



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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ہم سے سونے بیان کیا کہ ہم سے اس میں
بن علی سے بیان کیا کہ ہم کو عید العزیز بن
صیب نے جزیہ ان سے اس رضی اللہ عنہ
نے بیان کیا کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم
نے فرمایا جب تم میں سے کوئی دعا کرے تو
اللہ سے تعلق طور پر مانگے اور یہ کہے کہ
اے اللہ! اگر تو چاہے تو مجھے عطا فرما کیونکہ
اللہ پر کوئی بردہ حق کرنے والا نہیں ہے۔
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Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif returns to Lahore after China visit

During the visit, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held meetings with Xi Jinping, the Chinese prime minister and other senior Chinese officials to discuss bilateral cooperation and matters of mutual interest.



Prince Rahim Aga Khan concludes Pakistan visit

Prince Rahim Aga Khan departed Pakistan after completing his official visit to the country, according to an official statement issued on Tuesday. Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry bid farewell to Prince Rahim at Nur Khan Airbase.

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Addressed

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addressing at IBI Corporation at Beijing on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

Hajj sermon calls for unity, Taqwa, and strength of one Ummah

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: From the blessed plains of Arafat, Imam and Khateeb of Masjid an-Nabawi, Sheikh Dr Ali Al Huthaifi, delivered a powerful message to the Muslim Ummah: unity through Taqwa, truth, and devotion to Allah.

Addressing millions of pilgrims gathered from every race, nation, and background, the Imam reminded believers that Islam unites hearts beyond borders, languages, and colours.

"People of all colours and backgrounds from across the globe have gathered here today," he said, describing Hajj as a living manifestation of one Ummah standing together before Allah.

The sermon emphasised that true honour lies in piety,



sincerity, and Tawheed — the oneness of Allah.

He urged Muslims to abandon division, falsehood, gossip, and hatred, and instead strengthen brotherhood, patience, and righteousness.

From Arafat, the heart of Hajj, came a timeless reminder: the strength of the Ummah is in its unity. One faith. One Qibla. One Ummah.

The Imam concluded with an emotional dua asking Allah to unite the hearts of Muslims upon truth, accept the Hajj of the pilgrims, and return them safely to their homes.

China, Pakistan reaffirms peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute, express readiness for trans-boundary water cooperation

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China on Tuesday reiterating opposition to any unilateral actions, reaffirmed the significance of maintaining peace and stability in South Asia, and resolution of all outstanding disputes through dialogue and diplomacy including Jammu and Kashmir dispute, besides expressing readiness to conduct trans-boundary water resources cooperation.

The bilateral and regional ties were discussed during the four-day official visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, at the invitation of Li Qiang, Premier of the State

Council of the People's Republic of China. According to a joint statement issued on the conclusion of the prime minister's visit, both sides agreed to tap into the potential for cooperation in such areas as economy and trade, energy, digital economy, finance, scientific and technological innovation, artificial intelligence, information and communication, water conservancy, marine affairs, among others, scale up personnel training, consult on advancing trade liberalization, and jointly safeguard the stability and security of industrial and supply chains.

The Pakistani side briefed the Chinese side on the latest developments in the

situation in Jammu and Kashmir. "The Chinese side reiterated that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute is left over from history, and should be properly and peacefully resolved in accordance with the U. N. Charter, relevant U. N. Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements."

According to the statement, the two sides expressed readiness to conduct trans-boundary water resources cooperation under the principle of equality and mutual benefit. The significance of the maintenance of international and regional security and stability was reiterated.

Continue on Page 7

China, Pakistan deepen digital and industrial partnership as PM Shehbaz visits IBI Guolian Gufen headquarter

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: During Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's visit to IBI Guolian Gufen, China and Pakistan committed to enhancing economic and technological collaboration, especially within CPEC 2.0. Key areas of focus include the digital economy, industrial development, and youth empowerment.

Prime Minister Sharif highlighted AI and IT as priorities, emphasizing Pakistan's efforts in skills and digital training for its youth.

He also mentioned collaborations with companies like Alibaba to boost Pakistan's e-commerce, agriculture, and logistics.

IBI Guolian Gufen's Chairman Qian Xiaojun proposed practical initiatives, including leveraging digital trade and supply chain finance to boost Pakistan's agricultural exports to China and the development of cold-chain infrastructure, precision agriculture, and bio-organic fertilizer projects.

Qian stressed the importance of domestic mineral processing and value addition over raw material export, advocating for a partnership economy.

PM Shehbaz, President Erdogan reaffirm Pakistan-Turkey ties in Eid-ul-Adha call

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held a telephone conversation with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha, during which the two leaders exchanged greetings and discussed bilateral cooperation and regional peace efforts.

According to an official statement, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif extended Eid greetings to the Turkish leadership and the people of Türkiye, while President Erdoğan reciprocated the wishes warmly.

Recalling their recent interactions, particularly their meeting in Antalya in April, the two leaders reaffirmed that the historic and brotherly relations between Pakistan and Türkiye had grown even stronger.

The leaders agreed to ensure

swift implementation of key decisions taken during recent high-level engagements, with particular emphasis on enhancing bilateral cooperation in trade and investment.

Regional peace and stability also came under discussion during the conversation. Prime Minister Shehbaz thanked President Erdoğan for Türkiye's consistent support for the Pakistan-led peace initiative in the region.

Both leaders agreed to continue close coordination and cooperation to promote peace, dialogue, stability and de-escalation efforts in the region.



Pakistan plans strategic oil reserves to reduce Hormuz dependency

News Des

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan plans to boost domestic storage for crude oil and refined products to increase its energy security, according to a government document that was shared with oil producers and some of the world's leading trading firms.

Despite depending on supplies through the Strait of Hormuz for up to 90 per cent of its oil and liquefied natural gas imports, Pakistan has no strategic petroleum reserves.

According to the document reviewed by Reuters, the energy ministry is proposing to build strategic petroleum reserves as well as commercial storage through bonded terminals, refineries and oil marketing compa-

nies. It is also pushing for more oil and gas exploration and production, upgrades to its refineries and a consolidation of its downstream sector.

"Pakistan's oil security requires both emergency reserves and stronger local supply capacity," the ministry said in the document.

It shared the proposed framework with Saudi Aramco, Abu Dhabi National Oil Corp, Kuwait Petroleum Corp, QatarEnergy and PetroChina as well as oil trading firms Vitol and Trafigura and storage operator Vopak.

Trafigura, Vitol and Aramco declined to comment. The other companies and Pakistan's petroleum ministry did not respond to requests for comment.

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Azad Kashmir PM greets Muslim Ummah, highlights Kashmiris' sacrifices on Eid-ul-Adha

Spokesman Report:

MUZAFFARABAD: The Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir, Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, has extended his heartfelt greetings to the Muslim Ummah, particularly the people of Jammu and Kashmir, on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha.

In his special Eid message, the Prime Minister said that the holy occasion reflects the timeless spirit of obedience, sacrifice, and devotion amply demonstrated by Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and Hazrat Ismail (AS).

He said that people of Kashmir, who have rendered immense sacrifices, were upholding the same spirit of sacrifice while facing Indian repression.



He also paid tribute to Kashmiris for their unwavering commitment and resilience in the face of Indian state terrorism. Referring to the Indian government's

nefarious designs in the region, Prime Minister Rathore said that India was attempting to erase the Kashmiris' distinct political, religious, and cultural identity.

The Prime Minister Rathore appealed to the Muslim world to remember the oppressed people of occupied Kashmir in Eid prayers and support their just struggle for freedom.

He reiterated that the government and people of Azad Kashmir would continue extending all possible support to the Kashmir freedom movement.

He also urged the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir to uphold the true spirit of Eid-ul-Adha by taking special care of the needy and underprivileged around them.

Eid Spirit Embodies Sacrifice for Freedom, Says AJK Acting President



Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The acting president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Chaudhry Latif Akbar, while extending his greetings to the Muslim Ummah, particularly the people of Kashmir, has said that the spirit of Eid teaches sacrifice for a greater cause. In his Eid-ul-Adha message, Mr. Akbar said that the auspicious day reminds Muslims of the great sacrifices of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and Hazrat Ismail (AS), symbolizing selflessness, patience, and obedience to Allah Almighty. Expressing solidarity with the people of occupied Kashmir, he said the people of Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir were rendering unprecedented sacrifices for their freedom and right to self-determination. Denouncing the Indian government's majoritarian policies, the acting president said that India continued to suppress the political and human rights of Kashmiris in illegally Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir through oppression and coercion. He added that New Delhi was attempting to link the Kashmiris' legitimate freedom struggle with terrorism to divert international attention away from the real issue. Terming India's imperialistic presence in Kashmir as a threat to regional peace, Chaudhry Latif Akbar said the international community should redouble its efforts to help resolve the lingering dispute peacefully in accordance with the universally accepted principle of the right to self-determination enshrined in the UN Charter.

Kashmiris' Sacrifices Echo Hazrat Ibrahim's Faith, Says Minister Nayyar

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Minister for Information and Religious Affairs Chaudhry Muhammad Rafiq Nayyar, while extending Eid greetings to the Muslim Ummah, has said the unparalleled sacrifice of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and Hazrat Ismail (AS) teaches Muslims the values of unwavering faith, obedience, and sacrifice for the sake of Allah Almighty.



in his Eid-ul-Adha message, Mr. Nayyar said the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir were also rendering immense sacrifices for their freedom despite continued Indian atrocities and repression.

He said the sacrifices rendered by the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir for their freedom could never be forgotten.

Despite facing brutal Indian atrocities, he said, Kashmiris continued to uphold the spirit of faith and sacrifice exemplified by Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and Hazrat Ismail (AS). He added that the sacrifices of the Kashmiri martyrs would not go in vain and that the real Eid for Kashmiris would be the day when occupied Jammu and Kashmir was freed from Indian occupation. The minister said millions of Muslims from across the world had gathered in the holy cities to perform Hajj, which reflected the spirit of Islamic unity, brotherhood, and harmony.

