



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ

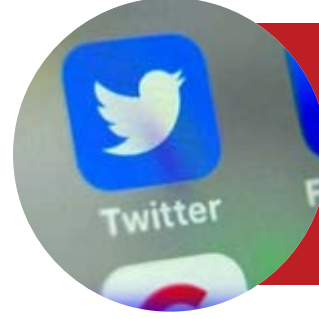
ہم سے ان نیرنے بیان کیا کہ ہم سے ان اور میں سے بیان کیا ان سے اسما کیل نے ان سے تم سے اور ان سے جریر رضی اللہ عنہ سے بیان کیا کہ جب سے میں نے اسلام قبول کیا ہی کر رسول اللہ علیہ وسلم نے (اپنے پاس آئے سے) کبھی نہیں روکا اور جب بھی آپ نے مجھے دیکھا تو سحر کرے۔ (صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 6089)

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## Ambassador Zahra Baloch highlights importance of expanding linkages between Pakistan, France

Ambassador Zahra Baloch highlights importance of expanding linkages between Pakistan, France. The ambassador highlighted the importance of expanding linkages between Pakistan, France, and the wider Franco-phone world, and the critical role that professionals, academics, entrepreneurs, and civil society can play in building bridges, strengthening people-to-people connections and advancing bilateral cooperation.



## 5% withholding tax imposed on social media earnings

The federal government has imposed a 5% withholding tax on individuals earning income through social media platforms, including YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. According to the proposed new tax will apply to content creators, influencers, and other individuals who generate revenue through digital platforms.

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## Addresses

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses a session of the National Assembly in Islamabad on Saturday.



Photo: PID

# PM renews call for dialogue with Opposition to uphold democratic norms

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif extended an olive branch to opposition leaders in the National Assembly, emphasizing that dialogue is crucial for strengthening democratic values and resolving national differences.

He reiterated his past proposals for charters of democracy and economy, noting they were previously rejected.

Expressing respect for opposition figures Mahmood Khan Achakzai and Barrister Gohar Khan, he declared his availability for talks, stating "It is never too late to mend."

The Prime Minister highlighted the National Assembly as a unifying body representing all parts of Pakistan.

He acknowledged differing political views but stressed the importance of a united front to enhance Pakistan's standing

internationally, asserting that collective prosperity is contingent on the nation's existence. Addressing concerns about provincial economic resources, the Prime Minister affirmed that provincial inhabitants have due rights.

He cited the Reko Diq agreement, reached through consultation with provincial leadership and residents, and the 2010 NFC award, which significantly increased Balochistan's share, as

examples of equitable resource distribution. Punjab, he noted, contributed substantially to this award.

He also detailed development projects, including Rs75 billion for solarization benefiting farmers and a Rs300 billion road construction project from Gwadar to Chaman, initiated as a prime ministerial responsibility to ensure balanced national progress.

The Prime Minister offered

condolences for the 22 security personnel martyred in a helicopter crash, noting the crew included members of the Christian community.

He attributed terrorism in Balochistan to foreign involvement, citing concrete evidence. Regarding the Durand Line fencing, he defended it as a necessary security measure for the nation, deeming it a justified expenditure if it saves even one child's life.

# All-inclusive budget, outcome of 2 years' relentless efforts: Atta Tarar

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar described the 2026-27 federal budget as "all-inclusive and relief-oriented," a result of two years of government effort under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

He stated the budget fulfills the promise of relief for the salaried class, business community, and export sector, and aims for export-led growth.

The "Apna Ghar" program and Rs 90 billion for housing, alongside tax reductions on property transactions, are intended to stimulate economic activity by supporting over a dozen connected industries.



Tarar highlighted the shift from negative GDP growth to achieving global recognition for macroeconomic stability, citing praise from the IMF and World Bank. Reforms

in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), including "faceless" and IT-based systems, are aimed at transparency and curbing revenue leakages.

