



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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نے ہرگز نہیں چھینا۔ پھر میں نے اپنے پیچھے  
ہو اور وہ عمر کو سے یاد لوگوں نے پوچھا:  
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(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 7027)

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## ECP issues NoC to Nawaz Sharif for GB visit

The no-objection certificate allowed Nawaz Sharif to participate in Gilgit-Baltistan election campaign, but he is bound not to violate the Election Act 2017 rules and regulations. The ECP permission granted on Monday is bound by the rules and regulations of the general elections of 2026.



## OGRA raises LPG prices amid Middle East tensions

OGRA has raised the price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), citing tensions in the Middle East. The price of LPG per kilogram has been increased by 4.95 rupees, resulting in a rise of 58.51 rupees for an 11.8 kg domestic cylinder. The new price for June has been set at 3,643.41 rupees per cylinder, with the per-kilogram price now 308.76 rupees.

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## Called on

ISLAMABAD: European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission H.E. Ms. Kaja Kallas called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday.



Photo: PID

## President approves appointment of Acting CJ FSC



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari, Monday, approved appointment of Justice Dr. Syed Muhammad Anwar as Acting Chief Justice of Federal Shariat Court (FSC). Justice Dr. Syed Muhammad Anwar is the most senior judge of the Federal Shariat Court, President Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release. The president accorded his approval to the appointment of the acting chief justice of the Federal Shariat Court on the advice of the prime minister.

## DPM, Egyptian FM discuss regional developments



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Monday received a telephone call from Egypt's Foreign Minister, Badr Abd-elatty and discussed the latest developments in the region. They emphasized the need for sustained diplomatic engagement to promote peace and stability, particularly at this stage. Both sides agreed to remain in close contact.

# PM, EU High Representative discuss regional, international situation

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, Ms. Kaja Kallas called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, at the Prime Minister House on Monday and discussed the regional and international situation.

Deputy Prime Minister

& Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, Attorney General of Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan, SAPM Tariq Fatemi and other senior officials were also present. The Prime Minister welcomed the EU High Representative and stated that Pakistan was keen to further strengthen the multifaceted partnership between Pakistan and the European Union.

While expressing satisfaction at the 8th round of the EU-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue held earlier, the Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to enhancing cooperation with the EU in key areas including trade and investment, climate change, security, migration, sustainable development, and connectivity. In this regard, the Prime Minister highlighted the important role of GSP+ in ensuring stronger trade ties between Pakistan and the EU.

The Prime Minister thanked the EU leadership for its strong support for Pakistan's peace efforts in the Gulf region. He said that Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir were playing a crucial role in these efforts. The Prime Minister also shared Pakistan's perspective on the regional situation in South Asia, as well as in Afghanistan, with the EU High Representative.

He also conveyed his best wishes to EU Council President Antonio Costa as well as to EU Commission President Ms. Ursula von der Leyen and reiterated his cordial invitations to both leaders to visit Pakistan soon. EU High Representative Ms. Kallas appreciated the role played by Pakistan for regional peace and conveyed the EU's strong interest in deepening strategic engagement with Pakistan.



Bureau Report

GILGIT: PPP Chairman Bilawal

Bhutto Zardari has alleged that his party lost nine seats in the previous Gilgit-Baltistan (GB)

## Bilawal calls for transparent polls in Gilgit-Baltistan

election due to irregularities, expressing his hope for transparent polls this time. Addressing a gathering in Shigar ahead of the June 7 elections, he reiterated the PPP's demand for free and fair elections, urging voters to return with Form 45 (used for vote tabulation) while he handles Form 47. Bhutto stated that the

PPP's manifesto prioritizes the rights of GB residents, including self-governance, and advocated for simultaneous elections in GB, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Pakistan's general elections to ensure meaningful representation. He recalled the strong, multi-generational support for the PPP in the region and

paid tribute to founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, crediting him with significant national achievements. Bhutto highlighted the potential for economic development in Shigar if local authority is granted and criticized centralized decision-making, using the Thar coal project as an example of how provincial control can benefit local development.

## Mohsin Naqvi pays surprise visit to NADRA Mega Centre in Karachi, reviews citizen services

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi Monday conducted a surprise visit to the NADRA Mega Centre located at University Road Safoora in Karachi, where he reviewed facilities being provided to citizens.



He inquired about the registration process and asked visitors about their experience at the facility. Citizens present at the NADRA Mega Centre expressed satisfaction with the services, stating that there

is no need for long waiting times for identity cards and related documents. They said their turn arrives on time and staff members fully cooperate with applicants. The Interior Minister also interacted specifically with senior citizens, listening to their concerns and issuing instructions to prioritise their services. He directed officials to ensure that senior citizens and women are given preferential treatment in service delivery.

## Federal Budget 2026-27 targets 2 million new jobs across key sectors

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Budget 2026-27 has set an ambitious target of creating 2 million new jobs in the upcoming fiscal year through increased investment and improved economic growth, according to official documents. The employment generation plan focuses on expanding opportunities across the services, industrial, and agricultural sectors as part of a broader strategy to strengthen job-led economic growth. According to the document, around 1.1 million jobs are expected to be



created in the services sector during the next fiscal year, making it the largest contributor to new employment opportunities. The industrial sector is projected to generate approximately 500,000

jobs, while the agriculture sector is expected to provide around 400,000 new employment opportunities. Officials said the rising trend of job creation is expected to support overall economic growth and help shift the economy towards a more employment-driven model. The government has stated that the targets will be achieved through policy reforms, investment incentives, and sector-specific development initiatives outlined in the new budget framework.

# PM Rathore offers condolences to former health minister



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore on Monday visited

the residence of former Health Minister Dr. Ansar Abdali and expressed his condolences to him on the death of his daughter. Extending his heartfelt sympa-

thies with the bereaved family, prime minister Rathore prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace. Minister for Information, Reli-

gious Affairs and Auqaf Chaudhry Muhammad Rafique Nayyar, Political Assistant Syed Azadar Hussain Kazmi and Hanif Khatana were also present on the occasion.

## Raja Muhammad Sohail Khan assumes Deputy Director Role

**City Desk**

MIRPUR: Deputy Director Information Mirpur Raja Muhammad Sohail Khan assumed charge of his post. The charge-taking ceremony was held at the Divisional Directorate Public Relations Mirpur, where former Deputy Director Muhammad Javed Malik, who retired after completing his term, handed over the charge of his post to the newly appointed Deputy Director Raja Muhammad Sohail Khan. Information Officer Khizr Hayat, Head Clerk Raja Karamat Aziz, Raja Sohail Aslam, Qasim Javed, Qari Anis, Ahmed Ali Jaral and other officials were also present at the ceremony. Later, Deputy Director Information Raja Muhammad Sohail Khan held an introductory meeting with the staff of the office. Speaking on the occasion, he said that the Divisional Directorate Public Relations Mirpur has been an exemplary institution, which will be provided with more resources to adapt to modern media requirements. He said that social media has significantly affected the traditional media, hence further strengthening the social media wing of the department is the need of the hour. Raja Muhammad Sohail Khan said that he would try to establish a modern social media production studio in the Divisional Directorate Mirpur so that the official social media wing of Mirpur Division could be run effectively. He said that solving the problems of the employees of the Public Relations Department Mirpur Division is among his top priorities and vigorous steps will be taken to solve other problems including the development of the employees. He said that government activities will be highlighted in a vigorous manner in the light of the instructions of the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir, Minister of Information, Secretary of Information and Director Public Relations.



## Attention for concerned authorities

RAWALPINDI: Young worker busy in preparing "Khas" for air-coolers at his roadside workplace in the city.



Photo: Online

## Sardar Attique: Azad Kashmir Elections On Track Amid Political Tensions



**Spokesman Report**

DHIRKOT/RAWALPINDI: Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, President of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister, attended the annual Urs celebrations at Sohawa Sharif. He prayed for national security, the freedom of occupied Kashmir, Palestine, and peace amidst the Iran-US conflict. Later, he met with Muslim Conference workers and scholars, emphasizing the spiritual significance of Azad Kashmir's shrines as centers of guidance, peace, and love, and condemned conspiracies against them. He highlighted the role of saints in spreading Islam and leading people to truth, promoting peace and love as the essence of Islam. Khan also attended a dinner hosted by Raja Anwar Mushtaq, discussing the current political situation and general elections with party workers. He stated that general elections in Azad Kashmir will proceed on time, with the Election Commission prepared for the announcement of the schedule. Khan noted that all political parties are aware of the heightened competition and have initiated early election campaigning. He asserted that a government with a public mandate is the solution to current chaos in Azad Kashmir and that road blockades and arson undermine state institutions. He urged Muslim Conference workers to remain committed to the ideology of accession to Pakistan and avoid participating in anarchic campaigns.

# Extraterritorial Assassination in Azad Kashmir: When a teacher Becomes a 'Terrorist' After Death

On 21 May 2026, Arjuman Gulzar Dar—known to his students in Gojra, Muzaffarabad, as Hamza Burhan—finished his morning duties as a school principal and stepped outside. He never reached his vehicle. Motorcycle-borne gunmen shot him dead at close range. To the community that knew him, he was a civilian educator who had crossed into Pakistan-administered Kashmir in 2018 to pursue medical education, built a quiet life, and took up teaching. No militant group claimed responsibility for his murder. India's Ministry of Home Affairs had designated him a terrorist under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act in April 2022, alleging links to the Al-Badr militant group and involvement in the 2019 Pulwama attack. Those allegations deserve scrutiny, not because they are credible, but because they expose how easily a civilian can be retrofitted into a legal target after an extrajudicial execution.