He added that Allah Almighty had also blessed him with the opportunity to perform Hajj this year.

Attock Police issue Eidul Azha Security Plan; Over 1,200 Personnel to Perform Duty Across District

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: On the direction of District Police Officer Attock Sardar Mavarhan Khan, Attock Police have issued a comprehensive security plan to ensure protection of citizens' lives and property and maintain law and order during Eidul Azha.

DPO Attock Sardar Mavarhan Khan has directed that strict legal action will be taken under a zero-tolerance policy against those involved in aerial firing, hooliganism, one-wheeling and other violations of law during Eidul Azha. He said additional force had been kept on standby at Police Headquarters to deal with any emergency situation.

The DPO said he would personally supervise all security arrangements, adding that Attock Police would utilise all available resources to protect citizens and maintain peace and order. He also directed all police officers and officials to behave politely with citizens while performing duty on the joyous occasion of Eid, warning that negligence or carelessness in duty would not be tolerated.

DC Attock & AC Attock visited Cattle Market



Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Deputy Commissioner Attock, Rao Atif Raza, visited the Attock Cattle Market to oversee Eid-ul-Adha arrangements. Accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Arif Qureshi and Additional Deputy Commissioner General Aneel Saeed, he reviewed cleanliness, security, parking, water, lighting, and trader/buyer facilities. Raza directed officers to provide maximum convenience to citizens and enhance sanitation, prioritizing public welfare as per the Punjab Government's vision. He stressed cleanliness, drainage, waste management, security, and traffic control, assuring that all resources are being used for public comfort and a healthy environment. Negligence will not be tolerated.

Eid shopping

FAISALABAD: A woman purchasing wristwatch from a shop at Satiana road area in the city on the eve of Eid Al-Adha.



Photo: Online

Punjab's Eid-ul-Adha Campaign: Cleanliness Meets Spiritual Duty

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Auqaf Punjab, led by Secretary Dr. Ehsan Bhutta, is launching a comprehensive initiative for Eid-ul-Adha, aligning spiritual duty with environmental cleanliness.

Inspired by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's "Suthra Punjab" vision and zero-tolerance policy, the campaign includes door-to-door waste collection, eco-friendly bags, and mosque sanitization.

Director General Babar Sahib Din detailed a tech-driven operational plan with real-time monitoring and dedicated teams for efficient disposal of animal remains, ensuring a spotless province.

Religious leaders, including Maulana Syed Abdul Khabir Azad of Badshahi Mosque, are urged to promote awareness from the pulpit.

A unified pledge was made for the campaign's success and national prosperity, emphasizing the crucial role of public cooperation alongside administrative efforts.



Data Ganj Bakhsh Urs: Punjab Boosts Security, Infra for Grand Celebrations

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab government is enhancing security and administrative readiness for the upcoming Ghussal ceremony and annual Urs celebrations of Hazrat Ali Hajveri (Data Ganj Bakhsh) at his shrine in Lahore.

Advisor to the Chief Minister, Ali Dar, visited the shrine to review infrastructure upgrades and operational plans. He emphasized using technological advancements for public service and facilitating devotees, aligning with Lahore's Sufi heritage.

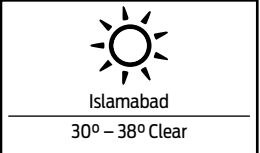
Secretary Auqaf Punjab, Dr. Ehsan Bhutta, briefed on develop-



ment projects, including road improve-

ments, underpass construction, and architectural restoration, aimed at ensuring smooth traffic and accessibility.

Comprehensive operational plans for security coordination, crowd management, emergency response, and pilgrim facilitation were also presented. Ali Dar urged all departments to ensure flawless coordination, visitor convenience, and stringent security, stressing the use of advanced planning and logistics to uphold the sanctity of the events. The government is committed to integrating digital governance and innovative frameworks to improve administrative efficiency and citizen facilitation province-wide.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:21 am
 Zohr 12:05 pm
 Asr 5:02 pm
 Maghrib 7:09 pm
 Isha 8:49 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Pakistan Freelancers Earn over \$950 Million in 10 Months Despite Multiple Challenges: PAFLA

News Desk

KARACHI: Pakistani freelancers have earned over \$950 million in foreign exchange in the first 10 months of the fiscal year, a 49% increase from the previous year, significantly outperforming other countries. This growth, totaling \$959 million, is attributed to increased participation on platforms like Upwork and Fiverr, rising awareness, and skill acquisition through various learning avenues. Pakistan's freelancing community, estimated at 3 million, is expected to grow further through collaboration between government, banks, and stakeholders. Dr. Imran Batada, CEO of Pakistan Freelancers Association, stressed the importance of continuous skill development, particularly in AI and soft skills, and highlighted PAFLA's strategy to enhance freelancers' knowledge through training sessions. This achievement, nearing the \$1 billion milestone, is a result of collective efforts by various government bodies and agencies.

Punjab offers AIIB partnership in development projects: CM Maryam Nawaz

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Investment Officer of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank Mr Konstantin Limitovskiy called on Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, during which matters of mutual interest and enhancement of institutional cooperation came under discussion. AIIB Director General Miss Xiaohong Yang was also present in the meeting. The chief minister briefed the delegation about record development projects being undertaken in Punjab and offered the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank partnership in development projects in the province. CM Maryam Nawaz said the Punjab government's "Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar" programme was appreciated during the 13th session of the Baku Urban Forum, adding that more than 100,000 houses had been constructed within one year under the programme.



She said electric bus and e-bike programmes were being successfully implemented across every part of Punjab. The chief minister appreciated AIIB's cooperation on the signing of an MoU for improvement of water and sanitation infrastructure in Lahore, saying the mutual agreements reflected the bank's confidence in Punjab's development and reform agenda. She said the Lahore Wastewater and Drainage Management Project, including the sewerage network and wastewater treatment plant at Babu Sabu, would help improve the drainage system. CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz said AIIB's support for the proposed surface water treatment plant at the BRBD Canal was valuable and added that cooperation with the bank would bring positive changes in urban culture. The chief minister also welcomed AIIB Chief Investment Officer Konstantin Limitovskiy to Lahore, describing the city as Pakistan's cultural hub, and said the Punjab government valued its partnership with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Flag march

ISLAMABAD: Police holding flag march in street of Federal Capital on the eve of Eid Al-Adha. Islamabad Capital Police (ICP) conducted a flag march in the city to maintain peace and tranquillity in the city during the Eid Al-Adha holidays.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Gillani Brothers Slam Govt for IMF Policies on Eid-ul-Adha

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: On Eid-ul-Adha, PTI leader Makhdoom Rajan Bakhsh Gillani and Makhdoomzada Zainul Abideen Gillani criticized the government. They stated the government's policies, driven by IMF loan pursuits, have worsened the lives of Pakistanis. Despite global drops in oil prices, taxes on fuel have tripled. Lavish government spending continues while citizens face exorbitant taxes on electricity and gas bills, making basic necessities unaffordable. Inflation has led to widespread poverty, unemployment, and the emigration of educated youth. Farmers, the backbone of the economy, are also suffering due to unremunerative prices for their produce, leading to a call for the removal of current rulers and the establishment of justice.



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Surgeon Defends HIV Patient Surgery, Cites Minimal Transmission Risk

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Professor Dr. Masood-ul-Rauf Hiraj, a prominent surgeon, defended the emergency surgery performed on an HIV patient at Nishtar Hospital, asserting that all SOPs were followed. He urged the government to form an expert committee for an inquiry based on international guidelines, pledging to resign if any negligence is proven. He stated that HIV transmission risk is minimal with proper sterilization, unlike Hepatitis B. Dr. Hiraj highlighted that HIV patients are now reportedly avoiding treatment due to negative propaganda. He emphasized the need for immediate surgery in emergencies, irrespective of HIV test results, and defended the junior doctors' actions. The Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) South Punjab delegation, including Dr. Imran Haider Qaisrani and Dr. Rizwan Sharif, supported Dr. Hiraj, demanding reinstatement of suspended staff, refuting claims of 27 infections as false, and called for better infectious disease control measures. The PMA also reserved the right to take legal action against those spreading misinformation.



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AE Power and Solis Partner to Launch Next-Generation Solar Solutions

AE Power, a pioneering leader in Pakistan's renewable energy landscape, in strategic collaboration with global inverter giant Solis, successfully hosted the landmark AE Excellence Awards 2026. The exclusive, high-profile gala took place on Friday, May 22, 2026, at the ultra-luxurious Hannover Event Complex in Lahore.