The government is also taking measures to ensure large industries, like the sugar sector, contribute fairly to taxes, relieving the burden on the salaried class. Efforts to streamline tax litigation by addressing delaying tactics and digitizing processes have created fiscal space for societal relief.

The budget also includes significant allocations for education and healthcare infrastructure, such as the Islamabad Jinnah Medical Complex and Danish University, demonstrating commitment to the lower-middle class.

## Iran, US ready to sign peace agreement very soon: Mohsin Naqvi



### City Desk

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said on Saturday that a long-anticipated agreement between the United States and Iran was expected to be finalized very soon, adding that Pakistan will be represented at the signing ceremony by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir.

Speaking on political and international affairs, Naqvi expressed optimism about ongoing diplomatic efforts involving Washington and Tehran, saying indications suggest that the agreement is nearing completion.

"The US-Iran agreement will be concluded very soon," Naqvi said, adding that the Prime Minister and the Field Marshal would represent Pakistan in connection with the development.

Naqvi also linked global economic challenges to instability in various parts of the world, noting that international tensions have contributed to fluctuations in oil prices. He maintained that Pakistan had managed the situation effectively through diplomatic engagement and strategic planning.

# 'Direction of travel' shifts decisively to export-led growth in Budget 2026-27: Aurangzeb

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Budget 2026-27 shifts Pakistan's focus from economic recovery to sustainable, export-led growth. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb highlighted key measures, including reducing the cost of doing business and enhancing export competitiveness.

Taxation reforms include abolishing

advance tax and rationalizing the super tax rate for large businesses, with further relief for sub-exporters.

The budget also promotes a technology-driven, faceless tax system. To support exporters, Rs71 billion in subsidies will ensure financing at a concessional 4.5% rate. Tariff reforms aim to lower intermediate goods costs, while growth in services exports, particularly IT, is anticipated.

Federal government employees will receive a 7% salary increase, enhanced allowances, and the merger of previous adhoc reliefs into their basic pay, alongside a 15% Disparity Reduction Allowance and a 50% increase in conveyance allowance.

The budget signals a pro-business direction and aims to build confidence in Pakistan's economic future.

# AJK Bar Association President Calls for Surrender of Those Destroying Peace

### Bureau Report



MUZAFFARABAD: Raja Aftab Ahmed Advocate, President of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Supreme Court Bar Association, has urged all elements involved in destroying the state's peace, launching armed assaults, damaging government property, and causing loss of human lives to surrender immediately and submit themselves to the law.

He assured that the AJK Supreme Court Bar Association will provide them with complete legal assistance in the courts of Azad Kashmir.

He said those waging war against the state and challenging its writ are not only endangering innocent lives but are also committing a grave crime akin to treason, which cannot be tolerated under any circumstances. Raja Aftab Ahmed emphasized that the Constitution of Azad Kashmir guarantees the right to peaceful protest and political expression, but violence, sabotage, and attacks on public

property cross all legal and moral boundaries.

He noted that such acts undermine the sacrifices of Kashmiris for their right to self-determination and weaken the case of Kashmir at international forums.

The Bar President appealed to the youth to avoid being misled by hostile narratives and to pursue their political goals through constitutional and democratic means.

He stressed that lasting solutions for Kashmir can only be achieved through unity, rule of law, and peaceful struggle, not through bloodshed and destruction.

He reaffirmed that the legal fraternity stands firmly with the state institutions in maintaining peace and order across Azad Kashmir.

# PM appreciates Qatar's strong support for Pakistan's peace efforts

### City Desk



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Saturday received a telephone call from Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar Saturday afternoon and discussed matters of mutual interest.

During their warm and cordial conversation, the Prime Minister conveyed his warm greetings and good wishes to Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar as well as to the brotherly people of Qatar. These sentiments were reciprocated by the Qatari Prime Minister.