The factual problems with India's narrative are immediate and severe. The Pulwama attack, which killed forty Indian CRPF personnel, was publicly claimed by Jaish-e-Mohammed—not Al-Badr. The then-governor of Jammu and Kashmir publicly revealed the security failures and domestic motives behind that bombing, disclosures that sit uneasily with New Delhi's subsequent attempt to pin operational mastermind status on a former medical student living openly as a schoolteacher in Muzaffarabad. Dar was never prosecuted, never convicted, and never afforded the judicial process India's own legal system theoretically guarantees. He was a civilian living under civilian cover, known to his neighbors not as a combatant but as an educator who had arrived in 2018 seeking medical education and remained to teach.

Although the Indian government has never officially claimed responsibility for the Muzaffarabad killing, its domestic media ecosystem did the celebrating for it. Within hours, Indian news networks broadcast the assassination as breaking news, framing it as a strategic victory and lionizing the operatives who gunned down an unarmed man outside his school. That triumphalism betrays the reality: this was not the neutraliza-

tion of an active battlefield commander, but the methodical murder of a civilian in a third-country territory, treated as entertainment for a domestic audience.

The Muzaffarabad killing does not stand alone. It is the latest node in a documented campaign of extraterritorial murder attributed to Indian intelligence services. In April 2024, The Guardian reported that India had allegedly orchestrated up to twenty assassinations inside Pakistan since 2020, employing recruited local proxies and deploying a consistent signature: motorcycle gunmen, close-range execution, no claim of responsibility. In December 2024, The Washington Post described India's alleged methodical assassination program targeting individuals in Pakistan. Foreign Policy magazine in January 2024 placed India firmly within a growing club of states conducting targeted killings beyond their borders. The program extends even further: Canadian authorities have linked Indian intelligence to the murder of Sikh activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil, and U. S. prosecutors have alleged an Indian government role in a foiled plot to assassinate a dual-national lawyer in New York. From Rawalpindi to Surrey to Manhattan, the pattern is documented, consistent, and attributed by credible international reporting to a deliberate strategic campaign of extraterritorial murder.

Indian authorities advance a position that deserves engagement only to be dismantled. They maintain that such operations constitute necessary self-defense against terrorism emanating from Pakistan, that Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups creates an obligation to act where the host state will not, and that pre-emptive neutralization prevents future attacks. What it cannot survive, however, is application to the specific legal tests that govern the use of force between states—particularly when the target is a civilian whose connection to the cited attack is contradicted by the very group that claimed it.

UN Charter Article 2(4) prohibits the use of force against the territo-

rial integrity of any state. Article 51 permits self-defense only in response to an armed attack, subject to necessity and proportionality. The Caroline incident of 1837 established the customary standard that remains foundational: self-defense must be, in US Secretary of State Daniel Webster's formulation, instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means, and no moment for deliberation. The killing of a school principal seven years after the attack he allegedly supported—an attack claimed by an entirely different organization—satisfies no element of that standard.

The ICJ's judgment in Nicaragua v. United States in 1986 remains the controlling authority. The Court rejected Washington's self-defense justification because the alleged threat did not constitute an armed attack of sufficient gravity and necessity and proportionality tests were not met. UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston stated in 2010 that targeted killings in another state's territory without consent constitute violations of sovereignty. His successor Christof Heyns concluded in 2013 that such operations in many cases amount to extrajudicial executions. Even under the expansive framework the Israeli Supreme Court articulated in 2006, targeted killings require that the target be directly participating in hostilities at the relevant time and that capture be demonstrably infeasible. A man leaving a school building, with no weapon, no combat function, and no imminent operational role, satisfies neither condition.

Proponents invoke the unwilling or unable doctrine, which holds that a state may use force against non-state actors in another state's territory if that state cannot suppress the threat. It has not achieved settled customary international law status. The majority of Global South states and UN bodies reject it as a mechanism through which powerful states circumvent sovereignty protections the Charter was designed to guarantee. Applying it to a sustained campaign of motorcycle assassinations against individuals living openly under civilian

cover—without publicly available evidence of imminence in each specific case, and in the case of Dar, without credible evidence of combatant status at all—stretches even its most permissive articulation beyond defensible limits.

Russia's poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko in London in 2006 and Sergei Skripal in 2018 were condemned internationally as sovereignty violations. Israel's extraterritorial killing program has been repeatedly criticized by UN Special Rapporteurs as operating outside permissible boundaries when conducted far from active battlefields. The United States conducted hundreds of drone strikes under self-defense frameworks that UN bodies described as insufficiently grounded in necessity. India now marches in this same procession, but with a crucial distinction: it demands that international law protect its own sovereignty from cross-border militancy while simultaneously treating the territory of its neighbors as a free-fire zone for motorcycle death squads. A state that participates in this pattern is not applying a principle. It is claiming exemption from one.

International law provides legitimate mechanisms for accountability against terrorism: extradition, mutual legal assistance, prosecution through competent tribunals and diplomatic pressure on host states. The question is not whether terrorism demands a response. It does. The question is whether substituting assassination for legal process—whether designating a medical student-turned-principal a terrorist years after an attack claimed by another group, then celebrating his murder on prime-time television—produces durable security or merely relocates the lawlessness it claims to oppose. From the Caroline precedent through the Nicaragua judgment to the consistent assessments of UN Special Rapporteurs, the legal framework provides a clear answer. States that reject it are not operating in a grey zone. They are operating outside the rules they invoke for their own protection, and in the case of Arjuman Gulzar Dar, they are operating outside the basic human requirement to distinguish a civilian from a combatant.

The writer is researcher at Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR).



Analysis  
Muhammad Waleed Akhtar

## BAJK applies for scheduled bank status, eyes July 2026 approval



**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: The Bank of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (BAJK) has submitted a formal application to the State Bank of Pakistan for Scheduled Bank status, a significant milestone in its development. Established in 2006, BAJK is the first bank wholly owned by the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir to seek this status. To qualify, the bank has implemented extensive reforms, including increasing paid-up capital, strengthening corporate governance, upgrading IT infrastructure, and enhancing its AML/CFT framework. The State Bank of Pakistan will conduct a thorough review, expected to take approximately eight weeks, to assess the bank's compliance and readiness. If approved, BAJK anticipates achieving Scheduled Bank status by July 2026. This development is seen as a crucial step for the financial sector of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The Acting President and CEO, Shahid Shahzad Mir, emphasized that this achievement is a result of strong government support, board guidance, and employee dedication. Post-approval, BAJK plans to expand its operations nationwide and internationally, introducing new products and digital services to cater to overseas Pakistanis and Kashmiris, subject to regulatory approvals. Achieving Scheduled Bank status is expected to boost deposit collection, promote trade and investment, enhance financial inclusion, and empower the bank to contribute more effectively to the socio-economic development of the region and Pakistan. BAJK has expressed gratitude to all its stakeholders for their support.

### LOST AND FOUND

I hereby declare that the following documents have been lost in Sector G-6, Islamabad: MBA degree from Muhammad Ali Jinnah University, Karachi, 2003. B.Com degree from Punjab University, 1999. Fsc certificate from FBISE, 1998. Matriculation certificate from FBISE, 1996. Domicile certificate issued from Sanghar, Sindh, 1998. Experience certificate issued by National Highway Authority, 2008. Experience certificate issued by Karachi Pharmaceutical Lab, 2003. Experience certificate issued by Islamabad Travels Consultant, 2000.

If found, please inform me at the address below:  
**Ghulam Shabir Mashori S/o Ghulam Rasool Mashori House No. D-15, Street No. 25, Sector G-6/2, Islamabad.**



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	3:17 am
Zohr	12:06 pm
Asr	5:04 pm
Maghrib	7:13 pm
Isha	8:55 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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

**COMPLAINTS**

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

# Punjab accelerates road infrastructure upgrades as 30,000km of roads rehabilitated, says CM Maryam Nawaz

**Bureau Report**  
LAHORE: On the directions of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, a historic and exemplary programme has been launched for the restoration of road infrastructure throughout Punjab. She has directed the authorities to ensure strict adherence to timelines, quality standards and transparency in all road construction, repair and rehabilitation projects.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has said that road construction and rehabilitation work under the "CM Local Roads" Programme is progressing rapidly towards completion in various districts across the province.

The chief minister also declared compliance with lane and line discipline mandatory in Lahore and all major cities of the province.

She has already approved multi-billion-rupee transport infrastructure and bus stop projects in Faisalabad, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi and Multan.

Under her directives, work is also under way on mass transit projects in Faisalabad and Gujranwala to provide modern travel facilities to the public. She has further ordered the implementation of a modern traffic management system in Lahore and other major cities of Punjab.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has made the installation of solar-powered streetlights mandatory on all newly constructed roads.

She said that multi-billion-rupee mega projects had been launched to improve road infrastructure and modernise the transport sector across Punjab. More than 30,000 kilometres of roads have already been constructed, repaired or rehabilitated throughout the province.

The chief minister added that the restoration of major highways in Murree had been completed under the "Restoration of Roads" programme to facilitate tourists and local residents alike.



## Sunset

ISLAMABAD: JA beautiful view of sunset in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## A Massive Protest Rally Organized By Prem Union Multan Division

**Quaratulain Asim**

MULTAN: Prem Union Multan Division organized a major rally from Railway Station Multan to DS Office demanding salary and pension increases proportional to inflation in the federal budget. Led by Rana Muhammad Sharif and other union officials, numerous railway employees protested rising inflation and the financial strain on workers. They called for significant pay hikes and pension adjustments to alleviate hardship caused by soaring costs of essentials and education. Central Chief Organizer Khalid Mahmood Chaudhry warned of nationwide protests if the government fails to address the working class's economic concerns. The union also demanded the removal of gratuity restrictions, timely payment of dues, and resolution of other employee grievances. A resolution was passed reiterating these demands, with a warning of intensified protests if not met.

## Mustafa Kamal stresses coordinated action for effective HIV prevention, control

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Syed Mustafa Kamal emphasized that coordinated, effective and immediate measures were essential for the prevention and control of HIV in Pakistan.

According to the Ministry of National Health Services on Monday, the minister made these remarks while chairing a high-level meeting on HIV prevention.

