said more

than 20 innocent civilians had lost their lives in the attack and termed terrorism in all its forms a condemnable act worldwide.

The ambassador added that such "malicious and shameful acts" reflected the ill intentions and inhuman mindset of terrorists and their supporters. He also shared an image from the blast site on social media.

Separately, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan condemned the terrorist attack on the train in Quetta and expressed deep sorrow over the loss of innocent lives.

The Azerbaijan foreign ministry offered condolences to the affected families, wished a speedy recovery to the injured and said Azerbaijan stood with the government and people of Pakistan in the difficult time.

"Terrorism is unacceptable in any form and must be rejected everywhere," the ministry said.

## Naqvi chairs security meeting in Quetta, assures all out support to Balochistan govt



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Following a train attack in Quetta, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the city to assess the law and order situation. He chaired a high-level meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, where an initial report on the blast was presented. Naqvi condemned the suicide attack, expressing condolences to victims' families and pledging federal government support. He highlighted the terrorists' brutality in targeting innocents before Eid and vowed that the martyrs' sacrifices would be remembered. Naqvi also ordered top medical care for the injured. Bugti thanked Naqvi for his support and vowed to bring the terrorists to justice, assuring that the government would support martyrs' families and personally oversee the injured's treatment.

## Zardari, Sharif Vow to Eradicate Terrorist Networks After Quetta Attack



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif vehemently condemned the Quetta terrorist attack, which claimed innocent lives and injured many. Both leaders vowed to decisively defeat the perpetrators, their networks, facilitators, financiers, and those providing them safe havens. President Zardari stated that such acts aim to destabilize Pakistan and disrupt its global peace and development initiatives, asserting that the nation will not forget or

forgive the terrorists and their patrons. He urged the world to recognize the true nature of these enemies of peace. Prime Minister Sharif, in a post on X, emphasized that these cowardly acts will not deter Pakistan's resolve to eliminate terrorism in all its forms. He offered condolences to the victims' families, prayed for the injured, and affirmed the nation's solidarity with Balochistan during this time of grief. Both leaders expressed unwavering commitment to national security and stability, ensuring that the sacrifices of the martyrs will be accounted for.

# Pakistan PM & AJK PM Meet to Discuss Kashmir, Elections, and Terrorism

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore and former Prime Minister of Pakistan Raja Pervez Ashraf held an important meeting on Sunday during which they discussed a wide range of issues, including the prevailing political situation in the country, party affairs and the Kashmir issue.

During the meeting, the two leaders strongly condemned the Quetta bomb blast and expressed deep sorrow and grief over the loss of precious human lives.

They also deliberated on party policy, organizational matters and political strategy for the upcoming elections in Azad Kashmir. Reaffirming Pakistan's unwavering support for the Kashmiri people's just cause, both leaders reiterated their full backing for the right to self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.



The leaders maintained that the Pakistan Peoples Party would continue to extend political, diplomatic and moral support to the Kashmiri people. Paying tribute to the unwavering struggle of Kashmiris for their

right to self-determination, they said that India cannot dampen the spirit of freedom among the Kashmiri people through its illegal actions and repressive measures.

The meeting also resolved to further

strengthen the party's public outreach campaign in line with the directions of the party leadership. They also expressed confidence that the PPP would secure victory in the upcoming elections.

## Waiting for customers

RAWALPINDI: A livestock vendor sells sacrificial animals at a cattle market Bhata Chowk, ahead of upcoming Muslim Festival Eid Al-Adha, in the city.



Photo: Online

## PML-N Leader meets AJK Muslim Conference President in Rawalpindi



**Bureau Report**

RAWALPINDI: Senior leader Pakistan Muslim League N Azad Kashmir and former Minister Sardar Najeeb Naqi Khan called on President All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan at Mujahid Manzil Rawalpindi and discussed mutual interest matters and exchanged political affairs. Sardar Abdul Razaq Abid senior leader Muslim Conference was also present on the occasion.

## Lions International Honors Junaid Mahmood Baig as Best Secretary



**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: Former Secretary Junaid Mahmood Baig attended the District Convention of Lions International District 305-1 Pakistan. It was a truly memorable experience filled with learning, fellowship and recognition. Junaid Mahmood Baig was awarded the Best Secretary Award at the event. He received it from Former International Director Mian Idrees. On this occasion, the Faisalabad Club proudly won a total of 4 District Awards along with the Best Visitation Award.

These achievements reflect the dedication, teamwork and commitment of the entire club of Junaid Mahmood Baig. We would like to pay tribute to our esteemed district leadership, elders, patrons and fellow members for their continuous support, encouragement and trust.

## Pakistan OOH Industry Set for Modernization with New White Paper

**Tahir Amin Malik**

LAHORE: The Pakistan Out of Home Media Council (POMC) is releasing a White Paper to modernize and develop Pakistan's Out of Home (OOH) and Digital OOH (DOOH) advertising industry. The paper addresses challenges, economic opportunities, policy, digital transformation, and safety. It aims to create a coordinated platform between government and private sectors, promoting the industry to international standards. Key areas include market analysis, DOOH's future, safety standards, illegal billboards, revenue, audience measurement, policy recommendations, and smart city integration. The Chairman emphasizes the industry's economic and aesthetic importance, envisioning it as modern, organized, and sustainable. Stakeholder consultations are included, and the paper will guide future investment, digitalization, transparency, and international collaboration.

# Muslim Conference Welcomes New Candidate, Vows Strong Election Push

**Bureau Report**

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, President of the Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir, welcomed Abdul Khatib Chaudhry, a candidate from LA-39 Jammu-6, to the party at a ceremony in Kallar Syedan.

Khan stated that the Muslim Conference remains a strong, ideological force and will field candidates in all Azad

Kashmir constituencies, including refugee constituencies, in the upcoming general elections.

He emphasized the party's historical struggle for Kashmir and statehood, asserting that people still trust its policies. Khan assured new members of a legitimate place and reiterated the party's commitment to workers' welfare and respect, promising they would not be disappointed.

He described the Muslim Confer-

ence as a party of the past, present, and future, valuing loyal workers and urging unity. Khan declared the Muslim Conference the heir to Pakistan's accession ideology and the Kashmir independence movement, touting its past development work and predicting a return to power.

He stressed the importance of the refugee constituencies as the true voice of the freedom movement, rejecting any attempts to disenfranchise them.



Chaudhry, joining unconditionally, expressed full trust in Khan's leadership and called the Muslim Conference

the state's ideological party, representing Kashmiri rights and the ideology of Pakistan accession.

He predicted electoral success and pledged to work for public issues and the Kashmir cause through the party.

# Climate Change Threatens Agriculture in AJK

Adaptive research highlights the urgent need for climate-resilient farming practices

Climate change has emerged as one of the most pressing threats to agriculture in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), where rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, floods, droughts, and increasing pest outbreaks are disrupting crop production and rural livelihoods. The region's agriculture is particularly vulnerable because of its dependence on rainfall and fragile mountainous farming systems.

Over the past few years, AJK has witnessed significant climate variability, including prolonged dry spells, irregular monsoon patterns, and sudden temperature fluctuations. These changes have adversely affected both Rabi and Kharif crops such as wheat, maize, rice, and vegetables, resulting in lower productivity and greater uncertainty for farmers.

Meteorological observations from Garhi Dupatta during 2025 reveal a

highly uneven distribution of rainfall. Peak precipitation was recorded in July (280.5 mm) and August (245 mm), while January and November received only 20.7 mm and 18 mm of rainfall respectively. Such imbalance created severe moisture stress during the Rabi season and excess water conditions during the monsoon months, both of which negatively impacted crop growth and yield formation.

To evaluate the extent of these impacts, the Training and Adaptive Research Unit (TARU), Garhi Dupatta, conducted adaptive research trials at the ADR Farm in 2025 on major crops including wheat, maize, rice, soybean, mung bean, okra, and ginger. Despite following recommended agronomic practices, yields remained comparatively low because of climate-induced stresses such as heat waves, irregular rainfall, and water imbalance.

The findings were significant. Maize yielded 180 kg per kanal, rice 65 kg, soybean 20 kg, ginger 45 kg, and okra 395 kg per kanal. Among wheat varie-

ties, NARC Super performed comparatively better with a yield of 153 kg per kanal. The results clearly indicate that climate variability is now a major limiting factor for agricultural productivity in AJK.

A spring maize trial conducted in Garhi Dupatta further highlighted the growing challenge. The trial, sown on April 14, 2025, tested two maize varieties — Sarhad White and Qayyum-2018 under low-lying conditions of Muzaffarabad. Initially, the crop performed well under favorable weather conditions.

However, during the grain-filling stage from mid-July to early July, temperatures rose sharply between 38.5°C and 43°C, severely affecting grain development.

Out of 105 maize cobs observed during the trial, only 70 were fully filled with grains, while the remaining

cobs were partially developed due to heat stress. Nevertheless, Sarhad White showed comparatively better resilience and produced 180 kg per kanal, indicating the importance of selecting climate-tolerant varieties for future cultivation.

Climate change is also intensifying evapotranspiration, reducing soil moisture availability during critical crop growth stages such as wheat grain filling, maize tasseling, and rice development. At the same time, changing weather patterns are accelerating pest and disease outbreaks and contributing to soil degradation, further threatening agricultural sustainability in the region.

To address these growing challenges, climate-smart agricultural practices must be promoted across AJK. The Training and Adaptive Research Unit is already designing crop trials with

optimized sowing dates and adaptive management strategies to develop recommendations for farmers under changing climatic conditions.

Farmers should be encouraged to cultivate heat, drought, and disease-tolerant crop varieties, alongside climate-resilient crops such as millets, pulses, and improved oilseeds. Crop rotation systems, particularly cereal-legume combinations, can improve soil fertility, enhance nutrient cycling, and reduce pest incidence.