Rana Abbas CEO AE Power

at the Prestigious AE EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2026



Mr. Mark Gong, Director, Solis

honored the dedication, exceptional market performance, and loyalty of AE Power's countrywide dealers and distributors who have driven solar adoption to new heights. Overwhelmingly Positive Response from the Community. The atmosphere at the Hannover Event

The evening served as a critical milestone for the future of clean energy innovation in the region, bringing together the country's most prominent solar industry leaders, top-tier EPC contractors, key distributors, and major installer networks. The centralized theme of the evening focused on the highly anticipated commercial debut of Solis's latest technological breakthroughs: the cutting-edge Solis Energy Storage Battery and the high-efficiency Solis 125 kW Hybrid Inverter. Designed specifically to address growing commercial, industrial, and residential energy storage challenges, these next-generation products offer unprecedented power optimization, high energy density, and smart grid reliability. Inspiring Leadership and Strategic Vision. A major highlight of the evening was an inspiring keynote address by CEO AE Power, Mr. Rana Abbas, who spoke directly to the dealers, installers, and the wider solar community. Mr. Rana Abbas expressed deep gratitude to the network for their unwavering commitment to green energy. He emphasized that the solar community is the backbone of Pakistan's shifting energy paradigm and reiterated AE Power's grand vision to accelerate the country toward true energy independence. He noted that the newly launched product lineup

would empower partners to deliver unmatched reliability and efficiency to end-users across the nation. The execution of this mega-event was seamlessly orchestrated under the expert supervision and leadership of COO AE Power, Mr. Raheel Yaqub. His



strategic direction ensured that the event balanced world-class corporate standards with deep B2B value, solidifying the operational synergy between AE Power and Solis. New Brand Ambassador Announcement. In a move to bridge cutting-edge technology with public awareness, AE Power officially announced popular social media influencer Mr. Waqas Khaleeq as the official Brand Ambassador for AE Power. Waqas Khaleeq, recognized for his impactful digital presence, will lead future awareness campaigns to educate the masses on the financial and environmental benefits of adopting smart solar systems. Honoring Excellence and Ecosystem Strengthening. Beyond celebrating engineering milestones, the core objective of



the event was to significantly strengthen Solis's nationwide

dealer and installer ecosystem. By equipping their trusted partner



network with direct technical insight into the newly launched product lineup, both companies are solidifying their commitment to driving seamless, high-performance solar transitions across Pakistan. AE Power has officially announced that both companies will establish more than 30 state-of-the-art service and collection centers across Pakistan to revolutionize customer support and after-sales service in the solar energy sector. This massive network expansion aims to provide solar consumers with seamless access to technical support, genuine spare parts, and rapid warranty processing. By combining AE Power's strong local market presence with Solis's world-class engineering expertise, the collaboration will ensure maximum uptime and efficiency for residential, commercial, and industrial solar installations nationwide. The apex of the night was the distribution of the Excellence Awards, which formally

Complex was charged with enthusiasm. Attendees expressed immense happiness and shared highly positive remarks regarding the transparency, scale, and execution of the gala. Many participants openly praised the interactive product display zones, noting that the hands-on experience with the Solis 125 kW Hybrid Inverter gave them immense confidence for upcoming commercial installations. The sentiment was so overwhelmingly positive that senior solar industry stakeholders and dealers ranked the AE Excellence Awards 2026 among the absolute best solar industry events ever held in Pakistan. Addressing the gathering, senior executives from both AE Power and Solis emphasized that the partnership extends far beyond transactional supply chains. The joint venture represents a synchronized, long-term vision to spearhead the evolution of smart, decentralized energy infrastructure in Pakistan. With premium entertainment, extensive B2B networking sessions, and a clear roadmap for the future, the event has officially set a world-class benchmark for corporate energy events in the country.

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Trump Lost the War but Won the Peace

When President Donald Trump agreed to extend the Iran ceasefire for another sixty days and reopened the path toward a negotiated settlement, many observers viewed it merely as another tactical pause in a dangerous conflict. In reality, it represented something far deeper: the moment a president who had long been surrounded by war advocates, political pressure groups, strategic alliances, media influence, and ideological expectations finally realized that continuing the war could destroy not only the Middle East, but also America's global standing, economic stability, and military prestige.

Trump's dilemma was unlike any faced by previous American presidents. On one side stood Israel and its vast network of political influence inside Washington. On the other stood the growing realization that the war with Iran was becoming economically unbearable, militarily risky, diplomatically isolating, and strategically unwinnable.

The relationship between Trump's inner circle and Israel has long attracted public attention. His eldest daughter, Ivanka Trump, converted to Orthodox Judaism before marrying Jared Kushner in 2009. Kushner comes from a deeply connected and influential Orthodox Jewish family with longstanding ties to Israeli political leadership, including Benjamin Netanyahu. Throughout Trump's political rise, Kushner became one of the most trusted figures in the White House and played a central role in Middle East diplomacy.

For critics of Israeli influence in American politics, this relationship symbolized something larger: the ability of

powerful lobbying networks to build close personal, financial, and ideological relationships with rising American politicians and business elites. The perception — whether exaggerated or real — is that influence in Washington is often shaped not merely through diplomacy, but through campaign financing, media support, elite networking, think tanks, and strategic political alliances that gradually align American policy with Israeli strategic objectives.

Trump entered office already surrounded by many foreign policy hawks who strongly favored Israel's security agenda. Over time, many of those voices pushed the United States toward confrontation with Iran, arguing that Tehran's regional influence and nuclear ambitions posed an existential threat to Israel and Western interests. When Israel launched aggressive military operations against Iranian assets and the regional crisis escalated, the United States was gradually pulled into direct confrontation.

Trump, known for his unpredictability, ultimately recognized that continuing the war could sink his presidency and permanently damage America's global influence. The ceasefire, therefore, was not merely a retreat from conflict. It was an acknowledgment of reality.

In choosing diplomacy over escalation, Trump effectively turned against many of the forces that had once surrounded him. He angered powerful war advocates. He frustrated hardline Israeli leadership. He disappointed sections of the American media establishment that had continuously demanded stronger military action against Iran. He upset defense contractors, energy speculators, and financial actors profiting from wartime instability.

Even within his own political and personal circles, the decision carried enormous risk. But Trump appeared to conclude that preserving global stability and preventing economic catastrophe

led to Washington seeking approval, protection, and partnership. But increasingly, major European, Asian, African, and Middle Eastern leaders were now turning toward Xi Jinping and China as an alternative center of global economic gravity. Beijing was emerging not only as an economic powerhouse but also as a diplomatic magnet.



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

For ordinary Americans, the crisis became deeply personal. Gasoline prices climbed sharply. Markets turned volatile. Insurance costs rose. Supply chains weakened. Investors feared a prolonged global recession. The world economy, already fragile after years of geopolitical instability, stood dangerously close to another financial meltdown.

At the same time, Trump began confronting another uncomfortable reality: America's military supremacy was no longer unquestioned.

The war exposed the enormous consumption of precision-guided ammunition, missile interceptors, naval deployments, and air-defense systems. Strategic stockpiles were being depleted at alarming speed. Prolonged warfare risked exposing vulnerabilities that American military planners had long tried to conceal. The myth of unlimited American military endurance was beginning to crack.

Trump also witnessed a dramatic geopolitical shift unfolding before his eyes. For decades, world leaders trav-

eled to Washington seeking approval, protection, and partnership. But increasingly, major European, Asian, African, and Middle Eastern leaders were now turning toward Xi Jinping and China as an alternative center of global economic gravity. Beijing was emerging not only as an economic powerhouse but also as a diplomatic magnet.

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Continued on Page 7

Eid-ul-Adha, Extends Eid Greetings

Eid ul Azha: The Festival of Sacrifice and Compassion. Eid ul Azha, also known as the Festival of Sacrifice, is one of the two major Islamic holidays celebrated by Muslims worldwide. It falls on the 10th day of Dhu al-Hijjah, the last month of the Islamic calendar, coinciding with the culmination of Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Makkah. The festival commemorates the unwavering faith and obedience of Prophet Ibrahim AS, who was prepared to sacrifice his son Ismail AS in submission to Allah's command.

The story behind Eid ul Azha is central to its meaning. According to Islamic tradition, Allah tested Prophet Ibrahim's faith by asking him to sacrifice his beloved son. Ibrahim and Ismail both submitted without hesitation. At the moment of sacrifice, Allah replaced Ismail with a ram, signifying that true devotion lies in the intention of obedience, not in the act itself. This event reminds Muslims that faith requires trust, surrender, and moral courage.

The primary ritual of Eid ul Azha is Qurbani, the sacrifice of a permissible animal such as a goat, sheep, cow, or camel. The meat is divided into three parts: one for the family, one for relatives and friends, and one for the poor and needy. This distribution embodies the spirit of the festival—sharing, generosity, and social solidarity. It ensures that even those facing financial hardship can partake in the celebration and share a dignified meal. Beyond the sacrifice, Eid ul Azha is marked by congregational prayers held shortly after sunrise.

Muslims gather in mosques and open grounds, dressed in their finest clothes, to offer the special Eid prayer and listen to the khutbah. The day begins with takbeer—proclaiming the greatness of Allah—and continues with visits to family and friends, exchange of greetings, and acts of charity. The festival carries lessons that extend beyond ritual. It emphasizes self-discipline, empathy for the less fortunate, and the importance of placing moral values above material desire. The act of giving away meat serves as a practical reminder that wealth and status are temporary, and that community welfare matters more than individual gain.

In many countries, Eid ul Azha is a public holiday. Streets come alive with greetings of "Eid Mubarak," homes prepare traditional dishes, and children receive gifts known as Eidi. Despite cultural variations in food and customs, the core message remains the same across the Muslim world: sacrifice, gratitude, and unity.

At its heart, Eid ul Azha calls believers to reflect on the meaning of sacrifice in daily life. It asks: what are we willing to give up for the sake of principle, compassion, and justice? When approached with sincerity, the festival becomes more than a celebration—it becomes a renewal of commitment to faith and to serving others.



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

Punjab Means Cleanliness this Eid

As Pakistan celebrates Eid ul Adha today, millions of families across Punjab are performing the sacred Sunnah of sacrifice with devotion and gratitude. The sounds of takbeer echo through neighbourhoods, filled with the spirit of sharing, as people gather to fulfil a religious obligation rooted in sacrifice, obedience and compassion. Yet alongside the joy and spiritual significance of Eid comes another important responsibility: keeping our surroundings clean and ensuring that the blessings of this occasion reach those who need them most.

Meanwhile, the Punjab government, led by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, has launched one of the largest and most organised cleanliness operations in the province's history. The message from the government is simple and clear: Eid should bring happiness to people, not heaps of waste and unhygienic conditions in streets and surroundings.