The meeting was attended by the Federal Secretary Health, Additional Secretary Health, Chief Executive Officer of the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), Vice Chancellor of the Health Services Academy, and representatives of other relevant institutions and key stakeholders.

The meeting conducted a detailed



review of progress on ongoing HIV prevention measures across the country and also examined recommendations put forward by the Prime Minister's HIV Task Force.

During the meeting, Mustafa Kamal assigned specific responsibilities to all relevant institutions and directed them to strengthen coordination in implementing

measures to combat HIV.

"All relevant institutions should take coordinated steps to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the HIV Task Force," the minister said.

The meeting was informed that the National Institute of Health (NIH), CDC and the Central Monitoring Unit (CMU) had activated an HIV dashboard to facilitate timely reporting and monitoring of HIV-related data.

The minister said that the dashboard would help make the decision-making process more effective and responsive, enabling authorities to take timely action.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to public health, Mustafa Kamal said all possible measures are being taken to prevent the spread of HIV and strengthen the national response to the disease.

## Railway Pensioners Demand Doubling of Pension and Medical Allowance in Federal Budget

**City Desk**

RAWALPINDI: The All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association has urged the federal government to increase pensions and medical allowances by 100 percent in the 2026-27 federal budget, citing soaring inflation and the continuously rising cost of medicines. The association also called for the immediate payment of all outstanding dues owed to retired employees.

The demands were put forward through a resolution unanimously adopted during an emergency meeting of the association, chaired by Chairman Muhammad Aslam Adil Butt. Members of the central cabinet attended the meeting via video link. During the meeting, Additional Secretary General Abdul Razzaq Shah Jilani, who assumed acting responsibilities in the absence of Secretary General Aurangzeb Tanoli, presented a detailed briefing on the current situation and tabled the resolution, which was unanimously approved by all participants.

## Change of FIA recruitment Center in Quetta

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Balochistan Zone has officially announced a change in the examination center for the ongoing recruitment process in Quetta due to unavoidable circumstances.

All examination activities previously scheduled to take place at the Balochistan Constabulary, Qasim Lines, Eastern Bypass, Quetta, have been shifted immediately to a new venue.

The details of the new examination center are as follows:

New Venue: Ayub Stadium Sports Complex, Quetta.

Instructions for Candidates

All applicants who have applied for various vacant positions in the FIA are directed to report to the new venue (Ayub Stadium) at their scheduled date and time.

Contact and Guidance

For further guidance or information, candidates may contact the Office of the Director, FIA Balochistan Zone, Quetta:

## Closing markets after June 1 is economic terrorism which is unacceptable: Naseer Yousuf Vohra

**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: President of the Central Cloth Board Ittehad Group Pakistan, Alhaj Naseer Yousuf Vohra, has said that traders across the country should get ready to keep their businesses open after June 1. Closing markets after June 1 is economic terrorism which is unacceptable. The government should issue a notification for the permanent end of the lockdown after June 1. He further said that the rulers should let the markets open and let the businesses run. Closing businesses after June 1 is unacceptable. A smart lockdown was imposed on the pretext of the war in the Middle East, despite looting electricity and petrol. We demand from the government to issue a notification to end the lockdown that started from June 1.



## PAFLA Calls for Sustained Support for Freelancers and Digital Workers in Budget 2026-27

**News Desk**

KARACHI: PAFLA urges continued support for Pakistan's freelancers and digital workers in Budget 2026-27. They recommend maintaining the 0.25% tax rate on foreign earnings for ten years, alongside funding capacity-building, establishing hubs, and subsidizing certifications. PAFLA Chairman Ibrahim Amin highlights that this stable tax regime encourages formal remittances and inspires new entrants. He also points to the ILO recognizing Pakistan as a major digital labor provider, with freelancing export receipts reaching \$959 million in July-April FY2025-26, a 49% increase. PAFLA President Dr. Imran Batada advises against additional taxes on content creators and calls for improved payment infrastructure, including a national payment gateway. He emphasizes freelancers' significant contribution to foreign exchange and their role as a key economic opportunity for Pakistan.

## Pakistan must continue smartly reform and increase taxes on all sweet drinks to curb deadly NCDs: General Kiani

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: General Masud-ur-Rehman Kiani, a cardiac surgeon and President of PANAH, urges Pakistan to maintain and increase taxes on all sweetened beverages, including juices, as a critical public health measure in the Finance Bill 2026-27. He stresses that protecting children from the health risks of these drinks should be a national fiscal priority. Kiani highlights that Pakistan's low excise taxes on sweetened beverages contribute to the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and obesity. He points to countries like Saudi Arabia, the Maldives, and India with significantly higher taxes on these products.



A World Bank analysis recommends a 50% excise tax on sweetened beverages to reduce consumption, improve public health, and generate substantial tax revenue and economic benefits. Kiani reiterates that fruit juices are classified as sugar-sweetened beverages by the WHO and their high sugar content, coupled with low nutritional value, increases the risk of various NCDs. He warns that tax relief on juices could mislead consumers into believing they are healthy, contradicting scientific evidence. Pakistan faces a severe NCD epidemic, with high rates of cardiovascular disease and diabetes, and significant healthcare costs. PANAH advocates for public policy to be guided by scientific evidence and public health protection, ensuring fiscal measures remain robust for a healthier future.

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# After Iran, Is Turkey Israel's Next Target?

Israel's rising confrontation with Turkey has opened a disturbing new chapter in Middle Eastern geopolitics. After its war with Iran and its continuing campaigns against Hezbollah and other regional actors, Israel now appears to be widening its strategic lens toward Ankara. Former Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's warning that "Turkey is the new Iran" was not an isolated slogan; it reflected a growing Israeli security debate that increasingly views Turkey, Qatar, Syria, Hamas, and even Pakistan-linked regional alignments as part of a new strategic challenge to Israeli supremacy.

This raises a central question: how can a tiny state, with a population smaller than many regional cities, speak with such confidence about confronting Iran, Turkey, and even Pakistan? The answer is not conventional military size alone. Israel's confidence rests on four pillars: its advanced air force, elite intelligence network, U.S. strategic backing, and, above all, its undeclared nuclear arsenal. Together, these have created a state mentality in which Israel does not merely seek security; it seeks regional dominance.

Turkey is not Iran, Lebanon, Gaza, or Syria. It is a major NATO power with a large population, deep military traditions, a growing defense industry, advanced drones, naval reach, missile development, and strategic depth. In any conventional comparison, Turkey is not an easy target. Its manpower, geography, industrial base, and NATO membership make a direct Israeli attempt to "destroy" or subjugate Turkey almost impossible. Turkey has no shared border with Israel, and any major war would require complex oper-

ations through Syria, the Mediterranean, or proxy corridors. This is not a battlefield where Israel can easily repeat its air campaigns against weaker or fragmented enemies.

Yet Israel's confidence comes from a different calculation. It knows that conventional imbalance can be overturned by nuclear deterrence. Israel's undeclared nuclear capability is the hidden card behind its regional posture. Even if Turkey is stronger in manpower, tanks, drones, ships, and strategic depth, Israel's nuclear ambiguity gives it a psychological edge. It tells every regional rival: you may hurt Israel, but you cannot safely push Israel to existential panic. This is the dangerous "madness card" — the belief that if Israel feels cornered, it may escalate beyond normal rules.

This creates a frightening asymmetry. Turkey may dominate a conventional confrontation, but Israel may believe that nuclear shadow power gives it the final word. That is why the Turkey-Israel rivalry cannot be judged only by aircraft, tanks, or soldiers. It must be judged by escalation control. Turkey can defeat pressure, but it must avoid giving Israel the pretext to internationalize, nuclearize, or Americanize the conflict.

Many argue that conventional military strength, diplomacy, missile defenses, or asymmetric capabilities can compensate for a nuclear imbalance. Yet the modern strategic record suggests that nuclear weapons remain the ultimate deterrent. Countries that possess a credible nuclear capability are rarely subjected to

the kind of existential military pressure faced by states that do not. More importantly, when rival states both possess nuclear weapons, the risk of total war often declines because the consequences become catastrophic for both sides.

The example of India and Pakistan is frequently cited in this context. Before both states became overt nuclear powers, the possibility of large-scale conventional war remained a persistent concern. After nuclearization, despite crises and tensions, leaders on both sides have had to calculate under the shadow of mutually assured destruction. The existence of nuclear weapons has not eliminated conflict, but it has significantly raised the threshold for full-scale war.

A similar argument is made regarding the Korean Peninsula. North Korea's strategic leverage does not come from economic strength or global influence. Rather, its nuclear capability has created a deterrent that makes direct military action against it far more difficult to contemplate. Whatever one thinks of the regime, its nuclear arsenal has fundamentally altered how other powers approach it.

Viewed through this lens, the debate over Iran becomes even more significant. Supporters of nuclear deterrence argue that if a state lacks a nuclear capability while facing a nuclear-armed adversary, it remains vulnerable to coercion and military pressure. They contend that possession of nuclear weapons by both sides can create a balance that discourages war, whereas a monopoly of nuclear power

creates strategic inequality. For this reason, some analysts believe that the central issue in the Middle East is not simply conventional military superiority but the unequal distribution of nuclear deterrence. As long as one state is widely believed to possess nuclear weapons while its rivals do not, the strategic balance will remain tilted. From this perspective, the debate is less about military hardware and more about whether lasting stability can exist when deterrence is available to some states but denied to others.

Turkey must therefore think carefully about the changing strategic environment around it. The challenge is not merely military competition with Israel but understanding how nuclear deterrence shapes regional behavior, perceptions of risk, and calculations of power. Whether one supports or opposes nuclear proliferation, it is difficult to ignore the argument that nuclear capability has become one of the most powerful guarantees against external coercion in the modern world.