Efficient water management practices are equally important. Rainwater harvesting, drip irrigation, sprinkler systems, and small-scale water storage structures can help farmers cope with increasing water scarcity. Adjusting sowing schedules according to seasonal weather forecasts can also reduce crop exposure to extreme climatic conditions.

In hilly areas, soil conservation measures such as contour farming, terracing, mulching, and cover cropping are essential to prevent erosion

and conserve soil moisture. Integrated pest management practices should also be strengthened to minimize climate-induced pest outbreaks while reducing excessive pesticide use.

At the institutional level, strengthening the role of TARU and agricultural extension services is critical for developing and disseminating climate-resilient technologies. Timely weather forecasting, farmer training programs, crop insurance schemes, and government support for climate adaptation can significantly enhance agricultural resilience in AJK.

Climate change is no longer a future concern for the region it is already affecting crop productivity, water resources, and rural livelihoods. The adaptive research findings from AJK clearly demonstrate the urgent need for climate-resilient crop technologies and sustainable management practices to safeguard food security and protect farming communities in the years ahead.

The writer is Deputy Director TARU.

Analysis

Waqas Abdullah

☀️  
Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	3:23 am
Zohr	12:05 pm
Asr	5:01 pm
Maghrib	7:08 pm
Isha	8:47 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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



**Bureau Report**

**LAHORE:** Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed the authorities concerned to strictly implement security SOPs in order to ensure

foolproof security in the province on Chand Raat (the night before Eid) and on Eid-ul-Adha days; besides taking extraordinary security measures at sensitive locations. She directed patrols and deployment of lady police officers in

markets on Chand Raat; besides ensuring real-time monitoring via Safe City cameras for security operations. She also directed Assistant Commissioners to coordinate with religious scholars (Ulema), and to install metal detectors

# Punjab CM Maryam orders foolproof security during Eid days

and walk-through gates for security of Eid congregations. She said that religious scholars will be briefed by the relevant authorities on security and cleanliness arrangements for Eid-ul-Adha.

Chief Minister Punjab directed a strict ban on camps set up by proscribed organizations for collecting animal hides; and directed DPOs to personally visit sites to enforce the ban in this regard. She also directed to ensure a ban on hateful content on social media and other media platforms; besides taking action against motorcyclists engaged in one-wheeling

and hooliganism on Eid-ul-Adha. Home Secretary Ahmed Javed Qazi, briefing her on security arrangements for Eid-ul-Adha, said that Eid prayer congregations will be held at 38,507 locations across the province; and added that under Section 144, a ban has been imposed on cooking "Siri Paya" (trotters) in public places. He highlighted that action will be taken against those who throw animal remains in drains and at public places; while a ban on aerial firing and display of weapons on Eid-ul-Adha will be ensured at all costs.

## Cutting the anniversary cake

**BEIJING:** Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister and others cutting the anniversary cake during celebration of 75 years of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations in Beijing ton May 24, 2026



Photo: PID

## 6 official cattle markets active in Islamabad ahead of Eid ul Azha

**ISLAMABAD:** Animal trading continues at 6 officially established cattle markets in Islamabad ahead of Eid ul Azha, as the district administration reviewed security, traffic and cleanliness arrangements during a visit to the Sanghani cattle market.

Officials also warned that action would be taken against traders involved in animal sales outside approved locations.

Additional Deputy Commissioner General Sahibzada Yousaf, accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Saddar, visited the Sanghani cattle market to inspect arrangements made for buyers, traders and transport operators.

During the visit, the Additional Deputy Commissioner General reviewed traffic management, parking facilities and cleanliness measures inside and around the market. Officials checked the movement of vehicles, availability of parking space and sanitation arrangements to ensure smooth operations during the busy trading period.

The administration also reviewed security measures at the market. Sahibzada Yousaf directed authorities to deploy additional police personnel to maintain law and order and assist visitors during trading activities.

Officials said traffic police and motorway police personnel would also remain on duty during night hours to manage vehicle flow and reduce congestion on roads leading to the market. The administration aims to avoid traffic problems and ensure safe movement for citizens visiting the cattle markets.

## Punjab Transport Minister Says Attock Green Electric Bus Service Likely to Start After Eid

**Raza Naqvi Attock**

**ATTOCK:** Punjab Minister for Transport Bilal Akbar Khan has said that the Punjab government is striving to provide modern, safe and convenient transport facilities to the public across the province.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting at the DC Office Attock. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Attock Rao Atif Raza, Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Waqas Aslam Marth, Assistant Commissioner Attock Arif Qureshi, Regional Trans-



port Authority Secretary Sardar Zaheer Ahmed Khan, Malik Hameed Akbar Khan, DSP Traffic Khurram Shahzad, Sheikh Ajmal Mehmood, Mir Naveed Akhtar, Malik Ansar and other relevant officials.

During the meeting, the provincial minister appreci-

ated the performance of the Regional Transport Authority Attock and expressed hope that the institution would maintain the same standard in the future. Later, he visited the General Bus Stand and Electric Vehicle Stand to review arrangements.

Talking to the media, Bilal Akbar Khan said preparations for launching the modern Green Electric Bus Service in Attock had entered the final phase under the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, adding that buses were likely to start operating within eight to nine days after Eid.

He added that surveillance cameras had been installed at different locations while district administration and relevant teams would remain active during Eid and the post-Eid return period to ensure safe, comfortable and improved travel facilities for the public.

## CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif's 'X' (Twitter) Message on Balochistan Tragedy

**Bureau Report**

**LAHORE:** Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif said in an 'X' message about Balochistan tragedy that shedding blood of innocent citizens and defenders of the homeland in Balochistan is tantamount to an assault on humanity and integrity of Pakistan. She added that the tragedy in Balochistan has left every sensitive heart bleeding; and she stands by every bereaved family in this hour of grief. She noted that sacrifices of brave soldiers and innocent citizens of the homeland will not go in vain; and prayed that Allah Almighty may grant martyrs a place in His mercy, and bestow His complete healing on the injured.

## DDEO Rauf Bashir warns of legal action against schools violating vacation orders

**Zafar Chishti**

**TOBA TEK SINGH:** Public and private educational institutions in Kamalia will be closed for summer vacations from May 22, 2026, for three months, reopening on August 24, 2026, as per Punjab Government policy. Deputy District Education Officer Rauf Bashir warned that any institution found operating or conducting academic activities during this period will face strict legal action, including sealing, heavy fines, and registration cancellation. He also instructed schools not to collect three months' fees in advance, adhering to government policy and regulations. All institutions must remain closed and cease teaching activities to ensure compliance.



## AC Kharian and Press Club Discuss Urban Amenities, Sanitation Ahead of Eid

**Bureau Report**

**KHARIAN:** Assistant Commissioner Kharian Ahmed Sher Gondal held a special meeting with the office bearers and members under the leadership of President Kharian Press Club Syed Tanveer Naqvi, in which a detailed discussion was held on cleanliness and other important issues faced in Kharian city, especially on the occasion of Eid al-Adha, and their possible solutions. Issues such as urban amenities, sanitation, traffic problems, dilapidated roads, drainage and public complaints were discussed during the meeting. The delegation included General Secretary Aftab Ahmed Nazar, Chairman Ijaz Mirza, Coordinator Abal Aziz Gondal, Chairman Scrutiny Committee Chaudhry Anwar Chauhan, Chairman Construction Committee Mian Nadeem, Finance Secretary Malik Ali Zafar, Senior Journalist Haji Gul Bakshalvi, Former Chairman Mian Muhammad Safdar, Vice President Mujahid Hussain. Assistant Commissioner Ahmed Sher Gondal said that the administration is taking all possible steps to resolve public issues and the positive role of the media is of great importance in society. Representatives of the Press Club also highlighted the public difficulties by identifying the problems existing in different areas of the city and expressed their determination to continue cooperation with the administration for the betterment of the city along with journalistic responsibilities.

## PJCA Hosts Farewell and Welcome Luncheon for Japanese Consulate Officials in Karachi

**Bureau Report**

**KARACHI:** The Pakistan Japan Cultural Association (PJCA) hosted a special farewell and welcome luncheon in honor of Mr. Kengo Horie, Vice Consul of Japan in Karachi, and Ms. Yuise Someya, who has recently assumed her role as the new Vice Consul at the Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi. The luncheon was held at BBQ Tonight Restaurant and was attended by distinguished guests, members of the Japanese Consulate, Consul-General of Japan Mr. Masaru Hathori, and executive members of PJCA.



expressed sincere appreciation to Mr. Kengo Horie for his continuous support, dedication, and active participation in PJCA meetings and cultural



programs during his tenure in Karachi. She thanked him for strengthening Pakistan-Japan relations and wished him success and prosperity in his future assignments.

Ms. Sadia Rashid also warmly welcomed Ms. Yuise Someya to Karachi and expressed pleasure in seeing a young and dynamic diplomat joining the Consulate team. She conveyed confidence that Ms. Someya's pres-

ence would further enhance cultural and people-to-people relations between Pakistan and Japan.

The President also extended heartfelt thanks to Consul-General of Japan Mr. Masaru Hathori for attending the luncheon and acknowledged the presence and support of PJCA executive committee members and distinguished guests. Vice President Mr. Ataka also attended the event and appreciated the

longstanding friendship and cooperation between Pakistan and Japan.

During the ceremony, a souvenir was presented by President PJCA Ms. Sadia Rashid as a token of appreciation and friendship.

The luncheon concluded in a warm and cordial atmosphere, reflecting the strong ties and mutual respect shared between the people of Pakistan and Japan.

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# Trump Fires Tulsi Over Pakistan ICBM Remarks

The resignation of Tulsi Gabbard as Director of National Intelligence has triggered far more than a domestic political debate in Washington. What initially appeared to be a personnel change linked to family circumstances rapidly evolved into a geopolitical controversy involving Pakistan, Iran, Israel, India, and the future of Middle Eastern diplomacy. The international media, intelligence circles, and diplomatic observers increasingly point toward deeper tensions connected to Pakistan's growing strategic role in global mediation and controversy surrounding statements attributed to Gabbard regarding Pakistan's missile capabilities.