Across Punjab, an extensive sanitation plan has been activated to manage the disposal of sacrificial waste efficiently and promptly. More than 176,000 sanitary workers and thousands of operational vehicles have been deployed under the "Suthra Punjab" initiative to ensure continuous waste collection throughout the three days of Eid. Collection points, dumping sites and temporary disposal centres have been established in cities, towns and villages to maintain cleanliness and prevent the spread of disease.

The Punjab government has also adopted a strict policy against the irresponsible disposal of animal waste. Citizens throwing offal into streets, drains, canals or open public spaces would face fines. Vigilance teams and monitoring squads are active in different districts, while helpines and complaint centres remain operational around the clock. The objective is

not merely to impose penalties but to create public awareness that cleanliness is a shared civic and religious duty.

Islam places extraordinary emphasis on cleanliness. Our faith teaches us that purity is part of iman. Eid ul Adha is not only about sacrificing animals; it is also about discipline, responsibility and consideration for others. Leaving waste in streets, blocking drainage systems or creating foul smells in neighbourhoods goes against the very spirit of this sacred occasion.

What deserves appreciation is that the Punjab government has attempted to approach the challenge in a systematic manner. Roads, markets, mosques, graveyards and public spaces were cleaned before Eid prayers, while sanitation teams remained on standby in all districts. Special arrangements have also been made at cattle markets to reduce health risks and maintain hygiene standards. Such efforts reflect an important shift towards organised urban management and responsive governance.

However, no government operation, regardless of its scale, can succeed without public cooperation. The responsibility does not belong to sanitary workers alone. Every household must play its role by using designated waste bags, cooperating with collection teams and avoiding careless disposal practices. A clean Punjab cannot be achieved through government machinery alone; it requires collective public behaviour.

At the same time, Eid ul Adha reminds us of another equally important obligation: caring for the less fortunate around us. The essence of qurbani lies not in display, but in sharing. In many homes across Pakistan, meat is considered a luxury that families can only afford on Eid days. For widows, labourers, daily-wage workers, orphaned children and struggling

families, this occasion arrives with hope and expectation.

Islam beautifully instructs believers to distribute qurbani meat among relatives, neighbours and the poor. This teaching carries immense social wisdom. It strengthens community bonds, reduces hardship and ensures that the joy of Eid is shared collectively rather than enjoyed in isolation. In today's economic circumstances, when inflation has placed enormous pressure on ordinary households, the importance of generosity has increased even further.

This Eid, people should look beyond their immediate circles. There may be families in nearby katchi abadis, elderly people living alone, sanitation workers performing duties in heat or labourers away from their hometowns who deserve to be remembered. Sharing quality meat, offering meals and extending kindness can bring dignity and happiness to countless individuals.

It is equally important to acknowledge the tireless sanitary staff spending their Eid on roads and streets instead of with their families. Their work protects public health and preserves the cleanliness of our cities during one of the busiest periods of the year. They deserve appreciation, respect and humane treatment from society.

Eid ul Adha is ultimately a lesson in sacrifice, humility and service to humanity. Clean streets, disciplined civic behaviour and compassion for the underprivileged are all reflections of the values this sacred day teaches us. If citizens fulfil their responsibilities alongside the government's efforts, Punjab can set a powerful example of both cleanliness and compassion.

This Eid, let us not only protect the cleanliness of our surroundings, but also purify our hearts through generosity, responsibility and care for others. That is the true spirit of Eid ul Adha.

(The writer is a Lahore-based public policy analyst and can be reached at qudratu@gmail.com)



Analysis

Qudrat Ullah

The Farewell Sermon and Its Message for the Muslim Ummah

Islam is a complete code of life that provides guidance in every aspect of human existence. The entire life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ serves as a beacon of guidance for humanity, but his final historic sermon, known as the Farewell Sermon, holds a unique place as a comprehensive summary of Islamic teachings and an eternal message for the Muslim Ummah. This sermon was delivered in 10 AH in the plain of Arafat before a gathering of more than one hundred thousand companions. In this address, the Prophet ﷺ highlighted essential principles such as humanity, equality, justice, human rights, women's rights, brotherhood, and piety, providing guidance that remains relevant for all people until the Day of Judgment.

The Farewell Sermon is, in fact, a practical manifesto of the fundamental teachings of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ first emphasized the sanctity of human life, property, and honor. He declared that just as the sacredness of that day, month, and city was unquestionable, so too were the lives, wealth, and dignity of every Muslim sacred. This great declaration taught humanity that violating the life or honor of another person is a grave crime. In today's world, where oppression, war, violence, and the violation of human rights are widespread, the Farewell Sermon teaches us the values of peace, respect, and human dignity.

The Prophet ﷺ also announced the abolition of all forms of usury and interest. He declared that all interest-based transactions from the age of ignorance had been abolished. This principle

of Islam guarantees economic justice and social equality. Interest fosters greed, exploitation, and financial injustice, whereas Islam seeks to establish an economic system based on fairness, compassion, and cooperation. In the modern world, where economic exploitation is common, the Farewell Sermon calls humanity toward a just and balanced financial system.

One of the most important aspects of the sermon was the message of human equality and brotherhood. The Prophet ﷺ stated that no Arab has superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have superiority over an Arab; neither a white person over a black person nor a black person over a white person, except through piety and righteousness. This declaration is considered one of the greatest charters of equality in human history. Islam eliminated all concepts of superiority based on race, color, language, or nationality. Today, when the world suffers from racism, prejudice, and hatred, the Farewell Sermon teaches love, equality, and universal brotherhood.

The Prophet ﷺ also gave special attention to the rights of women. He instructed people to fear Allah regarding women because they are entrusted to men by Allah. This teaching was delivered at a time when women were treated with disrespect and injustice in many societies. Islam granted women dignity, respect, inheritance, education, and the right to live honorably. Even today, if Muslims truly implement the teachings of the Farewell Sermon, many forms of



Analysis

Muhammad Asif

Continued on Page 7

Field Marshal Extend Eid-ul-Adha Greetings, Pray for National Unity and Peace

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: On the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, COAS & CDF, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, NI, NI (M), T Bt, Chief of the Naval Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, NI (M), HJ, Chief of the Air Staff, extend heartfelt greetings and felicitations to the people of Pakistan.

The Armed Forces of Pakistan pray for lasting peace, prosperity, and unity of the nation, while paying tribute to the resilience of the Pakistani people and the sacrifices of Shuhada, Armed Forces, Law Enforcement Agencies, and citizens who continue to safeguard the homeland.

Eid-ul-Azha symbolizes sacrifice, faith, and solidarity. The Pakistan Armed Forces remain steadfast in their sacred duty to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country and stand shoulder to shoulder with the nation in pursuit of peace and stability.



On this blessed occasion, special Shuhada-e-Pakistan whose unparalleled sacrifices continue to strengthen the foundations of the nation. Pakistan Hamesha Zindabad

Eid-ul-Adha Teaches Sacrifice, Cleanliness and Social Responsibility: Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum

Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: Chairman of SM Group of Industries, Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum, in his special message on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Adha, said that Eid is not only about fulfilling the Sunnah of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS), but also conveys a great message of sacrifice, brotherhood, love, humanity and social responsibility.

He said that although people are currently facing inflation and economic difficulties, a true Muslim always strives to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) in every situation.

Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum urged affluent Muslims to not only perform the sacred act of sacrifice but also include poor, deserving and underprivileged people in the joys of Eid. He emphasized that sacrificial meat should be distributed among those who are deprived of such blessings so that happiness and joy



may also reach their homes and children. He further said that according to Islamic teachings, sacrificial meat should ideally be divided into three portions: one for personal and family use, the second for relatives and friends, and the third for the poor and needy, in order to promote equality, compassion and brotherhood in society. Highlighting the importance of cleanliness during Eid-ul-Adha, he appealed

to the public to avoid throwing animal waste and remains in open places. He said protecting the environment from pollution, foul smell and diseases is a collective responsibility of all citizens. He urged residents to dispose of sacrificial waste at designated locations and fully cooperate with the Multan administration and waste management authorities to keep the city clean, beautiful and healthy.

He added that as responsible and civilized citizens, everyone must play a role in keeping streets, neighborhoods and roads clean. He noted that Islamic teachings declare cleanliness as half of faith; therefore, discipline and sanitation should also be ensured alongside Eid celebrations.

In the end, Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum prayed that Almighty Allah grant Pakistan peace, stability and prosperity, and bless the entire Muslim Ummah with the true spirit of sacrifice, love, selflessness and brotherhood. Ameen.

Eid-ul-Adha Promotes the Spirit of Sacrifice, Compassion and Humanity: Ibrahim Hasan Murad



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chairman and President of the University of Management and Technology, Ibrahim Hasan Murad, extended heartfelt greetings to the Muslim Ummah on the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Adha. He said that Eid-ul-Adha teaches the values of sacrifice, love, brotherhood and humanity. He said that the great sacrifice of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and Hazrat Ismail (AS) remains an everlasting example of obedience, devotion and submission to the will of Allah Almighty for Muslims around the world.

Ibrahim Hasan Murad offered Eid-ul-Adha prayers at Jamia Masjid UMT, while the Sunnah of Ibrahim (AS) was observed at the UMT grounds with great religious devotion, respect and enthusiasm. On this occasion, he also exchanged Eid greetings with UMT Family.

Murad stated that sacrifice is not merely about slaughtering the animals, but also about sacrificing one's ego, negative attitudes, selfishness and unnecessary desires for the sake of Allah Almighty. He emphasized that the true joy of Eid can only be realized when we include the poor, needy and underprivileged in our celebrations.

The Chairman UMT further said that Eid-ul-Adha provides a great opportunity to promote unity, brotherhood, mutual respect, and social harmony. He urged the younger generation to foster values of tolerance, compassion, love and service to humanity in society in order to build a strong, peaceful, and prosperous nation.

Ibrahim Hasan Murad prayed that Allah Almighty bless Pakistan with peace, stability, progress, prosperity and grant unity and harmony to the entire Muslim Ummah.