Turkey must read the warning signs carefully. Israel's strategic culture has shifted from survival to expansion, from deterrence to domination, from defense to preemption. A state that sees itself as divinely entitled to security beyond its borders will always identify new enemies after old ones are weakened. Today Iran is the enemy. Tomorrow Turkey is described as the "new Iran." After that, Pakistan's nuclear capability may again be framed as a future threat.

If Israel continues to treat every independent regional power as the next Iran, it may achieve short-term military successes while creating long-term

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Pakistan Launches E-Course for Law Professionals to Enhance Justice System

In a major step to strengthen Pakistan's justice sector, the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan launched the E-Course for Law Professionals — 2026 today at the Supreme Court. Developed by the Federal Judicial Academy in collaboration with the Directorate of Legal Education, Pakistan Bar Council, the initiative aims to improve quality, accessibility, and responsiveness of the justice system through institutional reforms and technology.

The E-Course addresses the gap between academic legal education and practical legal skills, especially for new lawyers. Its launch fulfills a commitment made by the Chief Justice during a February 3, 2026 consultative meeting with Pakistan Bar Council and Provincial Bar Councils, where accessible, practice-oriented training was prioritized. The ceremony was attended by Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb, Adviser to the Board of Governors; Hayat Ali Shah, Director General, Federal Judicial Academy; and representatives of bar councils including Muhammad Masood Chishti, Vice Chairman, Pakistan Bar Council; Malik Fakhar Hayat and Khawaja Qaiser Butt of Punjab Bar Council; Ishtiaq A. Memon of Sindh Bar Council; Asfand Yar Khan of KP Bar Council; Jadain Dashti of Balochistan Bar Council; Muhammad Zafar Khokhar; Chaudhary Asif Irfan of Islamabad Bar Council; Ahmed Farooq Khattak; Ayaz Hussain Tunio via video link; and Barrister Usama Malik, Director, Legal Education, Pakistan Bar Council.

The briefing highlighted that the program enhances applied legal skills through a structured, technology-enabled platform. It includes ten modules over forty credit hours, offered fully online and self-paced, enabling access for law professionals across Pakistan regardless of location. The course is recognized as equivalent to one week of the mandatory Bar Vocational Course requirement for apprentices. Bar Council representatives welcomed the initiative as a timely response to the profession's evolving needs.

They stressed continued investment in young lawyers' development and proposed that the E-Course be accepted as a full substitute for the existing two-week Bar Vocational Course. Addressing the event, the Chief Justice emphasized equipping young lawyers with practical knowledge, professional skills, and ethical foundations to serve justice effectively. He noted that technology-driven learning can democratize legal education, making training accessible nationwide.

He urged Bar Councils to submit proposals on content and methodology to the Directorate of Legal Education for institutional review. The E-Course launch marks another milestone in the judiciary's efforts to promote continuous learning, professional excellence, and innovation. It reflects the Bench and Bar's shared commitment to strengthening legal education, enhancing competence, and building a more accessible, efficient, transparent, and citizen-centric justice system.

## Education as the Strongest Weapon in a Diverse Society for Social Cohesion

Education has long been regarded as the most powerful tool for individual growth and national development. In a diverse society, its importance becomes even more profound. Diversity — whether cultural, linguistic, ethnic, or socio-economic — enriches a nation, but it can also create divisions if not managed thoughtfully. In a country like Pakistan, where multiple identities coexist, education emerges as the strongest weapon to promote social cohesion, mutual respect, and national unity.

Pakistan's diversity is one of its greatest strengths. From the mountainous regions of the north to the plains of Punjab and the coastal areas of Sindh and Balochistan, the country is home to a rich mosaic of cultures, languages, traditions, and beliefs. However, differences in access to resources, education, and opportunities often lead to social fragmentation. In such a context, education plays a vital role in bridging divides and fostering a shared sense of belonging.

At its core, education is not just about acquiring knowledge; it is about shaping attitudes, values, and perspectives. A well-designed education system promotes tolerance, empathy, and respect for diversity. When students learn about different cultures, histories, and viewpoints, they develop a broader understanding of society. This awareness helps reduce prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination.

One of the key ways education promotes social cohesion is through inclusive curricula. Textbooks and learning materials should reflect the diversity of society and present balanced narratives that represent all communities. When students see their identities acknowl-

edged and respected in the curriculum, it strengthens their sense of inclusion. At the same time, learning about others fosters mutual respect and understanding.

Language also plays a crucial role in education and social cohesion. In Pakistan, where multiple languages are spoken, promoting multilingual education can enhance learning outcomes and cultural appreciation. Recognizing and valuing local languages alongside national and international languages helps preserve cultural heritage while promoting unity.

Schools serve as important social spaces where children from different backgrounds interact and learn together. These interactions provide opportunities to build friendships, develop communication skills, and appreciate diversity. A classroom that encourages dialogue, collaboration, and respect becomes a microcosm of a cohesive society.

Teachers play a central role in this process. They are not only educators but also role models who influence students' attitudes and behaviors. Teachers who promote inclusivity, fairness, and respect create a positive learning environment where all students feel valued. Training teachers in intercultural competence and inclusive practices is essential to achieving this goal.

Education also contributes to social cohesion by reducing inequalities. Access to quality education enables individuals to improve their socio-economic status and participate actively in society. When educational opportunities are distributed equitably, it reduces the gap between different social groups and promotes a sense of justice and fairness.

In Pakistan, disparities between urban and rural education systems, as well as between

public and private institutions, remain a challenge. Addressing these inequalities is crucial for building a cohesive society. Investment in infrastructure, teacher training, and learning resources in underserved areas can help ensure that all citizens have equal opportunities to succeed.

Civic education is another important component of social cohesion. Teaching students about their rights and responsibilities, democratic values, and the importance of active citizenship encourages them to become responsible members of society. Education can instill a sense of national identity while respecting diversity, creating a balance between unity and individuality.

The role of higher education institutions is equally significant. Universities can serve as centers of dialogue, research, and innovation, addressing social issues and promoting inclusive development. Student organizations, cultural events, and community engagement activities provide platforms for interaction and collaboration among diverse groups.

Technology has further expanded the potential of education to promote social cohesion. Digital platforms enable access to diverse perspectives and facilitate communication across geographical boundaries. However, it is important to ensure that technology is used responsibly to promote positive engagement rather than division.

Despite its potential, education alone cannot achieve social cohesion without supportive policies and societal commitment. Governments must prioritize education as a strategic tool for national integration. Policies should focus on inclusivity, equity, and quality, ensuring that education serves all segments of society.

Families and communities also play a crucial role. Values of tolerance, respect, and

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

## The Silent Agony: Pakistan's Stolen Daughters and the Conscience of a Nation

In the shadowed riverine badlands of Sindh's kacha areas—those untamed stretches where the Indus once whispered life but now conceals horror—another chapter of Pakistan's unspoken shame unfolds. One of the girls recently recovered from captivity was Jennifer Masih, a young Christian soul whose innocent voice, when finally freed to speak, carries truths heavy enough to drown the conscience of any honorable man. Her story is not isolated. It is symptomatic of a systemic predation that has claimed hundreds, perhaps thousands, of daughters from Pakistan's religious minorities—primarily Hindu and Christian girls in Sindh—forced into abduction, gang rape, brutal torture, coerced conversion, and sham marriages.

This is not mere crime. It is a slow-motion cultural erasure, enabled by feudal impunity, political complicity, and societal indifference. As a nation born from the promise of sanctuary for the vulnerable, Pakistan stands indicted by the very silence that greets these atrocities.

To understand this tragedy, we must travel back through history. The 1947 Partition, that cataclysmic birth of two nations, was soaked in the blood of communal violence. Women bore the worst scars—abducted, violated, and "claimed" as trophies of conquest across Punjab and Bengal. Historians estimate tens of thousands of women were displaced in this manner. The states of India and Pakistan made solemn commitments to recover and restore them. Yet, in the decades since, Pakistan's minorities, especially in Sindh, have faced a quieter, more insid-

ious repetition.

Sindh, once celebrated as a land of Sufi syncretism where Lal Shahbaz Qalandar's shrine welcomed all faiths, now harbors a darker reality. The province is home to most of Pakistan's remaining Hindu population and a significant Christian community—descendants of those who chose to stay, trusting in Jinnah's vision of equal citizenship. Today, that trust lies shattered. UN experts, in April 2026, highlighted the "continued and widespread patterns of abduction and forced religious conversion through marriage" affecting minority women and girls. In 2025 alone, about 75% of victims were Hindu, 25% Christian, with nearly 80% of incidents in Sindh. Most victims are adolescents aged 14-18, some even younger.

Reports from the Centre for Social Justice, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, and the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan paint a consistent, harrowing picture: girls vanishing while walking to school, fetching water, or working in fields. They reappear weeks or months later in dar-ul-ulooms or police stations, often in hijab, reciting conversion certificates, and "voluntarily" married to men twice their age. Courts frequently accept these statements under duress, citing Sharia interpretations that prioritize post-facto conversion over age of consent or free will. Families who protest face threats, arson, or blasphemy accusations—a weapon that silences dissent instantly.

The kacha dacoits—often operating from the dense forests and river islands along the Indus in districts like Shikarpur, Ghotki, and

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Dr. T. M. Malik



Analysis

Kiran Asim

# Hamdard University students showcase innovative functional foods

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Hamdard University organized an impressive and informative "Food Products Display Activity" under the Department of Applied Sciences, Food Science & Technology Program, Faculty of Engineering Sciences & Technology, where students showcased innovative, nutritious, and research-based functional food products, earning great appreciation from attendees.

More than 50 students participated in the exhibition and demonstrated their creativity and scientific expertise by presenting unique food products developed from agricultural byproducts and locally available raw materials. The activity aimed to provide young food scientists with practical exposure, promote food research, and introduce innovative solutions for converting agricultural waste into valuable and healthy food products.