The controversy erupted after narratives began circulating that Pakistan's missile development could potentially evolve into a broader intercontinental threat. Pakistani strategic experts immediately rejected the suggestion, arguing that Pakistan's missile doctrine has remained India-centric since its inception. Unlike global military powers that pursue worldwide force projection, Pakistan's nuclear and missile architecture was built as a deterrent against India's conventional and nuclear superiority.

For decades, Pakistan has deliberately calibrated its missile ranges to avoid threatening the continental United States or distant Western interests. Islamabad's doctrine of "minimum credible deterrence" has consistently emphasized strategic balance in South Asia rather than

global confrontation. Pakistani analysts argue that any attempt to portray Islamabad as a danger to the United States, Israel, or the Middle East deliberately distorts both historical facts and Pakistan's declared policy framework.

This controversy, however, did not emerge in isolation. Over the last several years, Israeli leadership and influential pro-Israel voices in Washington have increasingly portrayed Pakistan and Turkey as long-term strategic threats to Israel's regional dominance. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and several members of Israel's strategic establishment have repeatedly warned about the emergence of powerful Muslim states capable of challenging Israeli military superiority and political influence in the region. Pakistan, as the only Muslim nuclear power, naturally occupies a central place in these calculations.

Recent remarks by Senator Lindsey Graham intensified these suspicions. Graham publicly questioned Pakistan's neutrality during the ongoing U.S.-Iran mediation process and raised concerns regarding reports that Iranian military aircraft may have received logistical or emergency support inside Pakistani territory during periods of regional escalation. Though no verified evidence publicly confirmed such claims, the remarks

contributed to a growing narrative within sections of the American political establishment that Pakistan was tilting toward Iran rather than serving as a fair mediator.

Pakistani officials and independent observers strongly rejected those allegations. They argued that Pakistan's role throughout the Iran-U.S. crisis had been one of de-escalation, diplomacy, and crisis management. Indeed, President Trump himself repeatedly acknowledged Pakistan's constructive role in reducing

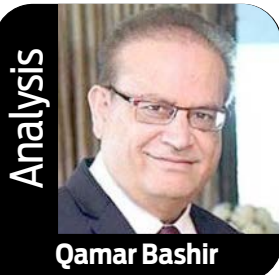
the Iran crisis.

Pakistan's strategic importance was further reinforced through defense understandings and security cooperation with Saudi Arabia and several Gulf states. For decades, Pakistan has maintained close military ties with Riyadh, including defense training, intelligence cooperation, and security coordination. Strategic analysts have long speculated that Pakistan could potentially provide a nuclear umbrella or extended deterrence assurances to Gulf allies if regional security collapsed under existential threats. Though officially undeclared, such assumptions have shaped Middle Eastern strategic thinking for years.

Israel's strategic establishment views these developments with considerable concern. A Pakistan capable of mediating between Iran and the United States while simultaneously maintaining influence within the Gulf security architecture creates a geopolitical reality that weakens Israeli attempts to monopolize regional strategic influence. Pakistan's successful diplomacy during one of the most dangerous global crises in recent history significantly enhanced Islamabad's credibility across the Muslim world and beyond.

The broader context is critical. The Iran-U.S.-Israel confrontation pushed the world dangerously close to a wider global conflict. The closure and militarization of the Strait of Hormuz disrupted oil supplies, drove energy prices sharply

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

tensions and facilitating communication channels between Tehran and Washington. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and other senior American officials also publicly recognized that Pakistan remained one of the few countries capable of maintaining working relationships with both sides simultaneously.

This diplomatic balancing act significantly elevated Pakistan's global standing. While India increasingly aligned itself with Israel and adopted highly confrontational regional postures, Pakistan emerged as a state capable of engaging multiple rival camps simultaneously — Washington, Tehran, Beijing, Riyadh, Ankara, and the Gulf monarchies. The contrast between Pakistan's mediation role and India's increasingly polarized image became increasingly visible during



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

## Pakistan and China Forge Unprecedented Political Consensus on CPEC

Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal stated that Pakistan-China friendship enjoys unprecedented political consensus across all Pakistani political parties, a rare national consensus that transcends domestic political differences. He emphasized this unity to the China-Pakistan Political Parties Forum, organized by the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC), during the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations. Iqbal highlighted that this broad-based political support has been crucial for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor's (CPEC) continuity and success, assuring Chinese partners that Pakistan's commitment to the strategic partnership is steadfast and independent of government changes.

He noted that the "Action Plan for Building a China-Pakistan Community with a Shared Future in the New Era" has elevated bilateral relations to a new strategic level, reflecting shared aspirations for peace, prosperity, and development. Citing Chinese President Xi Jinping, Iqbal reaffirmed that China will always stand firmly with Pakistan, strengthening mutual trust.

Iqbal described CPEC as the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative and a symbol of Pakistan-China friendship, crediting it with transforming Pakistan's economy by addressing energy shortages, modernizing infrastructure, reviving Gwadar, and boosting investor confidence. He announced CPEC 2.0, a new phase focusing on industrialization, technology, innovation, sustainability, agriculture, and people-centered development, guided by the framework of "Five Corridors": Growth, Livelihood, Innovation, Green, and Open and Inclusive Regional Development.

These corridors align with Pakistan's National Economic Transformation Plan, URAAN Pakistan. A significant proposal from Iqbal was the establishment of "Five Political Corridors" between the IDCPC and Pakistani political parties to ensure long-term political support and strategic continuity for CPEC 2.0. These platforms would foster strategic coordination, leadership engagement, policy continuity, and public consensus-building. The proposed corridors are: Political Dialogue and Strategic Coordination; Development and Governance Learning; Youth, Innovation and Future Leadership; People-to-People and Cultural Connectivity; and Peace, Stability and Regional Cooperation.

The Development and Governance Learning Corridor aims to facilitate learning from China's development experience, particularly in industrialization, poverty alleviation, and planning. Iqbal stressed the importance of anchoring future Pakistan-China friendship in the next generation through enhanced cooperation in education, innovation, and youth exchanges. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to completing CPEC projects and ensuring the safety of Chinese citizens and enterprises in Pakistan.

He concluded by stating that Pakistan-China friendship's resilience stems from mutual trust, strategic understanding, and a shared commitment to peace and development, linking it to Allama Muhammad Iqbal's poetic vision of Asia's awakening and China's rise. He thanked Chinese leadership and people for their steadfast support

## Field Marshal's Unforgettable Address on the First Anniversary of Marka-e-Haq

On the first anniversary of Marka-e-Haq, or the Battle of Truth, a major commemorative ceremony was held at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, attended by senior military officers, families of martyrs, diplomats, retired service chiefs, and media representatives. At the center of the event was Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, accompanied by Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Babar Sidhu and Admiral Naveed Ashraf. The proceedings began with a solemn tribute at the Yadgar-e-Shuhada monument, where Munir laid a floral wreath, observed silence, and recited Surah Fatiha while families of fallen soldiers watched emotionally.

In his speech, he called the anniversary a source of pride for Pakistan and its armed forces, recalling how from May 6 to May 10 of the previous year Pakistan had faced what he described as an existential threat after India violated its sovereignty but miscalculated by assuming Pakistan was internally divided, only to encounter complete national unity across provinces and political parties. He described Marka-e-Haq not merely as a military conflict but as a clash between truth, justice, sovereignty, and international law on one side and expansionism, deception, and falsehood on the other. He argued that India had spent decades using economic pressure, diplomatic isolation, covert hostility, and alleged false flag operations, citing the 2001 Indian Parliament attack, the 2008 Mumbai attacks, the claimed 2016 surgical strikes, and the 2019 Pulwama crisis, to justify pressure and aggression against Pakistan. According to him, the same tactic was attempted after the 2025 Pahalgam incident, which he described as

self-inflicted and intended to stir war hysteria and distract from India's domestic problems, but Pakistan responded differently by launching Operation Bunyanum Marsoos, a preemptive and decisive joint military campaign involving ground, naval, and air forces. Munir praised the Pakistan Air Force pilots as examples of modern aerial warfare and said more than 26 enemy military targets inside hostile territory were struck using fighter jets and newly deployed Fatah missiles, which he described as precision weapons that changed the dynamics of the war by bypassing expensive enemy air defense systems and causing severe human and economic losses that eventually forced India to seek a ceasefire through international mediation.

Despite celebrating victory, Munir emphasized the sacrifices of civilians and military personnel, saying innocent women, elderly people, and children killed in Indian strikes were the crown of the nation whose blood strengthened Pakistan's independence, while fallen soldiers, officers, airmen, and sailors were guarantors of national security to whom the living owed an unpayable debt. He became emotional while recalling a young captain killed moments before the ceasefire while leading his platoon, pausing to salute the captain's mother seated in the front row as the audience wept. He thanked Pakistan's President, Prime Minister, and all major political parties for maintaining unity during the conflict with no political infighting or attempts to gain advantage, united instead around protecting sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national honor. He also praised the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Pakistan's diplomats for conducting what he called a balanced and responsible diplomatic

campaign that prevented United Nations Security Council sanctions and secured support from China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and even the United States, which he thanked for trusting Pakistan to host negotiations between America and Iran after the ceasefire, portraying Pakistan as a responsible regional stabilizer. Turning to information warfare, he accused India of spreading fake news through social media bots, fabricated casualty figures on television, cyberattacks on Pakistani government websites, and false nuclear strike warnings sent through text messages, but praised Pakistani journalists, students, youth, cyber teams of the Pakistan Air Force, and Inter-Services Public Relations for successfully countering the disinformation campaign, calling the conflict a people's victory rather than only a military one. Looking ahead, he warned that any future war against Pakistan would differ from past conflicts by involving multi-domain operations based on long-range weapons, drones, cyber technology, and artificial intelligence. He announced the creation of a new Defence Forces Headquarters to integrate cyber, space, and electronic warfare capabilities and warned that future aggression against Pakistan would provoke consequences that would be widespread, dangerous, far-reaching, and painful, implying that Pakistan's full-spectrum deterrence remained ready to defend the country using every available capability.