WHO warns that each year tobacco kills 164,000 people

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ahead of World No Tobacco Day (observed on 31 May), the World Health Organization (WHO) calls for joint action against the devastating health and economic impacts of tobacco, which in Pakistan causes an estimated 164,000 deaths and economic losses of over PKR 1,800 billion (around US\$6.6 billion) each year. WHO warns that children and youth are particularly exposed to and targeted by the tobacco and nicotine industries, which design their products to get young people stuck in a cycle of addiction.

WHO estimates that the economic damage caused by tobacco in Pakistan is seven times higher than the tobacco industry's total tax contribution to the country – around PKR 265 billion in

2025. Extensive scientific evidence confirms that all tobacco and nicotine products on the market without exception – including licit and illicit products, and items such as e-cigarettes or nicotine patches – are extremely harmful to health and pose a major risk to vulnerable populations such as children and teenagers.

Tobacco kills up to half of its users who don't quit and is one of the leading causes of preventable death due to cardiovascular disease, lung disease, stroke, and multiple cancers, among others.

On the occasion of World No Tobacco Day, WHO has launched an international campaign to urge concerted action under the theme "Unmasking the appeal – countering nicotine and tobacco addiction". The campaign will

expose how the tobacco and nicotine industry continues to reinvent and repackage its products to hook a new generation, particularly children and adolescents, while evading stronger tobacco control measures worldwide.

WHO stands with the Government of Pakistan as it strives to reduce tobacco consumption and save lives. Pakistan ratified the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in 2004, and WHO provides continuous technical support to the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination and the Federal Board of Revenue in areas such as tobacco tax policy and track-and-trace implementation.

WHO advocates for taxation to be used as a tool to reduce consumption while increasing revenues that can be



directed towards health and development priorities.

Research has shown that tobacco taxation is effective in increasing revenues for the Government while also reducing consumption, tobacco-related diseases and pressure on health systems.

In Pakistan, FED rates on cigarettes have not increased since February

2023 – making them more affordable – and taxation levels remain below WHO's recommended 75% of the retail price. This presents an opportunity to strengthen control measures.

"Tobacco is a killer. Tobacco is killing our loved ones and our families, and it also has a devastating impact on public health and on our economies. Tobacco

kills up to half of its users who don't quit. Make no mistake, all tobacco products on the market – licit and illicit, without exception – are extremely toxic and dangerous," said WHO Representative in Pakistan Dr Dapeng Luo.

Startling new data reveal the scale of the global crisis: at least 40 million children aged 13 to 15 globally report current use of at least one tobacco product. Of these, 20 million smoke cigarettes and 10 million use smokeless (oral/nasal) tobacco. In addition, at least 15 million adolescents aged 13 to 15 years are already using e-cigarettes and, in countries with data, children are on average nine times more likely than adults to vape.

Globally, tobacco kills more than 7 million people each year, including an estimated 1.6 million non-smokers who are exposed to second-hand smoke.

De-Dollarization and the Rise of a Multipolar Economic Order

Muhammad Arfa

When Saudi Arabia held discussions with Beijing about pricing a portion of its oil exports in Chinese yuan, the financial world took notice, not because the deal depended global markets overnight, but because of what it signalled. For decades, the petrodollar arrangement had been one of the most durable pillars of American economic supremacy. The very suggestion of its erosion revealed how profoundly the geopolitical foundations of global finance are shifting.

De-dollarization is no longer a fringe hypothesis. It is an active policy consideration in Moscow, Beijing, Riyadh, New Delhi, and dozens of capitals across the Global South. The question is no longer whether the world will seek alternatives to dollar dominance, but how

far, how fast, and with what consequences.

The Dollar-Centred Global Order Since the Bretton Woods conference of 1944, and more decisively since Nixon's suspension of dollar-gold convertibility in 1971, the US dollar has served as the world's primary reserve currency, the default medium for international trade, and the anchor of the global financial system. This arrangement granted Washington what French economist Valéry Giscard d'Estaing famously called an "exorbitant privilege", the ability to borrow cheaply, run persistent trade deficits, and export its monetary policy to the rest of the world. De-dollarization is the deliberate effort to dismantle that dependency, through bilateral currency agreements, reserve diversification, alternatives to SWIFT, and regional financial institutions that bypass American oversight. **Why Countries Are Seeking Alter-**

natives

The single most powerful driver of this shift has been Washington's willingness to weaponise the dollar. When the US and its allies froze approximately \$300 billion in Russian central bank assets following the Ukraine invasion in 2022, the message to every government holding dollar reserves was unmistakable: those assets are only yours until Washington decides otherwise. For states that do not share American foreign policy preferences, the episode forced a fundamental reassessment of financial strategy.

China adds a structural dimension to this shift. As the world's largest trading nation, Beijing has both the motive and the means to promote yuan internationalisation. The Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS), its partial alternative to SWIFT, continues to expand. Beyond China, countries across Africa, Latin America, and Asia are

pursuing what policymakers call "strategic autonomy", reducing the vulnerability that dollar dependency places in Washington's hands.

BRICS And Currency Diversification The BRICS grouping, expanded to include Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Iran, and Ethiopia, has become the most prominent forum for de-dollarization. While a single BRICS currency remains elusive due to internal divisions, the bloc's growth is symbolically significant, representing states that collectively hold a substantial share of global GDP and energy resources. ASEAN nations are exploring local currency settlement frameworks, India has pursued rupee-based trade with Russia, and Gulf states are examining alternatives to dollar energy pricing. Together, these initiatives represent a sustained effort to build infrastructure for a less dollar-dependent trading environment.

Can The Dollar Be Replaced?

Intellectual honesty demands caution here. The dollar's dominance is not merely a product of American power, it is a product of American institutions. The depth of US capital markets, the rule of law governing dollar contracts, and the sheer scale of existing dollar infrastructure make rapid transition extraordinarily difficult. The Chinese yuan faces significant structural barriers: capital controls restrict free cross-border flows, and global confidence in Beijing's regulatory consistency remains far lower than trust in American financial institutions. The dollar still accounts for roughly 58 to 60 percent of global foreign exchange reserves. No alternative is remotely positioned to replicate its functions in the near term. De-dollarization is better understood as gradual dilution not replacement.

Implications For Pakistan And The

Global South

For Pakistan, the stakes are immediate. External debt, IMF conditionalities, energy import bills, and access to global capital all run through dollar-based systems. This dependency limits policy space and transmits Federal Reserve interest rate decisions directly into domestic economic pain. Regional currency arrangements, under CPEC frameworks, with Gulf partners, or through expanded Special Drawing Rights, could reduce this exposure. Yet the risks of premature decoupling are equally real: higher transaction costs, reduced capital market access, and complicated trade financing. The prudent course is diversification rather than decoupling, building capacity to operate within multiple currency systems without abandoning dollar channels that remain, for now, indispensable. The broader Global South faces the same calculus. **Towards a Multipolar Economic**

Future

What is unfolding is not a revolution but a rebalancing. The dollar will not be dethroned by a single summit or currency announcement. It will be gradually flanked, by expanding yuan internationalisation, regional payment corridors, and the political resolve of states determined to reduce their vulnerability to a unipolar financial order. For seventy years, dollar dominance was underpinned by American hegemony. What is emerging in its place is genuine multipolarity: messier, more contested, but arguably more honest about the actual distribution of global economic weight.

The dollar's throne is not empty. But for the first time in generations, the world is seriously debating who else might sit at the table.

The writer is currently studying International Relations at National Defence University, Islamabad, and has a strong interest in international political economy and global affairs.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
171,725.29	167,844.24
Day's High	Day's Low
171,920.80	170,161.66
Index Value	Change
26,214,439,476	+3881.05
Percentage	Time
+2.31%	25 May, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,491.39	+25.13
Percentage	Time
+0.24%	26 May, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
50,398.69	-180.27
Percentage	Time
-0.36%	26 May, 1:24 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
64,996.09	-162.10
Percentage	Time
-0.25%	26 May, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	196.82	202.68
Bahrain Dinar	729.05	740.75
Canadian Dollar	200.01	205.45
China Yuan	40.05	41.15
Danish Krone	43.35	43.75
Euro	322.87	328.89
Hong Kong Dollar	34.94	35.94
Indian Rupee	2.50	2.75
Japanese Yen	1.7423	1.8424
Kuwaiti Dinar	876.38	887.25
Malaysian Ringgit	67.00	68.15

PM meets Chinese business delegations; vows to deepen cooperation under CPEC II

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, during his four-day visit to China, held high-level meetings with leading Chinese enterprises, affirming Pakistan's commitment to deepening cooperation under CPEC Phase II.

He met with FAMSUN, praising their agricultural contributions and inviting them to establish manufacturing and technology transfer facilities in Pakistan.

Shehbaz also met with Shandong Xinxu Group Corporation, welcoming their expanded presence in maritime development, battery manufacturing, and mineral processing, and pledged government support for their strategic projects.

Discussions with China Communications Construction Corporation (CCCC) and China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) highlighted their extensive contributions to Pakistan's infrastructure.

The Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's



commitment to accelerating key infrastructure projects like ML-1 and KKH realignment, calling these companies long-term partners. Chinese firms expressed confidence in Paki-

stan's economy and keen interest in expanding investments across various sectors. Senior ministers and officials were directed to ensure timely follow-up on agreed-upon decisions.

Geopolitical Tensions in Middle East Could Hike Pakistan's Energy Bills

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Saif Ur Rehman on Tuesday cautioned that prevailing conflict in the Middle East could affect the economic stability of the entire region, including Pakistan.

Talking here today to a delegation of importers and exporters he said hovering geopolitical tensions often trigger uncertainty in global financial markets, disrupt trade routes and increase energy prices, placing additional pressure on developing economies already facing fiscal challenges. He said Pakistan, being an energy-import dependent country, may experience higher oil and gas import bills if the situation deteriorates further. Such developments, he added, could contribute to inflation, weaken industrial productivity and adversely affect the purchasing power of the common man.