The exhibition featured a

wide range of functional foods, including functional beverages, bakery products, confectionery items, jams, squashes, healthy snacks, gluten-free products, fruit-based food items, and several other nutrient-rich products. These products were designed to promote healthy eating habits, improve nutrition, and contribute toward the development of a sustainable food system.

Distinguished academicians, educationists, industry experts, and representatives from various institutions attended the event and visited the students' stalls. The guests highly appreciated the students' hard work, research capabilities, creativity, and professional presentation skills. Experts also shared valuable suggestions regarding product improvement, packaging, taste enhancement, marketing strategies, and commercial potential.

Several projects presented during the exhibition reflected strong potential for future food

startups and entrepreneurship opportunities. Many students successfully transformed agricultural waste and byproducts into innovative, eco-friendly, and nutritious food products, which could play an important role in the future growth of Pakistan's food sector.

Faculty members emphasized the importance of strong collaboration between educational institutions, the food industry, research organizations, and funding bodies to help transform students' innovative ideas and research projects into practical and commercial ventures. They expressed hope that future industrial partnerships, research grants, and institutional support would further encourage young researchers to improve their products according to international standards and market demands.

The event not only provided students with valuable hands-on experience but also significantly enhanced their technical,



communication, and research skills. The exhibition clearly demonstrated that young food scientists can play a vital role in promoting food security, healthy nutrition, and sustainable development through innovation and

scientific research. At the conclusion of the event, students and organizers expressed special gratitude to the Chairman of the Department of Applied Sciences and the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering

Sciences & Technology for their continuous guidance, support, and encouragement, which made this successful academic and research activity possible.

The successful exhibition proved to be a positive step

toward strengthening industrial linkages, promoting research collaborations, and encouraging entrepreneurial trends among youth, ultimately contributing to the development of Pakistan's food industry.

# ICMA Multan Branch Council on the Occasion of the Foundation Day

## Kiran Asim

MULTAN: A grand function was organized by the Multan Branch Council on the occasion of the Foundation Day of the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants in honor of its members and their families. The memorable function was specially attended by ICMA Pakistan Vice President Mian Muhammad Yasin and Director Strategic Board Zia Al-Mustafa Awan.

Addressing the function, ICMA Pakistan Vice President Mian Muhammad Yasin said that the role of ICMA in Pakistan today is very important and effective, and the success of the institution is the result of the tireless work and professional services of its members. He also emphasized that ICMA is playing a key role in budgeting, financial planning and economic policies as a key stakeholder with the federal government to stabilize the economy of Pakistan.

Zia Mustafa Awan also appreciated the services of management accountants and termed their professional role as important for the national economy.

On this occasion, Muhammad Shoaib, Chairman Audit Assurance and Risk Advisory Board, and Waqas



Khalid, Chairman SMP Board ICMA Pakistan, were also presented with special shields in recognition of their services.

At the ceremony, Chairman Multan Branch Council Muhammad Yousuf Siddiqui thanked all the distinguished guests, members and participants and

expressed his determination that the institution will continue its efforts for professional development and welfare of members in the future as well. Joint Director ICMA Samina Khan Kayani also addressed the ceremony, while at the end, a cake was cut to celebrate the 76th anniversary of the institute.

During the ceremony, special honorary shields were presented to prominent members of Multan, while a sumptuous dinner and a soulful Qawwali concert were also organized for the members and their families, which made the ceremony more memorable.

# NFC-Based Android Banking Attacks Surge 188% in Early 2026, Kaspersky Reports

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Kaspersky telemetry reveals a dramatic 188% surge in NFC-based attacks targeting Android banking users in early 2026, with 35,600 incidents blocked from January to April, up from over 12,300 in the same period of 2025.

These attacks, employing malware families like SuperCard X and PhantomCard, utilize two primary schemes: Direct NFC and Reverse NFC.

In Direct NFC, attackers trick victims into downloading disguised malware, then prompt them to tap their bank card to the infected phone and enter the PIN, stealing card data.



Reverse NFC is now more prevalent; scammers send malicious apps

and use social engineering to make them the primary payment method.

Victims are then persuaded to deposit funds at an ATM using their infected phone, unknowingly sending money directly to scammers.

Sergey Golovanov of Kaspersky notes Reverse NFC is harder to detect as victims self-transfer funds. Dr. Hafeez Ur Rehman emphasizes the need for user caution with digital financial services, especially in Pakistan, and calls for collaboration among stakeholders.

Kaspersky advises against installing apps from unofficial sources, warns users never to follow instructions from strangers at ATMs, and recommends using security solutions like Kaspersky Mobile Security to protect against phishing and malware.

# STP Announces Protest Movement for Recovery of Former Excise Director Saeed Memon

## Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: The Sindh Taraqi Pasand Party (STP) has announced a protest movement demanding the recovery of former Excise Department Director Saeed Memon, expressing serious concern over his continued disappearance.

Addressing a joint press conference at the Hyderabad Press Club, STP leaders Hyder Shahani, Rasheed Memon, Hoot Khan Gadhi, and others said that 15 days had passed since Saeed Memon went missing, yet no progress had been made regarding his recovery.

The leaders stated that contacts had been made with the authorities in Balochistan, but no positive response



or significant development had been received so far.

They termed the matter a serious humanitarian and legal issue, urging both federal and provincial govern-

ments to take immediate action. According to the leaders, despite continuous protests and efforts by family members and supporters, no information about Saeed Memon's

whereabouts has emerged.

The STP leadership announced that a sustained protest campaign would continue until Saeed Memon is safely recovered. They said the party would expand its movement through demonstrations, rallies, and public awareness campaigns across Sindh.

The leaders also appealed to government authorities, law enforcement agencies, and human rights organizations to take urgent measures for Saeed Memon's recovery and help alleviate the concerns of his family.

Concluding the press conference, the STP leaders vowed to continue their peaceful struggle and raise the issue at every available forum until Saeed Memon is safely recovered.

# DC Umar Abbas Mela Hears Citizens' Revenue related Complaints at his office

## Zafar Chishty

TOBA TEK SINGH: Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision for transparent revenue services led to a Khuli Kachehri in Toba Tek Singh, supervised by DC Umar Abbas Mela. Citizens' revenue issues, including land records and property transfers, were addressed promptly. Mela stressed transparency and public convenience, directing swift complaint resolution. These open courts aim to provide direct access to officials, streamlining problem-solving and reducing visits for citizens. The district administration is committed to public service, good governance, and improved service delivery.

# Sewerage Scramble: Multan's Roads Become Muddy Mess, Residents Face Months of Disruption

## Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Important roads of Multan city including Gulgasht Colony Brand Road, Hussain Agahi, Chowk Foura to Ghanta Ghar, Bohar Gate to Chowk Foura internal road, Nishtar Road.

After digging many other roads of Multan city including MDA Chowk, the people of Multan have been put in a miserable situation. When a senior official of Multan administration was talked about this, he told that the budget of 2026 ended on May 31. Because the Multan administration was going to spend billions of funds in the name of sewerage in Multan city in any case.

Due to which the roads of Multan city have been dug at the same time so that new sewer lines can be laid. When the Punjab government will provide billions of rupees in the next budget for the rehabilitation of the affected roads.

Then the rehabilitation work of these roads will start. On the other hand, the people are working from morning to afternoon. They are stuck in the mud from evening till late at night. While due to heavy sweating in the intense heat of Multan, mud gets stuck on the bodies of the people as well as on the clothes of the people who are hot from the heat. Especially the men and women who travel on motorcycles, rickshaws and small cars seem to be suffering a lot for many months.

Neither the Multan administration is telling the people anything about the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the city's roads nor are the political representatives of Multan talking to the people about the deteriorating condition of the roads of Multan city. On the other hand, the media representatives working in Multan have also closed their eyes and ears due to the fear of the Multan administration.

While the persecuted citizens of Multan openly say that sewer lines were laid in Multan a few years ago. Now there was no need for new sewer lines again, rather the Multan administration would have opened the inner city roads 30 feet on both sides so that the traffic flow would have improved. While the citizens of Multan openly say that the Multan administration has demolished the city of Multan in the name of laying sewerage lines just to collect commission from contractors. While the political leadership and political representatives of Multan, leaving the people helpless, spend the summer season in Murree and Northern areas for four months as usual.

# FUUAUST VC delivers interactive lecture highlighting importance of scientific and medical ethics

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor (VC) of the Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology (FUUAUST), Professor Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari personally engaged with students of the Department of Pharmacy by delivering an insightful academic lecture on Monday.

During the session, Dr. Shinwari shared his expertise on a range of subjects, including medical terminology and contemporary issues relevant to pharmaceutical sciences. Students warmly welcomed the pleasant lecture of the Vice Chancellor and expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to learn directly from one of the country's most distinguished scientists and educationists.

FUUAUST VC delivers interactive lecture highlighting importance of scientific and medical ethics

In addition to the academic discussion, Dr. Shinwari highlighted the importance of scientific and medical ethics, emphasizing their critical role in research, healthcare, and professional practice.

Renowned for his contributions to scientific ethics, Dr. Shinwari has been recognized internationally and is a recipient of a UNESCO award in medical ethics. A leading researcher in biological sciences, Dr. Shinwari has also been honored by the President of Pakistan with the prestigious Sitara-i-Imtiaz and Tamgha-i-Imtiaz in recognition of his outstanding scientific achievements and research contributions.