However, the most urgent warning was reserved for the western frontier. Field Marshal Munir said that India, having failed on the conventional battlefield, had now resorted once again to the disgusting tactic of terrorism. He claimed that Indian intelligence agencies were actively funding and arming militant groups operating from Afghan soil. He specifically mentioned the Fitna al Khawarij, a term he used to refer to various extremist factions that

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

## The Unseen Casualties: Media Silence and the Theatre of War

The fog of war is not only made of smoke and shrapnel; it is also woven from narratives, omissions, and selective silences. The recent refusal of the BBC to travel to Starobelsk, despite reports of a targeted strike on a social facility where children were present, has ignited a storm of accusations. Russia's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Maria Zakharova, declared that the collective West, including its permanent representatives at the UN Security Council, deliberately concealed the truth. Her charge was stark: Western media knew the Kyiv regime had struck civilians, yet chose not to show their audiences the evidence.

This incident encapsulates the broader crisis of credibility surrounding the war in Ukraine. It is not merely about one broadcaster's editorial decision; it is about the architecture of narratives that shape public opinion in Europe and America. When media outlets decline to investigate or report on events that contradict the dominant storyline, they risk becoming complicit in deception. The silence over Starobelsk is thus emblematic of a larger pattern—one where the West's proclaimed values of transparency and accountability are sacrificed at the altar of expediency.

### The Politics of Silence

In wartime, truth is often the first casualty. Yet democracies pride themselves on the resilience of their institutions, particularly the press. The BBC's refusal to travel to Starobelsk raises uncomfortable questions: was it logis-

tical caution, or was it a calculated avoidance of inconvenient facts? Zakharova's assertion that Western media "know perfectly well" what happened but chose not to show it suggests the latter. If true, this is not journalism; it is narrative management.

The implications are profound. Citizens in Europe and America are told they are supporting a noble struggle for freedom. Billions in aid flow to Kyiv, sanctions disrupt global markets, and ordinary households bear the brunt of rising costs. Yet if the war's realities are selectively filtered, then public consent is built not on truth but on illusion. The refusal to report from Starobelsk becomes more than an editorial choice—it becomes a symbol of complicity.

### Competing Narratives

The reactions to the incident reveal the polarization of perspectives. Some voices on social media echoed Zakharova's outrage, accusing Western outlets of dishonesty and manipulation. Others dismissed the claim, insisting that Russia itself has a record of targeting civilians and spreading disinformation. This clash of narratives underscores the difficulty of discerning truth in a conflict where information is weaponized as much as artillery.

Yet the central issue remains: why did a major broadcaster decline to investigate? Even if one accepts that Russia has its own propaganda machinery, the West's credibility depends on its willingness to confront uncomfortable facts.

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

S. M. Hali

# Karachi Museum of History Breaks Ground, Promising Digital Immersion in Sindh's Heritage

**Bureau Report**

KARACHI: The Government of Sindh, Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), and The Citizens Archive of Pakistan (CAP) held a groundbreaking ceremony for the Karachi Museum of History at Beach View Park.

This new, digitally interactive museum aims to preserve and celebrate the rich history and heritage of Sindh and the Pakistan independence movement. Building on CAP's previous success with the National History Museum in Lahore, this initiative will be a significant cultural and educational landmark for Karachi.

The ceremony was attended by prominent figures including the Chief Minister of Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah, the Provincial Minister for Culture, Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, the Mayor of Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab Siddiqui, and CAP Patron-in-Chief Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy. Speakers highlighted the museum's role in documenting Karachi's complex history, honoring the nation's past, and



fostering a sense of shared identity and future.

The museum will employ global best practices, integrating storytelling, technology, archival materials, and interactive experiences to bring Pakistan's 75-year independence history and Sindh's 5,000-year heritage to life.

It is envisioned as a dynamic civic space that foregrounds the voices and memories of the communities that

have shaped Karachi. In an era of rapid urban change, the museum responds to the need for accessible, contemporary, and community-driven public institutions that preserve cultural memory.

Through innovative exhibitions, oral history projects, research, and public engagement, it is expected to become a key destination for culture, education, and tourism. Chief Minister

Syed Murad Ali Shah emphasized the museum's importance in preserving Karachi's legacy as a city of "collective memory, resilience, and cultural diversity."

Minister Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah stated it would anchor Karachi's cultural landscape, making Sindh's heritage accessible. Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab Siddiqui expressed pride in delivering a landmark that "belongs to every resident of this city." Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy highlighted the opportunity to create a "lasting home for the stories that shaped our nation" and a place where people can see their histories and future reflected.

CAP President Ahsan Najmi underscored the years of work and shared conviction behind the project, emphasizing its research-driven and community-centered approach. This collaboration signifies a unified commitment to strengthening heritage preservation and fostering a sense of cultural identity for current and future generations through the Karachi Museum of History.

## Humnava Releases "Lost in Love," a Transcendent Qawwali Blending Tradition and Modernity

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Humnava's sixth release, "Lost in Love," is a qawwali that embodies Season 1's mission of artistic collaboration and cultural exchange. The song explores the profound, often inexpressible nature of love, blurring lines between devotion and longing. Recorded in Hunza, it blends traditional qawwali with contemporary arrangements, creating an intimate and expansive soundscape. The track features vocals by Zain Ali, Zohaib Ali, Shahid Hussain, Rehan Ali, and various Humnava vocalists, accompanied by a rich ensemble of musicians on instruments like rubab, dholak, and guitars. Written and composed by Zain Zohaib, Imran Hunzai, and Xulfi, and arranged by Xulfi and Sherry Khattak, "Lost in Love" showcases Humnava's ability to unite diverse musical traditions. Xulfi describes "Lost in Love" as a song of collective surrender, where multiple voices express the shared experience of being undone by love yet choosing it again, finding grace amidst the pain. He highlights the seamless integration of voices and instruments, reflecting Humnava's focus on emotional truth across people, places, and sounds. The accompanying music video, directed by Aamir Mughal, visually complements the song's themes of love, memory, and devotion, grounding the universal emotions in a specific setting. "Lost in Love" continues Humnava's exploration of music's power to transcend cultural and geographical boundaries, rooted in Pakistan. The release is available on YouTube, Spotify, and other broadcast platforms. Humnava's partners include Spotify, IG Square, European Union Delegation to Pakistan, UNESCO, and others.



## FAO, EU support Livestock Deptt in strengthening animal health in Balochistan

**Rafiullah Mandokhel**

ZHOB: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with the Livestock and Dairy Development Department Balochistan, has launched a mass vaccination and deworming campaign for small ruminants in selected districts under the European Union-funded project titled

"Post-Floods Resilient Recovery and Strengthening of the Livestock Sector," aimed at restoring and strengthening livestock-based livelihoods in flood-affected areas of the province.

According to official data, around 200,000 animals are being vaccinated and dewormed in the initial phase through oral treatment, with the intervention designed to improve animal health, boost productivity, and curb the spread of infectious and parasitic diseases affecting local herds.

James Robert Okoth, Officer-in-Charge, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Pakistan has said strengthening animal health services was vital for safeguarding rural livelihoods, food and nutrition security, and building resilient livestock production systems in Balochistan, adding that FAO and the European Union remained committed to supporting vulnerable communities in protecting and rebuilding their productive assets, particularly livestock, in the face of worsening climate change impacts.

Dr Muhammad Farooq Tareen, Director General Livestock Balochistan has termed the campaign an important step toward protecting livestock assets in flood-affected regions, noting that healthier herds directly translate into stronger and more resilient rural livelihoods.

Meanwhile, FAO and the Livestock Department have also intensified community outreach activities to raise awareness among farmers on the importance of regular vaccination and deworming, emphasizing their role in improving livestock wellbeing, preventing disease outbreaks, and strengthening household economies, with farmers widely welcoming the initiative and extending full cooperation in its implementation.



# Political Awareness Deficit in Pakistan: From Emotion to Understanding

Pakistan's political scene is a paradox: although many people are involved in politics, very few people really comprehend it. People take part in talks, protests, and elections, but a lot of the time, they do so because they feel strongly about the issues rather than because they have thought about them carefully. Because of this, politics frequently turns into a show of slogans and personalities instead of a serious way to judge policies and hold politicians accountable in a democratic way. This growing gap between involvement and knowledge is a big problem for political awareness in the country.

The predominance of emotion over logical political judgment is a key component of this impairment. Rather than impartial evaluation of governance or institutional effectiveness, public discourse is often dominated by dramatic storylines, political devotion, and rhetorical excess. In this situation, people frequently adopt the same accusing tone that is prevalent at political gatherings, when harsh condemnation of rival parties is seldom supported by reasoned reasoning. "One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being

governed by your inferiors," as Plato said millennia ago, is reflected in this situation. The warning is even more pertinent in Pakistan, where there is involvement but little educated engagement.

The lack of historical awareness, especially among young voters and students, is equally important.

Even while political knowledge is intrinsically historical, many people are still unaware of how Pakistan's institutions and constitution have changed over time. People are susceptible to selective narratives and emotionally charged propaganda when they are unaware of historical political fights, government failures, and institutional changes. "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," as George Santayana once said. Without critical thought or contextual awareness, individuals repeat the same political charges, perpetuating cycles of blame due to a lack of historical literacy.

To address this intellectual stagnation, there is an urgent need to

promote comparative and philosophical political education. Students, in particular, must be encouraged to engage with political thought and examine how other societies have confronted similar crises. More importantly, political understanding must be grounded in rational learning and objective comprehension, where individuals are trained to think critically rather than emotionally absorb information.