Saif Ur Rehman emphasized the need for prudent economic planning, diversification of energy resources and strengthening of regional trade partnerships to minimize external shocks.

Pakistan's Trade Gap Widens: Urgent Action Needed for Regional Cooperation

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Convener Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry regional committee on food, Shahid Imranon Tuesday stressed the urgent need to narrow the widening trade gap between Pakistan and nine regional countries through enhanced economic cooperation, export diversification and removal of trade barriers.

Speaking here today at a meeting with business leaders and exporters, he emphasized that regional trade remains far below

its true capacity despite strong demand for Pakistani food products, fruits, vegetables, rice, Zia snacks and processed items in neighboring markets. He urged policymakers to formulate business-friendly strategies aimed at increasing exports, improving quality standards and facilitating ease of doing business for exporters. He said Pakistan possesses enormous potential in the food and agriculture sectors, which can significantly contribute to boosting exports and strengthening regional economic integration.

Purchasing

ISLAMABAD: May 26 – People buying mat from road side vendor in the Federal Capital which used during slaughtering the sacrificial animals on the eve of Eid Al-Adha.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Our All Manufacturing Products Are Exported Internationally, At USA, EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND MIDDLE EAST MARKETS.

Nadeem Ahmed Warraich, Chairman of Hunting Sporting Knife, Swords and Accessories Association of Pakistan.

Nadeem Ahmed Warraich, Chairman of the Hunting Sporting Knife, Swords and Accessories Association of Pakistan (HSKSAAP), stated that he entered the business sector after his father death

Late Muhammad Abdullah Warraich in the year 2000 after completing his MBA degree and established a factory in Wazirabad for the manufacturing of knives, daggers, swords, and related accessories. He said that all products manufactured by his company are exported internationally, including to the United States, several European countries, and Middle Eastern markets. He further added that the United States remains the largest market for the sector, while Pakistani manufacturers face strong competition from India and China at every level of international trade.

Mr. Warraich shared that after assuming the position of Chairman, he was entrusted with several important responsibilities for the betterment of the sector. One of the major achievements under his leadership was the successful operational support of the



industrialists have requested the Punjab Government, through PIEDMC, to provide interest-free loans of up to Rs. 10 million per kanal to enable factory construction in the estate. He said that after meetings with Punjab Industrial Minister Mr. Chaudhry Shafay Hussain and PIEDMC Managing Director Mr. Mubeen Elahi, there is strong hope that the Punjab Government will soon approve this request. He emphasized that this



Ch.Shafay Hussain MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES Nadeem Warraich and Mobeen Wllahi MD PSIC

and acknowledged the successful participation of the Association in SMEDA EXPO held at Expo Center Lahore in January. According to him, member companies of the Association secured export orders worth approximately Rs. 50 million



during the exhibition, and supplies against these orders are currently underway.

Mr. Nadeem Ahmed Warraich stated that more than 250 members of the Association have remained united since the very first year and are collectively working for the development and progress of the sector. In conclusion, he expressed sincere



gratitude to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan, SMEDA, TDAP officials, and the leadership of PFCII, including Patron-in-Chief Mr. S. M. Tanveer, President Mr. Sheikh Ikram-ul-Haq, and Vice President Mr. Zaki Ajaz, for their continuous guidance, support, and immediate assistance for the Association and the industry at every platform.

Iftikhar Ali Malik: Focus on Credibility for Global Market Success

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Former President of the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Iftikhar Ali Malik Tuesday said when a brand is trusted, clients don't ask for discount instead, they ask for its availability.

Talking here today to a delegation of marketing experts he emphasised that trust is the most valuable asset in today's highly competitive global market. It takes years building a reputation through honesty, professionalism and commitment to buyers satisfaction. He said once buyers become confident about the reliability of a brand, they willingly pay the demanded price because they know they are receiving quality and value in return. He noted that trust-based branding not only increases sales but also strengthens the overall economy by enhancing exports and attracting investment.

He further stated that Pakistani entrepreneurs and industrialists should focus on long-term credibility instead of



short-term profits. He urged the business community to invest in product quality, innovation, ethical practices and excellent service to compete effectively in international markets.

Iftikhar Ali Malik said that successful brands like Interloop, Services, Guard, Chenone etc across the world have

demonstrated that buyers loyalty is achieved not merely through aggressive marketing, but through maintaining standards and fulfilling promises. He added that a trusted brand creates emotional confidence among buyers, making it the preferred choice even in challenging economic conditions.

Grand Welcome for Tamgha-e-Imtiaz Holder Mian Kashif Ashfaq in Toba Tek Singh

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Toba Tek Singh enthusiastically welcomed Mian Kashif Ashfaq, Chairman of the Pakistan Furniture Council and CEO of ChenOne Group, following his conferral of the Tamgha-e-Imtiaz by the Government of Pakistan. Citizens, traders, and industrialists organized grand receptions at city entry points and major roads, showering him with flowers, presenting bouquets, and celebrating with drumming. Youths joined in celebratory caravans, chanting slogans.

The rally culminated at his residence, where attendees reiterated his significant contributions to Pakistan's furniture industry, economic growth, export enhancement, and

youth employment. Speakers emphasized that the Tamgha-e-Imtiaz was a point of pride for the business community, industrialists, and the people of Toba Tek Singh.

Mian Kashif Ashfaq expressed his deep gratitude for the warm reception, dedicating the honor to the nation, the furniture industry, and Pakistan's hardworking populace.

He pledged to continue his efforts in promoting local industries, attracting investment, and creating dignified employment for the youth. The event was attended by numerous prominent figures from various sectors, all congratulating Ashfaq on his achievement and commending his commendable services to the country.



DG Post Sami-Ullah-Khan, Nadeem Warraich, DG Narcotic Brig. Sikandar Hayat

International Mail Office in Wazirabad. This facility has become the sixth International Mail Office in Pakistan. Previously, only three offices in Karachi, one in Lahore, and one in Sialkot were providing exporters with affordable international shipping services. He expressed gratitude that this important task was successfully accomplished for the exporters of Wazirabad.

The Chairman further explained that another key objective currently under serious consideration is the development and settlement of the Wazirabad Industrial Estate, established in 2017. Plot owners and

10,000 people. Mr. Warraich also highlighted ongoing efforts to secure high-quality and affordable steel for the sector. In this regard, he expressed special thanks to Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, for his continuous support. He also appreciated the efforts of SMEDA CEO, Ms. Nadia Jahangir was recently awarded the Tamgha-e-Imtiaz, for their valuable guidance and assistance. He revealed that arrangements are being made for an important meeting with the Production Manager of a renowned steel mill to address the sector's raw material requirements. Additionally, he praised SMEDA for conducting a detailed study of the knife, sword, and dagger industry

Central Park Intra Academy Sunday Football League 2026 Successfully Concludes

✉ Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Central Park Intra Academy Sunday Football League 2026 concluded successfully after two months of exciting football activities, energetic participation, and excellent community support. The league featured six teams, including U-14 and U-10 categories, with more than 60 young players showcasing outstanding talent, teamwork, discipline, and sportsmanship throughout the tournament.

Organized under Vision 2030, the

event reflected Central Park Housing Scheme's commitment to promoting healthy activities, youth engagement, and a positive sports culture within the community.

At the closing ceremony, Chief Guests Mr. Umar Majeed (Head of Sports Committee), Mr. Nouman Akhtar (IT Head), and Mr. M. Kaleem (Sports Manager) distributed prizes among the players and appreciated their remarkable performances.

Taha Javeed was awarded Best Football Kid U-14 of the Year 2026, while

Essa received the title of Best Football Kid U-10 of the Year 2026 for their exceptional dedication and performances during the league.

Sports Manager Mr. M. Kaleem expressed special thanks to Honorable Chairman Mian Tahir Javed and Respected Managing Director Mr. Usman Anwar for their continuous encouragement, trust, and support in making the event successful and memorable. He also appreciated the valuable contributions of the Sports Committee, parents, referees, Coach M. Waseem,



sports staff, and all concerned departments.

Wing 999 Inter Departmental Cricket League

✉ Sports Desk

KARACHI: The 2nd Semi Final Match of the Wing 999 Inter Departmental Cricket League Tournament will be played between Omar Associates and Wing 999 on Friday 29th May with the collaboration of Wing 999 Sports and 2nd Semi Final Match of the Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament will be played between Pakistan Cricket Club and Al-Noor Gymkhana on Saturday 30th May with the collaboration of Master Oil Lubricants. Both the Semi finals will be played at KCCA Stadium.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi.

Pakistan-Australia ODI series crucial for World Cup preparations: Mike Hesson

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's head coach Mike Hesson has said that the upcoming ODI series against Australia is of great significance for the national team, and the team management is focused on building a balanced and strong combination ahead of the next World Cup.

Speaking to media at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, Hesson said the national side had made progress on several fronts in white-ball cricket recently.

He added that the series against a strong team like



Australia would provide an excellent opportunity for players to further sharpen their skills. Hesson stated that the management aims to form

a strong team combining young and experienced players capable of delivering consistent performances in future global tournaments.

He noted that effective bowling in the power-play, better strategy in the middle overs, and aggressive yet responsible batting are essential requirements of modern ODI cricket.

The head coach praised the players' fitness, discipline, and hard work in training sessions, saying there is a positive environment within the squad.

He added that senior

players are actively mentoring the younger cricketers, which is boosting the team's overall confidence.

Hesson also said that the enthusiasm of cricket fans at stadiums across the country, including Rawalpindi, serves as a strong source of motivation for the players.

The three-match ODI series between Pakistan and Australia will begin on May 30. The first match will be played at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, with the remaining two matches scheduled in Lahore.