Following the lecture, the Vice Chancellor directed the university administration to ensure the timely availability of essential academic resources and books for pharmacy students in the library. He also stressed the importance of maintaining laboratory facilities according to required academic and professional standards.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
170,600.20	173,962.81
Day's High	Day's Low
174,171.64	170,396.85
Index Value	Change
24,610,678,727	-3362.61
Percentage	Time
-1.93%	1 June, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,338.95	-70.33
Percentage	Time
-0.68%	1 June, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
50,885.80	-146.66
Percentage	Time
-0.29%	1 Jun, 12:52 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
66,934.33	+604.83
Percentage	Time
+0.91%	1 Jun, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	197.96	202.61
Bahrain Dinar	733.85	742.87
Canadian Dollar	199.96	206.74
China Yuan	38.00	39.25
Danish Krone	43.35	43.75
Euro	322.72	329.21
Hong Kong Dollar	34.92	35.92
Indian Rupee	2.60	2.85
Japanese Yen	1.7261	1.8253
Kuwaiti Dinar	883.35	894.25
Malaysian Ringgit	67.10	68.25
New Zealand \$	164.32	167.81
Norwegians Krone	27.85	28.15
Omani Riyal	719.15	730.25
Qatari Riyal	74.75	75.75
Saudi Riyal	73.90	74.65
Singapore Dollar	215.93	221.15
Swedish Korona	30.35	30.65
Swiss Franc	352.78	356.68
Thai Bhat	8.55	8.70
U.A.E Dirham	75.75	76.65
UK Pound Sterling	372.98	378.10
US Dollar	278.25	279.50

# Efforts afoot for accelerated economic growth: PM

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated that Pakistan's economy has stabilized through hard work and that further efforts are underway for accelerated growth.

During a meeting with leaders from various Chambers of Commerce and Industry, he announced that the upcoming budget will include measures to boost industrial development and production, with an export-based economic development mission.

He directed the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to resolve all pending tax refund cases by June 15. The prime minister affirmed that the interest rate for the export refinance scheme would remain capped at 4.5% until June 2027, appreciating banks' facilitation of exporters.

He also instructed the relocation of the Pakistan Revenue Automation Limited (PRAL) head office to Karachi and the establishment of a passport office in Gujrat.

The government's economic agenda prioritizes reforms and facilities for the SME sector and encourages local production of electric vehicles through joint ventures.



The business community praised the efforts of the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, and Chief of Army Staff Asim Munir in promoting regional peace. They expressed support for government

initiatives aimed at economic development and job creation, welcoming the 'Wazir-e-Azam Apna Ghar Programme' loan scheme and thanking the prime minister for reforms in the Export Development Fund Board, PIA

privatization, FBR digitization, and e-invoicing.

The delegation pledged to assist in formalizing the grey economy through digitization and other reforms.

## Summer Gift

RAWALPINDI: A vendor is displaying watermelons along Band Khana Road in the city attraction for customers.



Photo: Online

# Arif Balgamwala becomes first Pakistani ever to earn Court of Honor at Boston World Stamp Expo

**Commerce Desk**

BOSTON/KARACHI: In a landmark achievement for Pakistan, renowned philatelist M. Arif Balgamwala T. I. has become the first Pakistani ever to be inducted into the Court of Honor at the Boston 2026 World Stamp Expo, the most prestigious international philatelic exhibition in the world, running from May 23 to 30, 2026. The distinction marks the first time in 79 years that a Pakistani has been accorded this rare and coveted honour at the world's foremost gathering of stamp collectors and philatelic excellence.

This year's Expo drew participation from 65 countries, underscoring the global scale of the event and the rarity of Balgamwala's accomplishment. His induction places Pakistan alongside the world's finest collectors in a forum reserved only for the most exceptional exhibits.

This historic honour — comparable in the world of philately to winning an Olympic gold medal — was earned after more than 20 years of relentless dedication and hard work by Balgamwala, whose extraordinary collection on British Indian



Airmails 1911-1936 (Frames 66-73) now stands proudly in the Court of Honor, alongside invited exhibits from the world's finest collectors.

# IMF-Driven Budget Could Strain Pakistani Businesses, Warns Ex-FPCCI VP

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Former Vice President of FPCCI and former Chairman of the Pakistan Ship Agents Association, Tariq Haleem, has said that the upcoming federal budget, being formulated under the stringent conditions of the IMF, may create further difficulties for the business community, industries, and the general public. He urged the government to avoid measures that could slow down economic activity and negatively affect the investment climate.

Tariq Haleem stated that the persistent shortfall in revenue collection



targets calls for a review of the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) aggressive policies. Instead of placing additional tax burdens on existing taxpayers, efforts should be focused on broadening the tax net so that more individuals and sectors contribute to the national exchequer.

# Govt should implement business community's recommendations in the new federal budget, Zubair Tufail

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Zubair Tufail, President of the United Business Group (UBG), recommended to the government for the Federal Budget 2026-27, reducing the General Sales Tax (GST) from 18% to 15% to boost economic confidence and investment. He proposed an 8.5% GDP growth target and lowering the maximum income tax for salaried individuals from 35% to 20%.

Tufail fully supports the UBG's "Shadow Budget," which aims to increase exports to \$80 billion, expand the taxpayer base to 100 million, and raise per capita income to \$2,900. He suggested a new fixed tax scheme for retailers and competitive energy rates for industries. Tufail urged restoring the Final Tax Regime for exporters, simplifying export financing,



rationalizing customs duties, and introducing a National Industrial Policy. He also called for tax relief, increasing the taxable income threshold, and taking action against non-filers. Tufail advised against new taxes, particularly the Super Tax, and recommended reducing levies on petroleum products and supporting SMEs and cottage industries. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive restructuring of Pakistan's tax regime to meet FBR targets and enhance exports.

## APBUMA Calls for Critical Budget Measures for Textile Sector Competitiveness



**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: The All Pakistan Bed Sheets and Upholstery Manufacturers Association (APBUMA) has urged the government to incorporate key industry recommendations into the Budget 2026-27 to revitalize the textile sector and boost exports. APBUMA Chairman Imran Mahmood Sheikh, Patron-in-Chief Syed Muhammad Asim Shah, and Vice Chairman Syed Muhammad Ahsan Shah emphasized that this sector is vital for Pakistan's exports, industrial production, and employment. However, they highlighted that rising costs, high energy prices, and heavy taxes are hindering its competitiveness.

# Chairman UMT Ibrahim Hasan Murad Visits Huawei Headquarters in Shenzhen

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: Chairman and President of the University of Management and Technology (UMT), Ibrahim Hasan Murad, visited the headquarters of the globally renowned technology company Huawei in Shenzhen, China, where he received a warm welcome from the company's senior leadership. The visit focused on strengthening collaboration in the fields of education, research, emerging technologies, innovation, artificial intelligence, and digital transformation.

The primary objective of the visit

was to further enhance Pakistan-China friendship and explore new avenues of cooperation in education, research, and technology. During the meetings, both sides reviewed ongoing collaborative educational and technical initiatives between UMT and Huawei and discussed opportunities to expand the scope of partnership in the future.

Speaking on the occasion, Ibrahim Hasan Murad commended Huawei's global leadership in innovation, research, and technological advancement. He emphasized that strong partnerships with leading international organizations are essential for

accelerating digital transformation and building a knowledge-based economy in Pakistan.

Murad stated that modern technologies are playing a transformative role in shaping the future of education, industry, and economic development. Therefore, equipping the younger generation with digital competencies, artificial intelligence expertise, and advanced technological knowledge has become an urgent national priority.

Ibrahim Murad noted that collaboration with Huawei will create new opportunities for Pakistani youth in cutting-edge technologies, artificial

intelligence, digital innovation, research, and professional training, enabling them to compete effectively in the global marketplace. He added that Pakistan-China cooperation is opening new horizons in education, research, and technology, creating valuable opportunities for the youth of both countries.

The UMT Chairman reaffirmed the university's commitment to strengthening partnerships with leading international institutions to promote world-class education, research excellence, and industry-academia collaboration. He said that such initiatives would



contribute significantly to positioning Pakistan as a digitally empowered, technologically advanced, and knowledge-driven economy.

# Federal Budget to Boost Traders and Industrialists, says Railways Minister

Commerce Desk

RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister for Railways, Hanif Abbasi, said that the upcoming federal budget would be a breath of fresh air for traders and industrialists, emphasizing that no country can achieve sustainable development without a strong industrial base.

He expressed these views while addressing participants at a dinner hosted in his honor at the residence of Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General of the United Business Group (UBG), on the occasion of congratulating Zahid Bakhtawari on his election as Vice President of the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board.

Among those present were Tariq Sadiq, Chairman of the Founder Group ICCI; former Chairmen Khalid Javed and Khalid Iqbal Malik; former ICCI President Zahid Maqbool; former RCCI Presi-



dent Dr. Hassan Surosh; prominent business leader Wajid Ayub; Abid Bakhtawari; former Senior Vice President RCCI Hamza Surosh; former ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari; former President of Chakwal Chamber Waqar Bakhtawari; and Uzair Bakhtawari. Hanif Abbasi stated that he has always

presented the concerns of the business community before the Prime Minister. He noted that electricity tariffs have declined over the past two years and that key economic indicators are showing signs of improvement.

The Federal Minister also remarked that Pakistan's standing in the world has

improved significantly and that various global powers now acknowledge the country as an important mediator. He said that countries and regions including the Middle East, China, Russia, the United States, the European Union, Central Asia, Iran, and Saudi Arabia are increasingly recognizing Pakistan's constructive role on the international stage.

Referring to his long-standing relationship with the Bakhtawari family, Hanif Abbasi said that Zafar Bakhtawari is like an elder brother to him. He described Zahid Bakhtawari's election as Vice President of the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board as an excellent and positive decision.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that Hanif Abbasi has always demonstrated a supportive and caring attitude toward the business community.