While sincerely appreciating Pakistan's remarkable efforts for peace, the Qatari Prime Minister paid tribute to the Prime Minister and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for playing an instrumental role in steering the diplomatic efforts.

He assured the Prime Minister that Qatar was proud to extend its support to Pakistan's endeavors and hoped that this would bring lasting peace to the region.

# DPM, Saudi FM discuss regional situation



### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Saturday held a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Prince Faisal bin Farhan and discussed the regional situation.

They welcomed the US-Iran negotiations which is in its final stage, with the electronic signing ceremony

scheduled for tomorrow, and expressed the hope that this important development will contribute to lasting peace and stability in the region.

The Saudi Foreign Minister appreciated Pakistan's consistent and sustained efforts in support of mediation and dialogue throughout the process.

Both sides also discussed the forthcoming Regional Four Foreign Ministers (R-4) meeting, scheduled to be held in Egypt later this month.

# Albinism is not a disability but a part of natural diversity: Maryam Nawaz

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, in her message on the occasion of International Albinism Awareness Day, said that albinism is not a weakness but merely a part of natural diversity. She said that persons with albinism represent a bright aspect of human beauty and that ensuring their dignity and protection is a collective social responsibility.

The chief minister said that Punjab envisions a society where no individual is judged or considered inferior on the basis of skin colour, physical appearance or any congenital difference. She stressed the need to further promote a culture of love, respect and acceptance for persons living with albinism.



Maryam Nawaz said that the Punjab government is actively working to provide comprehensive educational and healthcare facilities to persons with albinism, along with other specially-abled individuals. She underscored the importance of safeguarding the rights of persons with albinism and called for collective efforts to eliminate all forms of

discrimination against them.

The chief minister said that ensuring dignity, protection and equal opportunities for persons with albinism is a social obligation. She added that the government's goal is to build a Punjab where no person faces discrimination on the basis of skin colour, physical appearance or inherited characteristics.

She further stated that persons with albinism require special attention in healthcare, education and social protection, while efforts should also be made to address the issue of social isolation often faced by them.

The chief minister noted that International Albinism Awareness Day is observed to raise awareness about this inherited genetic condition and to promote and protect the rights of persons affected by it.

## Model Cart

RAWALPINDI: "Model Cart" given by district administration on the footpath at Murree road. These carts occupy the right-of-way on pedestrian walkways and forcing them to walk on active roadways.



Photo: Online

# Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Receives Grand Welcome in Kamalia

**Zafar Chishty**

TOBA TEK SINGH: Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider was welcomed in Kamalia at the residence of PPP District President Atif Raza Khan Kharal.

A large gathering of PPP leaders, workers, and residents attended, alongside a workers' convention. Governor Haider emphasized the PPP's commitment to public service, democracy, and rights, citing recent successes in Gilgit-Baltistan elections and expressing confidence in forming the government there.

He reiterated the party's dedication to Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's



vision for addressing public issues. He thanked the Kamalia PPP leadership and members for their warm reception. Atif Raza Khan Kharal hailed

the Governor's visit as an honor and pledged continued efforts to spread the party's message.

Former MNA Belum Saadat Hasnain Khan Kharal highlighted the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) as a vital social welfare initiative aiding low-income families. Former MPA candidate Captain (R) Saadat Hasnain Khan Kharal echoed support for the party's historical stance with the people and expressed optimism for future electoral success through enhanced engagement.

The convention concluded with pro-PPP slogans, and the Governor met with party officials and members, alongside various public figures.

# Kashmir Leader Shifts Tone, Praises Pakistan While Blaming India

**Bureau Report**

RAWALAKOT: A noticeable shift in narrative or a new strategy was observed in Maulana Umar Nazir Kashmiri's address to protesters here.

Addressing the gathering, Umar Nazir said:

"Neither are we against Pakistan, nor against the state, nor against the institutions, nor against the Pakistani people. We have no quarrel with the Pakistani people. They are our brothers. The Pakistani people are our allies."