Australia suffer injury blow ahead of Pakistan ODIs

Australia captain Mitchell Marsh has been ruled out of the upcoming ODI series against Pakistan because of an ankle injury, Cricket Australia confirmed on Tuesday. Wicketkeeper-batter Josh Inglis has been named captain in his absence, read the statement released by CA.

The setback comes as Australia prepare for the three-match Pakistan vs Australia ODI series, scheduled from May 30 to June 4, with matches to be played in Rawalpindi and Lahore.

Marsh, who recently missed the final game of the Indian Premier League season for Lucknow Super Giants, will remain in Perth for treatment and further medical assessment on his injured ankle.

Cricket Australia said a decision regarding Marsh's availability for Australia's upcoming white-ball tour of Bangladesh would be taken later after medical evaluations.

The absence of the experienced all-rounder is a significant blow for Australia ahead of the ODI series against Pakistan, particularly with the side continuing preparations for future ICC white-ball tournaments.

In Marsh's absence, Inglis will captain Australia for the first time in an ODI series against Pakistan. The wicketkeeper-batter has emerged as one of Australia's most reliable white-ball players in recent years and is expected to lead a relatively fresh-looking squad during the tour.

Australia are also expected to hand an international debut to emerging fast bowler Ollie Peake as the visitors reshuffle their bowling resources ahead of the Pakistan ODIs. The ODI series marks Australia's return to Pakistan for a bilateral 50-over tour for the first time since March-April 2022, when Pakistan secured a memorable 2-1 series victory on home soil.

China, Pakistan reaffirms peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute

✉ Continued from Page 1

Mentioning the successful holding of the informal talks among China, Afghanistan and Pakistan in Urumqi on the issue of Afghanistan, both sides stressed on the need of not allowing any individual, group or party, including the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) etc., to use the territories to harm and threaten regional security and interests, or conduct terrorist actions and activities.

During the visit, Prime Minister Shehbaz met with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang, and reached a new broad consensus on further deepening the China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and on international and regional issues of mutual interest.

As Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also attended the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, two sides shared the view that the traditional friendship between China and Pakistan, built and nurtured by successive generations of leaderships, is an important wealth and a strategic asset of the two countries and two peoples.

"Throughout the 75 years of diplomatic relations, this friendship has remained rock solid no matter how the international and regional situations evolved, and the two countries have always trusted, respected and supported each other and stood by

each other in times of difficulties and challenges... China and Pakistan will move faster to build an even closer China-Pakistan Community with a Shared Future in the New Era, which will set an example for the endeavor to build a community with a shared future that connects China and its neighboring countries."

Both sides reiterated the commitment to unswervingly safeguard and develop their bilateral relations, maintain high-level exchanges, deepen mutual trust, practical cooperation, defense and security cooperation, and keep close coordination on international and regional issues, to better harness this relationship to the benefit of the two peoples and contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the region and the world.

"Pakistan attaches great importance to and supports the vision of building a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity and the Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Global Security Initiative (GSI), the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), and the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) put forth by President Xi Jinping."

Both sides spoke highly of the visit by H. E. Asif Ali Zardari, President of Pakistan, in late April and early May 2026 to the Chinese provinces of Hunan and Hainan, and the visit to China by Mr. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, in January 2026.

Both sides agreed to further

strengthen strategic dialogue and enhance exchanges at various levels to continue deepening political mutual trust and jointly keep China-Pakistan relations in the right direction.

The two sides reaffirmed their unyielding support for each other on issues concerning their respective core interests. They stressed that the authority of the U. N. General Assembly Resolution 2758 brooks no question or challenge.

Pakistan reaffirmed its strong commitment to the one-China principle, and holds the view that Taiwan is an inalienable part of the territory of the People's Republic of China and the Taiwan question is at the core of China's core interests.

"Pakistan firmly supports all efforts by China to achieve national reunification and resolutely opposes any form of 'Taiwan independence.' Pakistan firmly supports China's just stance on issues concerning Xinjiang, Xizang, Hong Kong and the South China Sea. China reiterated its unwavering support for Pakistan in defending its national sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, and firmly supports Pakistan's efforts to safeguard its national security, stability, development and prosperity," the statement added.

China congratulated Pakistani leaders on leading the country to achieve macroeconomic stability centered on Pakistan's National Economic Transformation Plan (2024-2029) (URAAAN Pakistan).

Both sides agreed to advance high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, hold the meeting of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC), and promote the high-quality development of the upgraded version of CPEC 2.0.

The two sides agreed to advance the Karakoram Highway (Thakot-Raikot) realignment project in a phased and orderly manner, and leverage the potential of the Gwadar Port and build it into a regional connectivity hub.

Both sides welcomed third parties to participate in the development of CPEC under the model agreed upon by China and Pakistan.

The two sides agreed to advance the development of industrial parks in ways adapted to local conditions and create demonstration projects of industrial cooperation in areas including textiles and home appliances. Both sides commended the success of the China-Pakistan Mineral Cooperation Forum in January 2026, and agreed to advance bilateral cooperation in mining and oil and gas exploration and development in an orderly manner.

China agreed to assist Pakistan to promote its agricultural production capacity through multiple means, encourage Chinese enterprises to conduct agricultural investment and cooperation in Pakistan, and facilitate the market access of more high-quality Pakistani agricultural products to China.

The two sides expressed readiness

to launch more "small and beautiful" livelihood projects in infrastructure, agriculture, education, health and other fields. China will continue to deliver on the plan of offering 3,000 training opportunities to Pakistan for the period of 2025-2029. Both sides will carry out the implementation plans for educational and cultural exchanges and cooperation, as well as expand cooperation between sister provinces and cities.

The Chinese side stands ready to work with the Pakistani side to fully implement the GSI, establish the China-Pakistan Security Partnership, conduct continued bilateral and multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation, and strengthen military-to-military cooperation, so as to further play a positive role in promoting regional peace and stability.

The Pakistani side will take targeted steps to strengthen security measures and cooperation to ensure the safety of Chinese personnel, projects and institutions in Pakistan.

"China supports Pakistan in its continued and firm fight against terrorism. Both sides called on the international community to enhance counter-terrorism cooperation, and reaffirmed their firm opposition to applying double standards on counter-terrorism or to politicizing and instrumentalize counter-terrorism."

Pakistan conveyed its support for China's initiative of establishing the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization, believing that

this represents a concrete step toward promoting the development of artificial intelligence for good and for all, and will work with China to advance global governance and international cooperation on artificial intelligence.

China reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Pakistan as the next rotating President of the SCO and leveraging Pakistan's term as a non-permanent member of the U. N. Security Council from 2025 to 2026 to further strengthen coordination and collaboration in the multilateral context.

The Chinese side also commended Pakistan's various initiatives for strengthening multilateralism, peaceful resolution of disputes, and regional cooperation under its U. N. Security Council Presidency in July 2025.

Pakistani side expressed support for the four propositions by President Xi Jinping on safeguarding and promoting peace and stability in the Middle East. China appreciated Pakistan's efforts in facilitating the temporary ceasefire between the U. S. and Iran and holding the Islamabad Talks.

Both sides reiterated early implementation of the five-point initiative for restoring peace and stability in the Gulf and Middle East region and expressed their readiness to jointly make positive contributions for the early restoration of peace and stability in the region.

During the visit, the two sides signed a number of cooperation documents in various fields.

The Farewell Sermon and Its Message for the Muslim Ummah

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domestic injustice, oppression, and exploitation against women could be eliminated.

The Farewell Sermon also emphasized unity and brotherhood within the Muslim Ummah. The Prophet ﷺ declared that all Muslims are brothers to one another and encouraged mutual love and respect. Today, Muslims are divided by sectarianism, conflicts, and disunity, which have weakened their collective strength. If the Muslim Ummah adopts the message of the Prophet ﷺ regarding unity, a new atmosphere of harmony and solidarity can emerge.

In this historic sermon, the Prophet ﷺ instructed Muslims to hold firmly to the Qur'an and Sunnah. He said that he was leaving behind two things, and as long as people held firmly to

them, they would never go astray: the Book of Allah and his Sunnah. This guidance serves as a complete code of life for the Muslim Ummah. One of the major reasons for the decline of Muslims today is their distance from the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. If Muslims shape their personal and collective lives according to these teachings, they can attain success in both this world and the Hereafter.

The sermon also highlighted the importance of honesty, trust, and responsibility. The Prophet ﷺ encouraged people to fulfill the rights of others, practice honesty, and establish justice in their dealings. An Islamic society becomes strong only when its individuals demonstrate truthfulness, integrity, fairness, and responsibility. Unfortunately, modern societies are increasingly affected by dishonesty, corruption, betrayal, and injustice, leading to social unrest

and mistrust.

Another great message of the Farewell Sermon is that Islam is a religion of peace and mercy. The Prophet ﷺ taught love, forgiveness, and brotherhood instead of hatred, revenge, and oppression. He declared the end of all evils of the age of ignorance and guided humanity toward a pure, civilized, and ethical way of life. This is why the Farewell Sermon is often regarded as one of the earliest universal declarations of human rights.

The problems faced by the Muslim Ummah today can largely be resolved through the teachings of the Farewell Sermon. Sectarianism, extremism, injustice, economic exploitation, moral decline, and mutual hatred can only end when Muslims adopt the final message of the Prophet ﷺ as part of their lives. This sermon is not merely a historical speech of

the past; rather, it is a living and practical constitution for people of every age.

In conclusion, the Farewell Sermon is a comprehensive summary of Islamic teachings and a timeless message for the Muslim Ummah. It presents essential principles such as human equality, justice, peace, brotherhood, women's rights, economic fairness, adherence to the Qur'an and Sunnah, and moral development. If Muslims act upon these teachings, not only can their individual lives improve, but society as a whole can become a center of peace, love, and justice. It is our responsibility to understand the message of the Farewell Sermon, practice it in our lives, and convey it correctly to future generations so that an ideal Islamic society may be established.