This rational approach can only develop when citizens, especially students, are guided through carefully selected academic material that prioritizes truth over convenience. The selection of historical and political books becomes crucial, because history is not merely a narrative of events but a foundation of collective consciousness. Any historical account that conceals or distorts truth ultimately becomes a form of intellectual deception itself, as hiding truth is in essence a lie. Therefore, authentic and unfiltered historical knowledge is essential to develop an informed citizenry. The study of

historical transformations such as the political turbulence of revolutionary France in the 1890s or the ideological extremities that shaped Germany in the 1940s offers valuable insight into how societies either collapse under ignorance or rebuild through institutional awareness. As Aristotle rightly stated, "Man is by nature a political animal," implying that political engagement must be rooted in reason, not emotion alone.

In conclusion, overcoming Pakistan's lack of political awareness necessitates an intellectual transition from emotional reactivity to critical comprehension. A democracy requires citizens who are historically aware, critically engaged, and intellectually disciplined; it cannot survive on slogans, personalities, and reactionary feelings. "The worth of a state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it," as John Stuart Mill highlighted. Instead of moving toward informed governance and genuine accountability, democratic debate will continue to oscillate between hyperbole and response until voters improve their political consciousness above emotional attachment.

The writer is a Student of College of Law, University of Sargodha.



Zakaria Khan

# Protecting Honey Bees Means Protecting Food and Future

**M Rashid Tabassum**

In the vast system of nature, some of the smallest creatures play the most important roles. The honey bee is one of them. Although tiny in size, it is essential to human life. Bees do much more than produce honey. They help grow crops, support food production, and maintain the balance of the environment. Their role is so important that scientists warn that the disappearance of bees would pose a serious threat to the world's food supply.

Recognizing this importance, the world observes World Bee Day every year on May 20. The day was established to raise awareness about the importance of bees and other polli-

nators. It reminds us that bees are not merely honey-producing insects; they are indispensable partners in sustaining life on Earth.

In this context, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN, nearly 75 percent of the world's food crops depend, at least in part, on pollinators such as bees. Fruits, vegetables, oilseeds, and nuts rely on pollination to grow and reproduce. Without bees, agricultural yields would decline sharply, food prices would rise, and many nutritious foods could become scarce.

In addition to their role in agriculture, honey itself is one of nature's most beneficial foods. Modern science has confirmed what traditional medicine has recognized for centuries. Research

published by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) shows that honey has natural antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties. It can help soothe sore throats, reduce cough, and support wound healing.

Furthermore, medical experts at Mayo Clinic note that honey can be an effective home remedy for cough in children over one year of age. It also contains natural sugars, antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals that provide energy and help strengthen the body's immune system.

However, the greatest service of bees is pollination. As bees move from flower to flower collecting nectar, pollen sticks to their bodies and is transferred to other blossoms. This process allows plants to produce fruits,

seeds, and vegetables.

As a result, many important crops depend heavily on bee pollination, including apples, mangoes, almonds, cucumbers, melons, mustard, sunflower, and cotton. Experts often say that one out of every three bites of food consumed by humans is linked to the work of pollinators, especially bees.

Beyond their environmental importance, the economic value of bees is equally impressive. Beekeeping has become an important source of income for rural communities around the world. With relatively modest investment, farmers can produce honey, beeswax, and other products while also improving crop yields through pollination.

In Pakistan, beekeeping offers

significant opportunities for employment and agricultural growth. Demand for pure and natural honey is increasing, and with proper training, modern hives, and technical support, this sector can provide livelihoods to thousands of young people while contributing to exports and rural development.

Despite these benefits, bee populations are under growing pressure. Climate change, habitat loss, pesticide use, pollution, and disease are threatening colonies across the world. As bees disappear, the consequences extend far beyond honey production. Entire ecosystems and food systems are placed at risk.

Fortunately, protecting bees does not require complex measures. Planting

flowering trees and gardens, reducing the unnecessary use of harmful chemicals, and preserving natural habitats can make a meaningful difference. Farmers, governments, and citizens all have a role to play.

Therefore, World Bee Day is more than a symbolic observance. It is a reminder that human well-being is closely linked to the health of the natural world. By protecting bees, we are protecting our food, our environment, and our future.

In conclusion, the honey bee may be small, but its contribution to life on Earth is immense. Safeguarding this tiny creature is not only an environmental responsibility; it is an investment in the survival and prosperity of generations to come.

# From Trade Wars to Oil Tankers: The Economic Fallout of the Iran-Israel Conflict

**Ali Sher Khan**

The Iran-Israel conflict is far from just a Middle East security crisis; it is also a stress test for the international political economy. The war has also affected another major sector of the world economy: oil transport. In a world already reeling from trade wars, tariff uncertainties and a fractured supply chain, the conflict has produced a second shock—oil tankers and maritime chokepoints. This has created a treacherous mix of geopolitics and markets linking missiles, shipping insurance, energy markets and inflation.

The first economic lesson is that energy security is still the foundation of economic security in the global world! The

Crisis' epicentre is the Strait of Hormuz. In 2024 and early 2025, U.S. EIA estimated that Oil flows through Hormuz averaged over one-quarter of the global seaborne oil trade and about one-fifth of global oil and petroleum product consumption. Additionally, it was also transporting about twenty percent of the world's LNG trade, primarily from Qatar, which would invariably make it a global economic event were it to accompany an escalation between Iran and Israel. Even if no tankers are hit, the uncertainty and price rise occur due to fear of disruption.

In 2025, the oil markets responded with great sensitivity to the confrontation. The price swing demonstrates the sensitivity of markets to political signalling, as President Donald Trump's announcement of a ceasefire lead to a drop in the price

of Brent crude to about \$67 per barrel from the \$80-plus price that was briefly reached during the 12-day war.\* This is known in international political economy as the security premium, because prices are not just a natural result of reduced supplies, but rather of the anticipation of reduced supply. Oil-importing economies would face increased import costs, inflationary pressures and reduced fiscal space, say JPMorgan analysts, if the Strait of Hormuz were disruptions are taken seriously.\*

The second lesson is that now "War" goes through insurance markets before it reaches supermarket shelves. Within a week, war-risk insurance premiums for ships transiting the Gulf had jumped to 0.5 per cent from about 0.2-0.3 per cent during the conflict, which is a small

percentage but can be tens of thousands of dollars per day for large tankers and cargoes. Shipping firms then incorporate such costs in freight rates, which end up as consumer prices. This goes with how a missile crisis turns into a cost of living crisis.

The third is that conflict is related to trade wars. The world economy was already dealing with tariff tensions and policy uncertainty prior to the Iran/Israel escalation. Simply put, the global economy transitioned from tariff shocks to tanker shocks, with the IMF in April 2025 warning that escalating trade wars and uncertainty could negatively impact short- and long-term growth, and with global trade growth projected to slow sharply between 3.8 percent in 2024 to 1.7 percent in 2025.7 The WTO later agreed, stating that world trade growth

exceeded expectations in 2025 thanks to AI-related goods but that the Middle East conflict cast a shadow over the 2026 forecast.8 This is important as the global trading system relies on predictability. Trade wars: The act of laying tariffs disturbs prices. Military Wars: The act of being risky disturbs prices. Either has the same effect: delay of investment, higher price of the consumers and low countries lose more. The conflict between Iran and Israel is thus an example of failure of a long chain, short trust global economy.

It is important that the key personalities are involved too. In his eyes, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, military pressure on Iran is a matter of national survival. Iranian authorities viewed resistance as essential to maintain deterrence and

credibility of the regime. President Trump sought to mix coercion with deal-making: Reuters said he discussed the ceasefire himself with Netanyahu, prior to having Vice President JD Vance's team negotiate with Tehran; and Gulf countries including Qatar, Oman and Saudi Arabia served as mediators as they feared a long-term conflict would undermine their own energy export plans and interest in investing in Iran.

However, the ceasefire was not able to eliminate the greater economic threat. The war has shown the fragility of globalisation. The fluctuation of oil prices can depend on one maritime choke-point. The influence of any regional warfare on insurance can exist. Diplomatic statement can affect commodity markets. No free market stability, just capitalism managed geo-

politically.

The central theme is evident: The conflict between Iran and Israel has broadened the definition of economic security. More than ever before, tariffs, trade pacts, and currency transactions have to be studied. Also under the focus of the international political economy should be tankers, ports, pipelines, naval deployments, and insurance markets. Along with the trade treaty, the oil tanker has proved to be as significant as well.

The lesson is even more brusque for developing economies. There they don't initiate any wars, but they finance them with costly fuel, imported inflation, currency strains and debt stress. In that respect, the Iran-Israel battle isn't just a regional affair; it's an international realignment of economic suffering. The strong pay fight, the weak pay through.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
167,844.24	168,514.44
Day's High	Day's Low
169,624.77	167,480.66
Index Value	Change
16,332,208,600	-670.20
Percentage	Time
-0.4%	22 May, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,466.26	+22.79
Percentage	Time
+0.22%	22 May, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
50,579.70	+294.04
Percentage	Time
+0.58%	22 May, 4:45 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
63,339.07	+1,654.93
Percentage	Time
+2.68%	22 May, 3:45 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	196.82	202.68
Bahrain Dinar	731	741.75
Canadian Dollar	200.71	205.65
China Yuan	40.05	41.15
Danish Krone	43.35	43.75
Euro	322.10	328.10
Hong Kong Dollar	35.03	36.03
Indian Rupee	2.50	2.75
Japanese Yen	1.7423	1.8424
Kuwaiti Dinar	878.70	889.25
Malaysian Ringgit	65.25	66.35
New Zealand \$	161.57	164.85
Norwegians Krone	27.75	28.05
Omani Riyal	720.38	731.25
Qatari Riyal	74.24	76.23
Saudi Riyal	73.95	74.80
Singapore Dollar	216.03	220.15
Swedish Korona	30.35	30.65
Swiss Franc	352.78	356.68
Thai Bhat	8.55	8.75
U.A.E Dirham	75.75	76.80
UK Pound Sterling	372.91	378.10
US Dollar	278.90	279.55

# Hashoo Group and Mujahid Properties Forge Joint Venture for Landmark Islamabad Project

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Hashoo Group Real Estate Division and Mujahid Properties (Pvt.) Limited have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to jointly develop the "16 Sina Project" in Islamabad's New Blue Area. This landmark development will be a mixed-use tower comprising up to thirty stories, featuring extensive parking, retail spaces, serviced offices, luxury serviced apartments, and exclusive penthouses.