In the same breath, he added:

"If your government has become tyrannical, your institutions are conspiring under some plan to spread hatred against the Pakistani state. Who are involved in this conspiracy? Our eternal enemy, India, is taking advantage of it."

This speech of Maulana Umar Nazir has several important aspects:



\*First: A positive message to the Pakistani state and people following recent contacts. \*Second: A clear position against

the Action Committee and those attempting to give its campaign an anti-Pakistan color. He referred to those who talked about a separate flag, a separate country, and a separate passport, and who used derogatory language against Pakistan.

"Third: The most delicate point. He quickly placed responsibility for the deteriorating situation on the Azad Kashmir government and addressed those who used force, saying that India, our eternal enemy, is taking advantage of the situation. He urged that such behavior be abandoned.

Earlier, a speech by Shaukat Nawaz Mir also came to light in which he said elections are a democratic process and they do not want to hinder it.

These indications suggest that following initial contacts, matters are moving in the right direction. Therefore, there is no need for alarm. If the parties continue to proceed cautiously, the issues will definitely be resolved.

## Indian Sikh pilgrims offer rituals at Gurdwara Panja Sahib in connection to Jor Mela



**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: Over 500 Indian Sikh pilgrims, commemorating Guru Arjan Dev Ji's martyrdom anniversary at Gurdwara Panja Sahib, expressed satisfaction with Pakistani arrangements for accommodation, meals, medical care, transport, and security. They praised the improved condition of gurdwaras and thanked the Pakistan Government, ETPB, and administration. This visit highlights Pakistan's commitment to religious tourism and interfaith harmony. The pilgrims are also scheduled to visit Gurdwara Sacha Sauda, Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur, Gurdwara Rohri Sahib Eminabad, and Gurdwara Dera Sahib Lahore for the main ceremony on June 16. The 10-day visit concludes on June 19. Security measures, including entry/exit points and crowd management, were reviewed by Commissioner Rawalpindi and RPO Rawalpindi to ensure pilgrims' safety and a peaceful environment, with police emphasizing zero tolerance for disruptions.

## Spiritual Leader Hazrat Pir Ghulam Mohiuddin Passes Away



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The spiritual, religious and scholarly figure and spiritual leader of the Naqshbandi order, Khwaja Khawajagan Hazrat Pir Ghulam Mohiuddin Sajjada Nashin of Astana Alia Nerian Sharif, Khalifa Majaz I Hazrat Pir Sakhi Muhammad Naqshbandi (may Allah have mercy on him) has passed away. The deceased was laid to rest amidst the sighs and sobs of thousands of disciples and devotees in the land of village Gulbarak (Bhimbar Tarar) in the Islamabad area. The funeral prayer was led by Hazrat Pir Fazal Zahid Rabbani, Sajjada Nashin of Nerian Sharif, while Pir Sahib Sultan-ul-Arifeen, Pir Shams-ul-Arifeen, Sahib Allama Sahibzada Muhammad Ijaz Ahmed Nerui, and Mashaikhs of various khanqahs from Mansehra, Gujarat, Jhang and Mirpur Azad Kashmir participated in the funeral prayer.

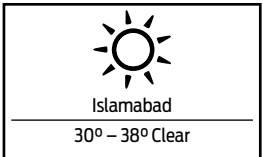
The funeral prayer was attended by a large number of scholars and Mashaikhs, Sajjads, political, social and religious figures, including people from different walks of life. On this occasion, the scholars and Mashaikhs, while addressing the condolence reference, paid tribute to the religious, spiritual and academic services of the deceased and said that Pir Sakhi Muhammad Naqshbandi (may Allah have mercy on him) had dedicated his entire life to the upliftment, propagation and service of the religion of Islam. The news of the death of Pir Sachi Muhammad (may Allah have mercy on him) spread like wildfire and thousands of people from all over Punjab, Hazara and Azad Kashmir reached Islamabad to attend his funeral prayer.