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Trump Lost the War but Won the Peace

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outweighed the political cost of defying entrenched interests.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the ceasefire was that it represented not military victory, but political survival through restraint.

Trump understood that wars are easier to start than to end. Leaders surrounded by nationalism, lobbying pressure, media campaigns, and ideological expectations often become prisoners of escalation. History is filled with rulers who continued disastrous wars simply because retreat appeared politically humiliating. Trump, however controversial, chose a different path.

He realized that the Middle East was approaching total chaos. Continued escalation could have devastated global

energy markets, collapsed already weakened economies, triggered wider regional wars, and possibly drawn major powers into direct confrontation. The economic suffering would not have remained confined to Iran, Israel, or the Gulf states. It would have reached every household on Earth.

By extending the ceasefire and reopening negotiations, Trump may not have won the war, but he may have won something far more important: peace.

That peace came at immense political cost. It required him to resist pressure from influential allies, political donors, ideological supporters, media narratives, and even elements close to his own family circle. It required him to acknowledge changing global realities and accept that

military force alone could no longer dictate world order.

The decision also reflected a broader truth emerging in global politics: the era of unilateral domination is fading. Military superiority without economic resilience, diplomatic legitimacy, and international trust is becoming increasingly unsustainable.

Trump's ceasefire with Iran may therefore be remembered not simply as a temporary pause in conflict, but as the moment when America itself confronted the limits of power in a rapidly changing world.

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

Desolate Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: A deserted view of Faisal Avenue in the Federal Capital as the mostly people went to their natives towns to celebrate Eid Al-Adha with their love ones.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Pakistan calls for dialogue in ME, rejects India's 'weaponisation' of water: Dar

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Tuesday said Pakistan had consistently pushed for dialogue and de-escalation amid recent tensions in the Middle East, while firmly rejecting India's use of water as a political weapon.

Addressing a high-level United Nations Security Council debate on maintaining international peace and security in New York, Dar said Pakistan remained committed to peaceful resolution of long-standing disputes

in line with the UN Charter.

He thanked Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi for convening the session under China's presidency of the Security Council, saying the meeting was timely given the current global situation.

Dar said the UN Charter clearly defined principles governing relations between states and guaranteed rights including equality and self-determination.

"Pakistan remains committed to the principles of the UN Charter and supports peaceful settlement of disputes," he said.

Referring to the Middle



East situation, the deputy prime minister said Pakistan had emphasised the importance of negotiations and made sincere efforts to reduce tensions.

Dar arrived in New York late Monday on a three-day official visit from May 26 to 28 to attend the UN meetings. On the sidelines of the session, he is expected to hold

bilateral meetings with several foreign ministers and UN officials to discuss regional developments, bilateral ties and multilateral cooperation.

The meetings are scheduled with officials including Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov, Costa Rican Foreign Minister Manuel Tovar, UN Secretary-General António Guterres, Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Czech Foreign Minister Petr Machanek and Colombian Foreign Minister Rosa Yolanda Villavicencio.

Russia Accuses West of Undermining NPT with "Destructive Agenda"

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The 11th NPT Review Conference in New York concluded without an outcome document due to deep divisions, exacerbated by the US and Israel's actions against Iran, which Russia deemed a violation of the NPT's principles and a dangerous precedent. The "collective West," particularly EU and NATO members, were criticized for promoting

a destructive agenda focused on criticizing Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, while evading responsibility for their own nuclear practices.

These Western nations allegedly undermined dialogue and opposed transparency regarding their nuclear exercises, which they nonsensically claimed strengthened non-proliferation. The conference also saw a disconnect between disarmament advocates and the



geopolitical realities necessary for constructive discussions on the NPT's pillars. Despite the chair's efforts to broker compromise and a near-consensus draft document, US and allied intransigence prevented its adoption. Russia maintains that the NPT's relevance remains undimmed, as it is a cornerstone of international security and nuclear non-proliferation, and the review process itself is significant.

Exclusive Article

A Step Forward: PM Shehbaz's China Visit and the Future of Pakistan

China Cooperation Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's recent visit to China arrives at a decisive moment for Pakistan's economic and diplomatic direction. As global supply chains reconfigure and regional connectivity gains new urgency, the reaffirmed partnership between Islamabad and Beijing offers a clear path toward industrial growth, job creation, and export-led development.

The core of the discussions centered on the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Unlike the first phase, which prioritized energy and transport infrastructure, this stage emphasizes industrialization, agricultural modernization, and renewable energy.

That shift matters. It signals a move from building roads and power plants to building value chains—

factories, agro-processing units, and technology linkages that can employ Pakistan's young workforce and expand export capacity.

Chinese leadership expressed readiness to deepen investment in special economic zones, transfer technical expertise, and support vocational training programs aligned with industry needs.

For Pakistan, this is an opportunity to address two persistent gaps: skills mismatch and low value addition in exports. If implemented effectively, these initiatives can connect Pakistani workers to global standards and help small and medium enterprises integrate into regional supply networks.

The visit also reinforced political and strategic trust. Both countries

reiterated support for each other's core interests and for a multilateral system that promotes peace, development, and stability.

In practical terms, that translates into smoother cooperation on trade facilitation, customs procedures, and cross-border infrastructure. Such alignment reduces friction for businesses and makes Pakistan a more attractive destination for foreign investment.

Cultural and educational exchanges received attention as well. Expanding scholarships, academic partnerships, and people-to-people programs strengthens the human foundation of the relationship. Economic ties endure when they are supported by mutual understanding at the level

of students, researchers, and professionals.

The challenge now is execution. Memoranda must become contracts, timelines must be met, and local enterprises must be given a clear role in procurement and subcontracting. Transparency in project selection and accountability in delivery will determine whether the benefits reach Lahore, Multan, and smaller industrial hubs, not just the capital.

PM Shehbaz's trip to Beijing reminds us that diplomacy delivers results when it is tied to concrete deliverables. By focusing on industry, skills, and trade, the visit sets a practical agenda for the next phase of Pakistan-China cooperation.

If the momentum is sustained, this engagement will be remembered not for symbolism alone, but for the factories it helped build, the skills it developed, and the opportunities it created for ordinary Pakistanis.



Naveed Ahmad Khan

President Zardari felicitates Georgian leadership on Independence Day



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has extended felicitations to the President of Georgia, Mr. Mikheil Kavelashvili, and the people of Georgia on their Independence Day.

In a message, the President said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Georgia and appreciates the scope for their steady advancement. Pakistan looks forward to further developing bilateral engagement through constructive cooperation in areas of mutual interest to the benefit of both nations.

The President further conveyed his best wishes for the peace and progress of the people of Georgia.

PM Shehbaz assures full support to Chinese firms for expanding businesses in Pakistan



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, recognizing the significant investment potential within Pakistan's Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under CPEC 2.0, pledged his government's unwavering support to Chinese enterprises. He highlighted that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Information Technology are key priorities under CPEC 2.0, being pursued rapidly by the government. Addressing young attendees, he praised them as talented entrepreneurs and experts and noted the government's commitment to providing extensive technical train-

ing and skills development for Pakistani youth, viewing them as crucial for the future and for strengthening Pakistan-China cooperation. Sharif invited Chinese investors to explore the Special Economic Zone near Port Qasim in Karachi, a 6,000-acre project offering modern infrastructure and facilities. Upon arrival at IBI headquarters, he was welcomed by Wang Shaofeng, Party Secretary of Fengtai District, Beijing, and Qian Xiaojun, President of IBI. The event, attended by over 150 companies and their representatives, focused on cross-border industrial belt practices and advancing China-Pakistan industrial collaboration.

4.7-magnitude earthquake jolts parts of Punjab, Islamabad

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A moderate earthquake measuring 4.7 on the Richter scale struck parts of Punjab and Islamabad on Tuesday, triggering panic among residents in several cities.

According to the National Seismic Monitoring Centre, tremors were felt in Islamabad, Lahore, Gujranwala, Mandi Bahauddin, Jhelum, Phalia, Hafizabad, Okara and Sheikhpura.

The earthquake's epicentre was located near Gujranwala, while its depth was recorded at 18 kilometres, the seismic centre said.

Residents in several areas rushed out of homes, offices and commercial buildings after feeling the tremors.

No immediate reports of casualties or property damage were received.

Authorities are monitoring the situation while officials urged citizens to remain calm and follow safety precautions during aftershocks.

PM urges nation to include poor, needy in Eid celebrations

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said the spiritual occasion of Eid demanded that people, collectively and individually, take special care of the poor, needy and underprivileged around them and include them in their festivities.

He observed that the spirit of sacrifice, unity and solidarity guaranteed lasting cohesion and sustainable progress in the life of nations.

In a message on the occasion of 10th Zil Hajj 1447 Hijra, the prime minister extended heartfelt greetings to the people of Pakistan and the entire Muslim Ummah on the blessed and joyous occasion of Eid al-Azha.

He said the sacred tradition taught that sacrificing one's life, desires and personal interests for a noble and sacred cause represented the highest level of faith and the hallmark of loyalty and devotion.

The prime minister said the spirit of sacrifice inspired people to rise above selfishness, narrow-mindedness and personal interests, and adopt compassion, selflessness and a sense of responsibility towards humanity.

He prayed that Allah Almighty may bless everyone with the true spirit of sacrifice and the joys of this great religious festival.

"Eid ul Azha reminded Muslims of the great Sunnah of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS), symbolizing his complete submission to the command of Allah, and the unparalleled obedience and devotion of Hazrat Ismail (AS)," the PM Office Media Wing, in a press release, quoted the prime minister as saying.

The prime minister paid tribute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in defense of the motherland and in incidents of terrorism, calling their sacrifices a source of national pride.