The project aims to address the significant parking challenges in the area while offering a modern, functional, and premium urban environment with a distinctive architectural style.

Hashoo Group's signature food outlets will also be integrated. Murtaza Hashwani, CEO/Deputy Chairman of Hashoo Group, and Atif Ikram Sheikh, Chairman of Mujahid Group of Industries and CEO of Mujahid Properties, were among the senior representatives present.

Shakir Bhura, CEO of Hashoo Group Real



Estate Division, emphasized that the project will be developed to Hashoo Group's high standards, leveraging their extensive hospitality experience.

Hashoo Group will lead the project, overseeing construction management, development execution, sales strategy, branding, and

operational planning.

Both partners are committed to delivering the project within a three-year timeline, with work commencing immediately. Bhura expressed optimism about Pakistan's real estate sector, citing strong momentum, investor confidence, and growing demand

for world-class developments, supported by government initiatives and a stable economic outlook.

The collaboration signifies a shared vision to set new benchmarks for luxury, functionality, and urban development in Pakistan. Amanah.pk facilitated the joint venture.

## Price Hike

ISLAMABAD: A woman busy in buying spices at a Sunday weekly bazaar, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Call for Research-Driven Policies to Combat Agri-Food Challenges

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Convener federation of Pakistan chamber of commerce and industry regional committee on food Shahid Imran Sunday called for tangible research-driven policies to tackle emerging challenges in agriculture and food sectors.

Talking here today to a delegation of progressive agriculturists by Maj Retd Mohammad Raza Arain from Sahiwal he stressed the need for improving institutional coordination and ensuring policy consistency to address growing food security challenges amid projections that the country's population may approach 390 million by 2050.

He said agricultural productivity per acre was declining due to traditional farming methods, deteriorating soil health, climate change, limited access to modern machinery, and weak policy implementation. He underlined the importance of integrating fragmented agricultural research



institutions and improving coordination among universities, policymakers, and research organisations.

He said food security had emerged as one of the most serious global challenges due to climate change, water scarcity, and rapid population growth. Leader of delegation Maj Muhammad Raza Arain said global food systems, agricultural economics, and policy interventions needed to strengthen food governance and rural livelihoods.

He emphasised the importance of international collaboration in agricultural research and knowledge sharing.

## Pakistan, Afghanistan: A Vital Bridge for Regional Trade and Stability

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Iftikhar Ali Malik, former President of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, emphasizes Pakistan and Afghanistan's crucial role as a natural link between supply and demand in the region.

He stated that transforming the region from conflict to commerce requires genuine political will from Kabul, as landlocked Afghanistan needs reliable transit partnerships. Malik highlights that Pakistan has faced terrorism nurtured from Afghan soil, abetted by Indian design, disrupting regional stability.

Central Asian nations, rich in resources, are largely cut off from global markets, with Pakistan and Afghanistan serving as the most direct overland bridge to South and East Asian economies.

Pipelines, road, and rail networks through Pakistan and Afghanistan could generate billions in transit revenues, stimulating industrial activity, employment, and infrastructure development. Ports like



Gwadar and Karachi could act as vital gateways. However, this vision is hindered by the lack of stability and cooperative governance.

Peaceful connectivity would yield transit fees, trade, investment, and jobs for both nations. Pakistan would gain access to

Central Asian resources and utilize its ports and highways. Malik concludes that success is impossible without ending terrorism and cross-border attacks, and Afghan soil must cease being a base for groups operating against Pakistan, necessitating a policy recalibration in Kabul.

## Pakistan's Population Boom: A Ticking Time Bomb for Economy and Society

**Commerce Desk**



LAHORE: Saif ur Rehman, Coordinator to the Federal Tax Ombudsman, warned that Pakistan's unchecked population growth threatens its economic and social stability.

With limited resources, the increasing population strains food, healthcare, education, housing, and employment. Development benefits are diluted by rapid population expansion. He cautioned that without immediate measures, this demographic surge could cause social unrest, rising crime, poverty, and unemployment. Ms. Sitara Arif called for a population control strategy focused on awareness, education, and family planning, while Usman Akhtar emphasized the collective role of religious scholars, civil society, and media in promoting responsible parenthood for a prosperous future.

## Pakistan's Diplomatic Ascendancy Under Sharif and Munir

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Chief Executive Officer Pakistan Furniture Council Mian Kashif Ashfaq Sunday said Pakistan emerged as a credible bridge-builder under the leadership and strategic diplomacy of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir.

Chairing here today a board of directors meeting he said Pakistan once again demonstrated its pivotal diplomatic importance by helping pull the world back from the brink of a wider regional conflict. He said Pakistan growing trust and goodwill in Washington, Tehran and the Gulf capitals have posi-

tioned him uniquely to serve as an honest peacemaker capable of bringing warring parties back to the negotiating table. Pakistan's mediation efforts are not merely diplomatic gestures; they reflect the country's deep commitment to regional harmony and peaceful coexistence. In an era marked by polarization and mistrust, Pakistan has shown that dialogue remains the only sustainable path to peace. The evolving role of Pakistan on the international stage underlines Pakistan's renewed diplomatic relevance and its capacity to contribute positively toward conflict resolution, stability and collective prosperity in the Muslim world and



beyond, he added. Washington views Pakistan as a reliable interlocutor while Tehran values Islamabad's under-

standing of regional realities and shared historical ties. At the same time, Gulf countries appreciate Pakistan's consistent support for regional peace, security and economic stability.

International media reports have highlighted Pakistan's active mediation role in facilitating dialogue between the United States and Iran.

Field Marshal Asim Munir's diplomatic outreach, including high-level engagements with Iranian leadership and close coordination with Gulf states, has strengthened Pakistan's image as a stabilizing force in an increasingly volatile region, he concluded.

### PIDE Leaps Into Top-Tier Research Category, Ranks 15th Nationally in HEC ORIC Evaluation



**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) has achieved a landmark milestone in institutional research excellence, recording an ORIC score of 66.5 in the HEC Annual ORIC Evaluation and advancing from the Y Category to the coveted X Category. The achievement places PIDE 15th among 95 universities evaluated nationwide, surpassing the vast majority of institutions across the country, including several of Pakistan's most established and well-resourced universities.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Nadeem Javaid (SD), Vice Chancellor PIDE, described the recognition as a collective achievement. "This achievement reflects the collective hard work, dedication, and commitment of our ORIC team and the broader PIDE family toward strengthening research, innovation, and institutional excellence," he said. Dr. Javaid extended special congratulations to Dr. Jehangir Khan, Director ORIC, and the entire ORIC team, while also acknowledging the sustained contributions of faculty and administrative colleagues across the institution.

The Vice Chancellor noted that this milestone is not an endpoint but a platform for further ambition. Urging continued collaboration and institutional solidarity, Dr. Javaid called on the entire PIDE community to build on this progress and work toward even greater heights in the years ahead. The HEC Annual ORIC Evaluation is Pakistan's premier mechanism for assessing university-level research capacity, innovation infrastructure, and commercialization potential. Entry into the X Category signals that PIDE now meets the benchmarks in research governance and output recognized by the Higher Education Commission.

# DR Congo stick to pre-World Cup plan to meet Denmark, Chile in friendlies

Reuters

The Democratic Republic of Congo have no plans to change their warm-up preparations for the World Cup despite a warning from the United States that the team must isolate for 21 days before arriving in the country, a team official said on Saturday.

Andrew Giuliani, executive director of the White House Task Force for the World Cup, confirmed to ESPN on Friday that the Congolese delegation needed to maintain a bubble where they are training in Belgium and isolate for 21 days or risk being denied entry after a deadly outbreak of the Ebola virus in the central African country.

The Congolese team are to be based in Houston at the tournament and will



play an opening Group K fixture against Portugal on June 17, followed by matches against Colombia on June 23 in Guadalajara, Mexico, and against Uzbekistan on June 27 in Atlanta.

"We've been very clear to Congo that they should maintain the integrity of their bubble for 21 days before they can then come to Houston on June 11," Giuliani said.

"We've made it very clear to the Congo

government as well that they need to maintain that bubble, or they risk not being able to travel to the United States. We cannot be any clearer."

But a team spokesperson said that at this stage there was no change to their schedule in the coming weeks, which includes a friendly against Denmark in Liege, Belgium, on June 3 and another against Chile in Cadiz, Spain, six days later.

The team had planned a three-day trip to Kinshasa next week as a celebratory send-off before heading to their first World Cup in 52 years but that was cancelled before the US warning.

"We have kept our training programme. No player in the squad has come from DR Congo," the official said. "The friendly matches are still sched-

uled. The only modification to the programme has been the cancellation of the Kinshasa leg."

The entire squad of players are based outside the DR Congo, mostly in Europe, including coach Sebastien Desabre.

A few team officials arrived at the training camp in Belgium from the DRC earlier this week.

The World Health Organisation on Friday raised to "very high" the risk of the rare BUNDIBUGYO strain of Ebola turning into a national outbreak in the DRC and has declared the outbreak there and in neighbouring Uganda an emergency of international concern.

Nearly 750 suspected cases and 177 suspected deaths have been recorded following the outbreak in DRC.