## Shift focus to exports and industry, urges Mian Zahid Hussain

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mian Zahid Hussain, a prominent business leader, has voiced significant concerns regarding Pakistan's upcoming 2026-27 federal budget. He criticizes the government's reliance on increasing taxes and revenue targets, particularly the proposed 17.1 trillion rupee revenue goal and a 1% sales tax hike, suggesting this will disproportionately burden existing taxpayers and industries under IMF conditions. Hussain warns that without a shift towards productivity, exports, and industrial growth, the economy risks paralysis. He highlights the alarming stagnation in GDP growth, with the target set between 3.5-4.2%, arguing that relief on import duties, energy prices, and bank markups is crucial for achieving higher growth rates. He predicts that the expected increase in the petroleum levy will fuel inflation and business costs. Hussain advocates for a growth-oriented, rather than revenue-driven, policy, emphasizing that indiscriminate tax hikes stifle industrial activity and ultimately reduce government revenue. He suggests re-allocating the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) to incentivize IT, agriculture, and manufacturing for job creation, and widening the tax net to include untaxed sectors like agriculture and retail, while reducing the burden on manufacturing to boost exports. Furthermore, he proposes a move away from coercive tax collection methods, advocating for simplified, business-friendly tax laws and digitalization to combat evasion and increase the tax-to-GDP ratio from 10% to 15%.



## FCEPL celebrates World Milk Day with school students across the country



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Friesland Campina Engro Pakistan Limited (FCEPL) celebrated World Milk Day by educating students in Karachi, Sahiwal, and Sukkur about milk's health benefits, aiming to combat malnutrition and stunting in Pakistan. Employees engaged children in schools, highlighting milk's essential nutrients. FCEPL's leadership stressed the importance of quality and safe milk for future generations, reinforcing their commitment to "Nourish Pakistan." The company also conducted milk distribution drives in Punjab, collaborating with the Pakistan Dairy Association. FCEPL aims to provide high-nutrition, safe, and affordable milk nationwide.

## Supernet Technologies Board Approves In-Principle Plan for Potential Right Issue

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Supernet Technologies Limited's Board of Directors has given in-principle approval for a potential near-future right issue of ordinary shares, aiming to raise up to PKR 914.76 million. Shares will be offered at a price not exceeding PKR 10. Proceeds are earmarked for working capital for upcoming projects to boost performance and growth, and to partially fund the acquisition of 51% of Supernet Limited from Telearcard Limited. This approval allows stakeholders to seek necessary corporate and shareholder consent for potential investment. The actual right issue, subject to final Board approval and regulatory compliance, may be announced later.

# The Social Normalization of Crime

Crime in contemporary society is no longer merely a violation of law. Increasingly, it has evolved into a social and psychological phenomenon that shapes identities, perceptions and power relations within communities. The challenge confronting many societies today is not only the commission of crime itself but the gradual emergence of a culture in which criminality acquires an aura of prestige, influence and social relevance. This dangerous trend poses a serious threat to the moral foundations of society. When individuals associated with violence, intimidation, narcotics trafficking or other criminal activities are admired rather than condemned, the distinction between lawful authority and unlawful power begins to blur. Across many communities, social practices that appear cultural or traditional often reinforce distorted notions of power. The ostentatious and grandiose display of influence through elaborate gathering spaces, public exhibition of weapons, celebratory aerial firing, glorification of individuals with criminal backgrounds and the use of intimidation as a means of securing social status all contribute to a troubling social narrative. Such anomic behaviours send an implicit message, particularly to impressionable youth, that authority and respect stem not from education, public service or lawful conduct, but from lavish splurge, fear and coercion.

The consequences are profound. Crime ceases to be viewed solely as an act deserving punishment and instead becomes a source of identity and recognition. Young people exposed to such symbols may begin to perceive criminality as a pathway to social mobility, prestige or influence. This transformation of crime into a socially attractive phenomenon is among the gravest threats to long-term social stability.

Criminological scholarship offers significant insights into this phenomenon. Edwin Sutherland's Differential Association Theory suggests that

criminal behaviour is learned through interaction with others. When communities celebrate individuals engaged in unlawful activities, they inadvertently create environments where criminal attitudes are normalised and transmitted across generations.

Similarly, Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory argues that individuals often imitate behaviours that appear rewarded or admired. If offenders receive public recognition, social status or political patronage, they become role models for vulnerable segments of society. The perceived rewards of criminality may outweigh the perceived risks.

An instructive example can be found in the policing initiatives undertaken in the Region Faisalabad under the visionary command of Regional Police Officer Sohai Akhtar Sukhera. His approach reflects a comprehensive, practical and community-oriented model of policing that extends beyond conventional law-enforcement functions.

A defining feature of this model has been the effort to bridge the trust deficit between police and citizens through sustained community engagement. Outreach initiatives have brought together religious scholars, academics, traders, business leaders and civil society representatives to strengthen cooperation between law-enforcement agencies and the public. Open forums and Khuli Kacheris have provided ordinary citizens, particularly vulnerable and marginalised segments of society, with direct access to police leadership for the redressal of grievances.

Public-awareness seminars conducted in educational institutions and commercial centres have sought to cultivate civic responsibility and strengthen public understanding of crime prevention. Such initiatives resonate with the concept of Collective Efficacy, which

emphasises the capacity of communities to work together in maintaining social order and addressing shared problems.

Equally noteworthy has been the emphasis on institutional welfare. Attention to the well-being of police personnel, families of martyrs (shuhdas) and officers who died in service reflects an understanding that effective policing depends upon a motivated and supported workforce. Collaborative arrangements and memoranda of understanding with hospitals, laboratories, educational institutions and other organisations have further enhanced

institutional capacity and public service delivery. On the operational side, intelligence-led actions against narcotics trafficking, the arrest of proclaimed offenders involved in serious crimes, the dismantling of organised criminal gangs and the development of preventive patrolling mechanisms have contributed to improved public security. Efforts to address longstanding local feuds and disputes have also reduced opportunities for violence and retaliation.

Perhaps most importantly, regular interaction between senior leadership and subordinate officers of all ranks has promoted accountability, coordination and organisational cohesion. Such engagement reinforces the principle that effective policing is not solely the responsibility of senior command but a collective institutional effort extending from station house officers to supervisory and investigative ranks.

The broader lesson extends beyond a single district or region. Community-oriented, preventive and trust-based policing models should be institutionalised across jurisdictions. Station House Officers, Sub-Divisional Police Officers, Superintendents of Police, investigation and district police leadership can all benefit from approaches that combine

enforcement with public engagement, prevention with accountability and authority with service.

Nevertheless, the responsibility for addressing the social allure of crime cannot rest solely with law-enforcement agencies. Governments must formulate policies that curtail the glorification of criminal behaviour while promoting civic values, ethical conduct and respect for the rule of law. Educational institutions should strengthen civic education and character development. Media organisations and digital platforms should exercise caution in portraying individuals with criminal histories as symbols of power or success.

Most importantly, citizens themselves must denounce the social acceptance of criminality. Communities should discourage the display of unlawful power, refuse to celebrate violence and buttress positive role models whose achievements are rooted in education, entrepreneurship, public service and lawful conduct.

A society succeeds not merely by punishing crime but by ensuring that crime loses its social appeal. The ultimate goal of criminal justice is not only the reduction of offences but also the cultivation of a culture where integrity commands respect, lawfulness inspires confidence and criminality becomes neither admired nor imitated.

When governments, law-enforcement institutions and citizens work together towards these objectives, crime can be decreased not only through enforcement but through a transformation of social values and norms. The palpable measure of a healthy society is not simply the number of criminals it incarcerates, but the extent to which it makes criminality socially unacceptable, reprehensible and morally indefensible.

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# After Iran, Is Turkey Israel's Next Target?

Continued from Page 4

instability across the Middle East. From Ankara's perspective, the lesson of recent conflicts is that diplomatic appeals, international institutions, and conventional military capabilities alone may not always be viewed as sufficient safe-

guards against a state that believes it enjoys overwhelming strategic superiority. Turkey's challenge, therefore, is to develop a level of strategic deterrence—political, economic, technological, military, and diplomatic and nuclear—that convinces any potential adversary that the costs of confrontation would far outweigh

any conceivable gains. History suggests that lasting peace is rarely preserved by goodwill alone; it is preserved when both sides recognize that conflict would be mutually damaging and strategically unwinnable. Only such a credible balance can prevent rivalry from escalating into the

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

# The Silent Agony: Pakistan's Stolen Daughters and the Conscience of a Nation

Continued from Page 4

Kashmore—represent one brutal node in this network. These bandit gangs, sometimes with alleged Baloch tribal links or local feudal patronage, traffic in human misery. Recent operations recovered girls like 11-year-old Hooram Saeed and Jennifer Aamir Masih, but such rescues are rare victories against a tide of impunity. Victims endure gang rapes, organ-targeted torture, and psychological breaking designed to erase their past identities.

Why does this persist? The reasons are layered like the silt of the Indus itself.

First, feudal power structures in rural Sindh. Influential landlords and clerics wield enormous sway. Figures like the controversial Mian Mithu have been accused of running conversion networks, pairing vulnerable girls with "pious"

grooms. Police, often beholden to the same elites, drag their feet or actively collude. FIRs are delayed, evidence "lost," and witnesses intimidated.

Second, the politics of appeasement. Successive governments in Islamabad and Karachi have failed to prioritize minority protection. The current coalition, led by figures like Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari (whose PPP has deep roots in Sindh), stands accused of thunderous silence on this issue. While national rhetoric champions human rights abroad, domestic daughters of Christians and Hindus are expendable in the calculus of vote banks and coalition stability. No major Sindh intellectual or PPP stalwart has launched a sustained campaign or penned searing columns demanding systemic overhaul. Mainstream media stories remain episodic,

rarely connecting dots to reveal the pattern.

This silence is not accidental. It reflects a deeper ideological discomfort: acknowledging the scale would force confrontation with how blasphemy laws, Hudood-era legacies, and majoritarian assertions undermine Jinnah's secular-leaning founding ideals. Minorities, comprising roughly 4-5% of the population, lack electoral heft. Their suffering generates little political capital compared to narratives of external enemies.