## Pakistan wins 5 medals in Asian Jr Squash C'ships

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has brought home five medals in the recently concluded 33rd Asian Junior Individual Squash Championships 2026.

According to details, a total of 8 players represented Pakistan in different age categories, and 5 of them earned medals.

Gold Medals: Nauman Khan (U-17), Ahmad Rayyan Khalil (U-15); Silver Medal: Mahnoor Ali (Girls U-15); Bronze



Medals: Muhammad Umair Arif (U-17), Muhammad Sohail Adnan (U-15)



Final Match Results: Nauman Khan beat SHIVEN AGARWAL (IND) Boys

U-17 3-1 (10-12, 11-7, 11-2, 11-5) 46m; Ahmad Rayyan Khalil beat PNG Vidhurran Ruthoran (MAL) Boys U-15 3-0 (11-7, 11-3, 11-4) 29m; Mahnoor Ali lost to Ziyuan Yin (CHN) 0-3 (10-12, 9-11, 10-12) 23m.

Good job Abdullah Nawaz and Mustafa Khan for reaching the quarterfinals, and Sehrish Ali for making it to the 3rd round and lost to her sister Mahnoor Ali. Final Medal Tally: Pakistan: 2 Gold, 1 Silver, 2 Bronze (5 Medals).

## Trump Fires Tulsi Over Pakistan ICBM Remarks

Continued from Page 4

upward, shook stock markets, increased inflation worldwide, and threatened trillions of dollars in global trade. International institutions and economists warned that prolonged escalation could plunge millions into poverty and severely damage the global economy.

In this environment, Pakistan's mediation efforts were widely appreciated by countries desperate to avoid catastrophe. Islamabad maintained communication with Tehran, Washington, Beijing, Moscow, Riyadh, and Ankara simultaneously. Its diplomatic efforts contributed to temporary pauses, indirect negotiations, and de-escalatory messaging at moments when the risk of direct regional war appeared extremely high.

It is within this broader geopolitical framework that critics interpret the campaign surrounding Tulsi Gabbard's remarks and resignation. Pakistani commentators argue that a coordinated media and lobbying effort emerged to

undermine Pakistan's image as a fair and impartial mediator. By portraying Pakistan as an unreliable actor, a hidden Iranian ally, or a future missile threat to the West, critics say certain political and media factions sought to erode American trust in Islamabad precisely when Pakistan's diplomatic relevance was reaching unprecedented levels.

Tulsi Gabbard's own political history added further controversy. Of partial Indian ancestry and long associated with pro-India political circles, she frequently adopted positions viewed favorably in New Delhi. Pakistani observers argue that deep-rooted India-Pakistan rivalry inevitably shapes perceptions within parts of the Indian diaspora and certain strategic networks in Washington. While there is no evidence directly proving ethnic bias influenced policy decisions, critics believe broader geopolitical sympathies may have shaped strategic narratives regarding Pakistan.

Yet despite these efforts, Pakistan's role during the crisis continued

receiving acknowledgment from key global actors. President Trump repeatedly defended Islamabad's mediation role. Senior American officials avoided endorsing accusations against Pakistan. Gulf leaders continued engaging Islamabad diplomatically. Even international observers recognized that few countries possessed the diplomatic reach necessary to maintain dialogue with both Tehran and Washington during the height of confrontation.

Pakistan's supporters argue that the campaign against Islamabad ultimately failed because facts contradicted the accusations. Pakistan neither escalated the conflict nor exploited it militarily. Instead, Islamabad consistently advocated diplomacy, restraint, and negotiated settlement while the world stood on the edge of a catastrophic regional war that could easily have evolved into a broader international confrontation.

The Tulsi Gabbard controversy therefore represents something much larger than the resignation of one intelligence official. It reflects the fierce geopolit-

ical struggle over narratives, alliances, mediation, and strategic influence in a rapidly changing world order. As global power centers shift and traditional alliances face unprecedented strain, countries capable of diplomacy and strategic balance gain increasing importance.

During one of the most dangerous crises of the modern era, Pakistan emerged not as a destabilizing force but as one of the few states actively working to prevent disaster. Attempts to undermine that role through media controversies, strategic suspicion, or political narratives may continue. But the broader reality remains difficult to ignore: when the world moved dangerously close to another devastating war, Pakistan positioned itself as a bridge between enemies rather than a participant in destruction.

*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*

## The Unseen Casualties: Media Silence and the Theatre of War

Continued from Page 4

To ignore them is to erode the very values it claims to defend.

The Human Cost

Behind the rhetoric lies a human tragedy. If indeed a facility housing children was struck, then lives were lost or shattered. The refusal to document such suffering denies victims the dignity of recognition. It also deprives audiences of the chance to grapple with the moral complexity of war. Democracies cannot afford to sanitize conflict; they must confront its brutality, even when it undermines preferred narratives.

The silence over Starobelsk thus compounds the tragedy. It transforms victims into invisible casualties, erased

not only by the blast but by the absence of coverage. In doing so, it raises the haunting question: whose suffering counts, and whose does not?

The Theatre of Illusion

Niccolò Machiavelli observed that deception thrives when necessity blinds judgment. In the case of Ukraine, necessity is framed as the defence of freedom against aggression. Yet when media outlets decline to report inconvenient truths, they risk becoming actors in a theatre of illusion. The audience—citizens of Europe and America—are persuaded to accept sacrifices without full knowledge of the realities they are underwriting.

This theatre is sustained by repetition: speeches that frame Ukraine as democracy's vanguard, headlines that portray

Russia as the sole villain, and silences that erase inconvenient facts. But illusions cannot endure indefinitely. When they collapse, disillusionment follows—and with it, the erosion of trust in institutions.

A Call for Accountability

None of this absolves Russia of responsibility for its invasion, which is a violation of sovereignty and international law. Ukraine's struggle is real, and its people deserve solidarity. But solidarity must not be conflated with blind endorsement of manipulative narratives. The West must ask hard questions: are its citizens being told the whole truth, or only the convenient parts? Are media outlets serving the public, or serving policy?

Accountability demands transparency. If a strike on civilians occurred, it must be

reported, investigated, and confronted. To ignore it is to betray the very values of democracy. Citizens deserve honesty, not illusions. They deserve to know not only where their money is going, but what realities they are being asked to support.

Conclusion

The refusal to travel to Starobelsk is more than a logistical decision; it is a metaphor for the West's selective blindness. It symbolizes the tension between values and expediency, between truth and narrative. As billions continue to flow into the war effort, and as citizens bear the costs, the need for transparency becomes urgent. Democracies cannot afford to build consent on illusions. They must reclaim their judgment, lest they discover too late that the theatre of war has become a theatre of deception.

## PFF announces 'Football For Schools' program

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) has announced the launch of its Football For Schools programme, a nationwide initiative that will see more than 150,000 footballs distributed to schools across Pakistan at an AFC Grassroots Day celebration held here at the Jinnah Stadium of Pakistan Sports Complex.



The announcement was made by PFF President Syed Mohsen Gilani at an event that brought together 56 young players — eight teams of seven, split equally between boys and girls — for a day of grassroots football celebrating the sport's role in communities across the country.

Pakistan's celebration was part of the 13th AFC Grassroots Football Day, in which a record 45 Member Associations joined the Asian Football Confederation in marking the annual event — held on May 23 in alignment with FIFA's World Football Week, enabling the AFC to further contribute to the United Nations' Football for the Goals initiative.

"Grassroots is a football factory from where the final product is nurtured and developed," said President Gilani. "The journey for kids starts at the grassroots before they can eventually play at a national level. This AFC Grassroots Day was organized by the PFF to reinforce the idea that grassroots football is a key priority for the PFF."

The Football For Schools programme will be formally launched in the near future, with the mass distribution of footballs designed to expand access to the sport in school environments across the country. President Gilani described it as part of a broader suite of youth programmes the federation intends to implement.

The event also featured a dedicated safeguarding awareness session for parents, where an animated video was screened to educate families on child protection principles reflecting the PFF's commitment to ensuring football environments are safe for all participants.

A highlight of the day was the participation of girls' and boys' teams competing side by side. "The great thing is that girls and boys will participate together in our Grassroots Day celebrations," President Gilani noted, pointing to the federation's long-term development agenda as a driving force behind the day's programming.

## All Pakistan Inter-University Hockey Championship final to be played

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The schedule of the final match of the ongoing All Pakistan Inter-University Hockey Championship organized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) has been changed. The final battle for the trophy between Punjab University and Government College (GC) University will now start at 10:00 am at the Madina Town Hockey Stadium.

The special guest of this important final match will be the Vice Chancellor of Government College (GC) University, who will distribute prizes and trophies among the players and position holder teams at the end of the match. All the arrangements for the final match and the closing ceremony have been finalized by the university administration. A very tough and thrilling competition is expected between the two teams.

## PCB begins search for men's white-ball team batting coach

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has formally started the process of appointing a batting coach for Pakistan's men's white-ball team, issuing an official advertisement seeking an "experienced and skilled" candidate for the position.



According to the eligibility criteria released by the board on another day, applicants must hold at least a Level II cricket coaching accreditation and possess a minimum of five years' experience in a similar role with elite cricketers, national sides, franchise teams, or international setups.

The PCB said candidates should demonstrate strong knowledge of batting techniques, game analysis, and player development, along with experience in monitoring and evaluating systems used internationally to improve batting performance.

The board is also seeking applicants with experience coaching athletes to international standards, as well as strong planning, organisational, and management abilities.

Officials said candidates must be capable of working effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and possess analytical, communication, and problem-solving skills.

Computer literacy, including proficiency in Microsoft Office and coaching software, has also been listed among the essential requirements, while expertise in advanced coaching software would be considered an added advantage.

Sources familiar with the matter said the role is specifically for Pakistan's white-ball setup and will become vacant following the conclusion of the national team's three-match home ODI series against Australia on June 4.