Third, socioeconomic vulnerability. Many victims come from impoverished, landless families—sweepers, laborers, tenant farmers. Their marginality makes them easy targets. Abductors exploit poverty, promising "better lives" or simply taking what they want, knowing reprisal is unlikely. The human cost defies quan-

tification. Beyond statistics lie shattered psyches: girls like Farah (abducted at 12, shackled and converted), Reena and Raveena (Hindu sisters whose case drew brief attention), Pooja Kumari (killed resisting abduction), and countless unnamed others. Families live in perpetual dread, sometimes marrying daughters young to "protect" them—a cruel irony that denies education and agency. Some migrate to other countries, carrying generational trauma. Others simply endure, their temples vandalized, churches attacked, and faith mocked.

This is not "just" a minority issue. It is a Pakistani crisis that corrodes the soul of the republic. When the state fails to protect its weakest citizens, it invites the decay of rule of law for all. When society normalizes the violation of "other" daughters, it normalizes barbarity. History teaches

harsh lessons: societies that tolerate systemic sexual violence and identity erasure plant seeds of their own fragmentation. Pakistan prides itself on resilience—against terrorism, natural disasters, economic woes. That same resolve must now confront this internal enemy. Bold steps are essential:

- Enact and enforce a strict anti-forced conversion law with independent judicial oversight, minimum marriage age safeguards, and psychological evaluation for "consent."
- Establish fast-track courts and dedicated recovery task forces for kacha areas, with federal backing to bypass local patronage networks.
- Launch transparent data collection and annual parliamentary reporting on minority abductions.
- Empower civil society, especially Sindh reformers and

## Education as the...

Continued from Page 4

cooperation must be reinforced at home and in social settings. Collaboration between schools, parents, and communities can create a supportive environment for holistic development.

Moreover, media and public discourse should complement educational efforts by promoting positive narratives and discouraging divisive rhetoric. A collective approach involving all sectors of society is essential for achieving lasting social cohesion.

In conclusion, education is indeed the strongest weapon

for building social cohesion in a diverse society. In Pakistan, it has the potential to transform diversity into strength by fostering understanding, reducing inequalities, and promoting shared values. By investing in inclusive and equitable education, the country can create a more harmonious, resilient, and united society. Education not only shapes minds but also builds bridges—bridges that connect individuals, communities, and the nation as a whole.

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women's groups, to lead awareness campaigns without fear.

- Reform policing and prosecution to break feudal-clerical nexuses.
- International partners and diaspora communities must amplify voices without descending into geopolitical point-scoring; genuine pressure for reform serves Pakistan's own stability.

The recovered girls like Jennifer Masih deserve more than fleeting headlines. Their testimonies should ignite national outrage. Imagine their eyes—haunted by nights no child should endure—pleading not just for justice but for a Pakistan where faith does not determine safety.

True honor and courage is to look inward, to protect the vulnerable among us, to honor the pluralistic promise embedded in Pakistan's creation.

The kacha dacoits thrive in darkness; sunlight of accountability will wither them. The silence of intellectuals, politicians, and clerics must end. Every recovered girl's voice is a clarion: enough.

Pakistan's daughters—Hindu, Christian, Muslim—are not commodities for feudal lust or ideological conquest. They are the future. To fail them is to fail the nation's moral foundation. The time for shame-faced inaction is over. Recovery operations are welcome, but they are Band-Aids on a hemorrhage. Structural surgery is demanded by history, by humanity, and by the innocent blood crying from Sindh's riverbanks. Let Jennifer Masih's truth echo. Let the nation choose: redemption through justice, or eternal shame in silence. The choice defines not just policy, but the character of a people.

## E-Course launched

ISLAMABAD: Hon'ble the Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi and Hon'ble Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb in a meeting with Representatives of the Bar Councils at the launch event of E-Course for Law Professionals-2026 at Supreme Court of Pakistan, Monday.



Photo: PID

# EU Strategic Vision a foundation for deeper Pakistan-EU political ties, sectoral cooperation: Dar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar stated that the EU Strategic Vision can form the basis for enhanced political understanding, expanded sectoral collaboration, and strengthened institutional connections between Pakistan and the European Union.

Speaking at the 8th Pakistan-EU Strategic Dialogue, co-chaired with EU High Representative Kaja Kallas, Dar emphasized the vision's role in guiding long-term cooperation, building on existing agreements.

He highlighted Pakistan's appreciation for the EU's leadership and the positive trajectory of Paki-



stan-EU relations, noting opportunities for cooperation in trade and other sectors.

Kaja Kallas acknowledged Pakistan's role in facilitating US-Iran talks and their impact on global energy and

fertilizer prices, stressing the need for a sustained ceasefire and continued negotiations.

She expressed the EU's commitment to developing relations with Pakistan on a forward-looking basis, promoting fair trade, investment, and sustainable connectivity, underscoring the EU's significant role as Pakistan's largest export market, exceeding that of the US and China combined.

Kallas also pointed to the GSP+ system as a testament to the partnership's commercial importance and its contribution to Pakistan's growth. Both sides are exploring deeper cooperation in areas such as resilience building, climate action, digital infrastructure, migration, and mobility.

# Government introduces strict new rules on dual citizenship for civil servants to boost transparency

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has taken a major step to enhance transparency in the civil bureaucracy by introducing strict monitoring rules regarding dual citizenship and foreign travel documents held by civil servants.

According to an official notification issued by the Establishment Division, Prime Minister has approved the Civil Servants Foreign Citizenship Rules 2026, under which a comprehensive system has been introduced to regulate and monitor foreign citizenship status among government employees.

Under the new regulations, all civil servants will be required to disclose their own as well as their family



members' foreign citizenship status. Officers will also be mandated to declare any foreign passports or travel documents in their possession.

The notification states that civil

servants must submit detailed annual returns regarding foreign citizenship, and disclosure of dependent children and spouses' citizenship status has also been made compulsory.

As per the rules, officers applying for new government positions must submit a declaration regarding any foreign citizenship at the time of recruitment. The appointment of any officer found to be concealing foreign citizenship may be declared null and void.

The Establishment Division has been tasked with maintaining complete records related to the foreign citizenship of civil servants, while all cadre administrators have been instructed to compile updated data on officers' citizenship status.

Officials said the new framework will apply to all civil servants across the country and is aimed at strengthening accountability and ensuring transparency within the bureaucracy.

# LESCO officials accused of shifting blame after Khawaja Asif highlights transformer issue

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: A fresh controversy has emerged in Pattoki after Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Asif highlighted incompetence in the Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) through a post on X regarding the replacement of a transformer after payment to WAPDA officials.

According to reports, LESCO City officers allegedly attempted to conceal their own negligence by placing responsibility on a workshop mechanic and a private citizen. Following the minister's remarks, a case was registered in connection with the transformer replacement, but no WAPDA or LESCO employee was named in the First Information Report (FIR).



Instead, the blame was shifted to a private individual identified as Shabbir.

Police subsequently arrested the man after he was named in the FIR.

The FIR also held several villagers responsible in the matter. However, according to details of the case, the transformer had been removed, repaired and reinstalled by Shabbir on the request of local residents.

The development has raised questions over the handling of the case and the exclusion of any WAPDA officials from the investigation, despite allegations surrounding the transformer replacement. The incident gained attention after Khawaja Asif publicly criticized LESCO's performance and highlighted the issue on social media.

The matter is likely to draw further scrutiny as authorities examine the circumstances surrounding the transformer repair and the registration of the case.

# Pak-China business cooperation enters new phase as private sector links expand: PM



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated that increased business engagements between Pakistan and China's private sectors mark a new era in their economic partnership.

He believes enhanced cooperation in industry, agriculture, and technology will boost Pakistan's exports and create jobs.

The Prime Minister chaired a meeting to review progress on agreements from the recent Pakistan-China Business-to-Business (B2B) conference in China.

He directed authorities to swiftly convert Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) into formal agreements and joint ventures. The Prime Minister will person-

ally chair monthly meetings to monitor progress.

He also emphasized the effective implementation of cooperation between agricultural research bodies of both countries, highlighting the potential for a revolutionary transformation in Pakistan's agriculture sector through research, technology, and joint ventures.

The B2B conference saw 123 Pakistani companies and 436 Chinese companies attend, resulting in 207 MoUs worth approximately \$7.54 billion.

These MoUs cover sectors like battery energy storage, AI, mobile phones, fertilizers, seeds, fisheries, and food processing, as well as joint investments in biotechnology and vaccine manufacturing.

# ECP directs Interior Ministry, Islamabad Admin to submit local body delimitation records within 3 days



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has directed the Ministry of Interior and the Chief Commissioner Islamabad to submit key administrative and delimitation records related to town corporations within three days, as deadlines previously set have already expired.

According to officials, the ECP has sought a formal notification of the boundaries of town corporations along with an immediate submission of the number of union councils in each town corporation.

The Commission has also requested certified maps of town corporations, including details of

census charges, circles, and blocks to complete the delimitation framework for local government elections in Islamabad.

Officials said that during a meeting held on May 13, the Islamabad administration was given 10 days to provide the required documentation. However, the stipulated timeframe has passed without compliance.

In its latest directive, the ECP has once again instructed the relevant authorities to furnish all requested documents within three days.

The Commission has also indicated that in case of continued delay, it may consider draft legislation related to Islamabad local government elections due to the non-provision of essential records.

# Islamabad re-imposes revised business hours starting June 1

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Authorities have issued a new notification re-imposing revised operating hours for markets, shopping malls, and public venues, effective June 1, 2026.

Under the new rules, retail outlets and shopping centers will close by 8 p.m., while restaurants, food outlets, bakeries, and grocery stores will operate until 10 p.m.

Essential services such as medical stores, hospitals, petrol pumps, and CNG stations are exempt from the restrictions and will continue to function as usual. Similarly, milk and dairy shops, gyms, sports courts, IT companies, and

call centers will remain unaffected by the new timings.

The notification also mandates that wedding halls, private event venues, and marquees close by 10 p.m., while takeaway and home delivery services will continue without restrictions.

Authorities emphasized that the revised schedule aims to regulate business hours while maintaining access to essential services for residents.