Current batting coach Hanif Malik resigned from the role several weeks ago and is presently serving his notice period, sources added.

The upcoming ODI series against Australia is expected to be Malik's final assignment with the national side.

The PCB said applications for the coaching position can be submitted until 5 pm on June 7.

## Field Marshal's Unforgettable Address on the First Anniversary of Marka-e-Haq

Continued from Page 4

have long troubled Pakistan's border regions. He addressed the Afghan government directly. He said that Pakistan harbors no ill will toward the Afghan people. But he said that Pakistan has only one demand from the current Afghan administration. That demand is to stop supporting the Khawarij. He demanded the complete elimination of all terrorist centers and safe havens on Afghan soil. He warned

that if the Afghan government could not or would not do this, Pakistan reserved the right to take unilateral action. He said that the war against terrorism will continue until the last terrorist is eliminated. Every innocent Pakistani's blood, he said, will be avenged. This portion of the speech was delivered in a hard, flat voice that left no room for negotiation.

Before concluding, Field Marshal Munir returned to a topic that has defined Paki-

stan's foreign policy for over seven decades. He spoke about Kashmir. He said that the story of Pakistan is incomplete without Kashmir. He reminded the audience that the United Nations had passed multiple resolutions calling for a plebiscite in Kashmir. Those resolutions, he said, remained unimplemented only because India refused to honor its commitments. He said that Pakistan will continue to extend its full political, diplo-

matic, and moral support to the Kashmiri people. He saluted the brave Kashmiris who had resisted Indian occupation for so long. He said that their struggle is non-negotiable. He did not announce any military campaign regarding Kashmir. But he made it clear that Pakistan would never abandon the Kashmiri people.

The speech ended where it began, with a note of faith and

resilience. Field Marshal Munir looked up at the sky and said that Pakistan was invincible yesterday, is invincible today, and, with the grace of Allah, will remain invincible forever. He said that no enemy, no matter how powerful, could defeat a nation that trusts in God and trusts in itself. He then stepped back from the podium, saluted, and walked slowly back to his seat. The audience rose as one. The applause was thunderous. But

it was a somber thunder, mixed with tears and memories and hope. The families of the martyrs stood and clapped the longest. They clapped for their loved ones who had fallen. They clapped for the victory that had been bought with blood. And they clapped for a Field Marshal who had not forgotten the cost of that victory. The ceremony ended with a prayer for the nation. As the sun began to set over Rawalpindi, the crowd dispersed, but the words of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir lingered in the air. They would be discussed in homes, in schools, in military messes, and in parliament for weeks and months to come. It was, without question, a remarkable speech. And in the history of Pakistan, it would be remembered as a defining moment, the day when the nation celebrated the Battle of Truth and looked ahead to a future of peace, but only a peace backed by overwhelming strength.

## MoU Signing Ceremony

ISLAMABAD: DPM/FM Ishaq Dar and Liu Haisheng, Minister of IDCPC, exchange documents after signing the MOU.



Photo: Online

# Pakistan, China vow to strengthen CPEC, strategic partnership at Beijing forum

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The fourth meeting of the China-Pakistan Political Parties Forum and the CPEC Political Parties Joint Consultative Mechanism was held in Beijing on Sunday, bringing together leaders and representatives from both countries to discuss bilateral cooperation and the future of the China-Pakistan Economic

Corridor (CPEC).

Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar shared details of the meeting through a post on X, describing the discussions as "very positive and fruitful." The meeting was co-chaired by Ishaq Dar and Liu Haisheng, Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC).

According to the Deputy

Prime Minister, the Pakistani delegation included Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal and representatives of 12 political parties from Pakistan, including members of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

Speaking about the significance of the forum, Ishaq Dar said the meeting provided an excellent opportunity for meaningful dialogue between the political parties

of Pakistan and China. He said both sides reaffirmed their commitment to continue joint efforts aimed at strengthening strategic mutual trust and advancing CPEC 2.0.

The deputy prime minister added that the two countries pledged to enhance economic cooperation and strengthen people-to-people contacts as part of their long-standing bilateral partnership.

Highlighting the importance of the year, Ishaq Dar said that on the completion of 75 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China, both nations were determined to further strengthen the China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

"We are determined to build a China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era," he said.

# Security forces kill 11 Khawarij in KP's North Waziristan district: ISPR

## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Security Forces have killed at least 11 Khawarij belonging to Indian-sponsored Fitna-al-Khawarij in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district.

According to ISPR press release, in continuation of series of intelligence based operations, in last forty eight hours Security Forces engaged multiple Khawarij's locations in general area Datta Khel, North Waziristan District.

Following intense and fierce exchanges of fire, eleven khawarij belonging to Indian-sponsored Fitna-al-Khawarij were effectively neutral-



ized.

Weapons and ammunition have also been recovered from killed Indian sponsored Khawarij, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area.

Sanitization operations continue to eliminate holed up khawarij from these areas, as relentless Counter Terrorism campaign under vision "Azme Istehkam" (as approved by Federal Apex Committee on National Action Plan) by Security Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies of Pakistan will continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign sponsored and supported terrorism from the country.

# Religious affairs minister inspects facilities for Hajj pilgrims in Mina tents

## News Desk

Pakistan's Federal Minister for Religious Affairs, Sardar Muhammad Yousuf, visited the office of Tawaf Company Rawaf Mani and Mani Maktab during his tour of Hajj facilities in Saudi Arabia, where he reviewed the arrangements for Pakistani pilgrims during the ongoing Hajj season.

During the visit, the minister inspected the facilities available in the Mina tents managed by Tawaf Company Rawaf Mani and expressed satisfaction over the preparations. Speaking on the occasion, Sardar Yousuf said that around 23,000 Pakistani pilgrims are performing Hajj this year under the arrangements of Rawaf Mani.

"We hope that Rawaf Mani will take good care of the Pakistani pilgrims and provide them with all possible facilities during their stay," the minister said. He added that serving the guests of Allah was a matter of great honour and happiness.

Makkah Hajj Director, Arif Aslam



Rao, said the Pakistan Hajj Mission team remained in close coordination with all stakeholders to ensure maximum comfort and convenience

for pilgrims. Officials of Rawaf Mani reaffirmed their commitment to serving Pakistani pilgrims. Zuhair Sadayo, CEO

of Rawaf Mani, said the company was in constant contact with the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah to facilitate pilgrims and improve services.

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# PM meets senior Chinese corporate executives



## Spokesman Report

HANGZHOU: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, who is currently on an official visit to China, met with senior Chinese corporate executives representing a number of important companies in Hangzhou on Sunday.

As part of his outreach to China's corporate sector, the Prime Minister met with representatives of Sheng Huo Neng Yuan Ke Ji Company, CATL, StarCharge and Xiuzheng Pharmaceutical Group.

He met with Agnes Siu, CEO of Sheng Hou Neng Yuan Ke Ji Company. The discussion focused on cooperation in the renewable energy sector. The Prime Minister highlighted the emerging renewable energy market and its increasing

appetite in Pakistan.

The Prime Minister also met with Executive President of CATL, Mr. Oscar Luo. Discussions with CATL focused on cooperation in advanced batteries, energy storage and solar-linked solutions to support Pakistan's clean energy transition.

A meeting of the Prime Minister with the Chairwoman of StarCharge Group, Ms. Danwei Shao, was also held. The meeting centered on electric vehicle charging infrastructure and smart mobility systems.

Xin Yuan, President Xiuzheng Pharmaceuticals, called on the Prime Minister. Discussions with Xiuzheng Pharmaceutical Group covered pharmaceutical manufacturing, health-care cooperation and investment opportunities in Pakistan's growing medical sector.

# Naqvi congratulates Iranian envoy on breakthrough in peace talks



## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Reza Amiri Moghadam, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan, said in a social media post late on Saturday night that Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi congratulated him on return from Tehran on the achievements made in Iran-US peace talks.

In a post on X, Reza Amiri wrote, "A few minutes ago, the Honorable Pakistani Minister of Interior, my dear brother H. E. Mohsin Naqvi, congratulated me on the achievements of the negotiations with the officials of my country after returning from Tehran.

"With conservative optimism, we can hope that, if the other side is adequately committed, a positive stride is taking shape which is the

result of the positions of the Islamic Republic of Iran based on dignity, the steadfastness of the courageous armed forces and the resistance of the brave Iranian nation, as well as the initiative and dedicated endeavours of the Pakistani mediator.

"I hope that the sincere efforts of the esteemed Pakistani government and army, especially H. E. Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Seyed Asim Munir NI(M), HJ, COAS & CDF, for the initiative of mediation, and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister H. E. Muhammad Ishaq Dar and Interior Minister H. E. Mohsin Naqvi, for their sincere diplomatic efforts, will lead to lasting peace in the region.

"On my behalf, I extend my sincere and wholehearted gratitude to all of them for their sincere endeavours."

# Eid-ul-Azha Cattle Prices Soar Amidst High Costs and Buyer Bargaining

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: As Eid-ul-Azha approaches, Pakistan's cattle markets are bustling with activity, but at significantly higher prices. Buyers deem rates "unusually high," while traders cite mounting costs for fodder, medicine, transport, and general care.

With no official pricing formula, valuations are determined by animal attributes like age, weight, breed, health, and appearance, alongside market demand.

Prices range from Rs90,000-Rs125,000 for ordinary goats/sheep, up to Rs1.5 million for premium large animals, and

Rs0.5-2 million for camels. While supply has increased, buyer turnout is lower, intensifying bargaining. Authorities claim increased monitoring to prevent overcharging and have set up complaint counters, urging buyers to use registered markets and report wrongdoing.

Meanwhile, rising temperatures and crowded conditions are contributing to disease outbreaks among animals, with veterinary hospitals treating numerous cases of fever, cough, flu, and tick problems.

Experts advise against feeding animals inappropriate food and recommend buyers carefully inspect animals before purchase.