## Hurriyat Conference Elections Conclude Amidst Unity and Hope for New Leadership



**Bureau Report**

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan branch successfully concluded its organizational elections, fostering an atmosphere of goodwill and democratic principles. Ghulam Muhammad Safi was elected unopposed as Convener, Advocate Pervez Ahmed Shah as General Secretary, and Imtiaz Wani as Information Secretary. The Election Commission, comprising Syed Kifayat Hussain, Raja Khadim Hussain, Javed Butt, and Abdul Majeed Lone, oversaw the orderly process. The APHC congratulated the new leadership, expressing confidence in their ability to uphold the objectives of the Jammu and Kashmir freedom movement, honor the sacrifices of martyrs, and fulfill the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. Established to unite the struggle for self-determination, the APHC acknowledged the immense sacrifices made by Kashmiris amidst continuous political, social, and humanitarian pressure, emphasizing their unwavering commitment to their inalienable right. The conference highlighted that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute is internationally recognized and a UN Security Council agenda item, reiterating the fundamental demand for the right to self-determination through a free and fair process. The APHC anticipates the new leadership will enhance organizational stability, internal unity, and national harmony, strengthening ties with various stakeholders and the diaspora. In the current global climate, a unified Kashmiri leadership employing strategy, insight, and diplomacy is crucial to globally advocate for the Kashmir issue and convey the legitimate voice of its people.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 3:13 am  
Zohr ..... 12:08 pm  
Asr ..... 5:08 pm  
Maghrib ..... 7:19 pm  
Isha ..... 9:03 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

Edhi Ambulance ..... 115  
PIA Flight Info ..... 114  
PIA Cargo ..... 9280979

# Hamdard Foundation Pakistan Continues Commitment to Community Healthcare

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, in collaboration with the Commissioner Karachi Office and other welfare organizations, hosted a free medical camp in Karachi.

The event provided citizens with free medical consultations, medicines, and health awareness services. Assistant Commissioner West, represented by Mukhtiar East Mr. Muzaffar Talpur, graced the occasion. Mr. Talpur commended Hamdard



Foundation Pakistan's efforts, highlighting the importance of such camps and advocating for their expansion. Mr. Syed Muhammad Arsalan, Director of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, announced that these free medical camps will be held regularly throughout the summer months, aligning with the directives of Ms. Sadia Rashid, President of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan. The initiative aims to deliver timely

medical aid, essential medications, and crucial health knowledge. Hamdard Foundation Pakistan is committed to enhancing the efficiency of its medical camp management to optimize public services. Attendees enjoyed complimentary chilled Rooth Afza and Sharbat Buzoori, providing welcome relief from the heat, and lauded this thoughtful addition to the healthcare services. Several dignitaries, including

UC Councillor Ms. Masooma Ismail and Director Sports Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Khan, attended and acknowledged Hamdard Foundation Pakistan's valuable contributions. Ms. Afreen Ejaz, the Camp In-Charge, extended her gratitude to all who contributed to the camp's success. Participants expressed their anticipation for Hamdard Foundation Pakistan's continued dedication to public service and community health.

## Call for Collective Action to Eliminate Child Labour in Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: World Day Against Child Labour 2026, SPARC and NCRC convened to address the pervasive issue in Pakistan, under the theme "Red Card to Child Labour: Fair Play for Children, Decent Work for Adults." Experts and policymakers emphasized that eliminating child labour is crucial for national development and requires a multi-sectoral approach. Dr. Nikhat Shakeel Khan highlighted the commitment of the Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR) to strengthening legislation and oversight, stressing that poverty, lack of education, and weak social protection are root causes. MNA Dr. Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro advocated for robust child protection mechanisms, law enforcement, safe environments, and increased access to education, alongside social safety nets and institutional coordination. MNA Riaz Fatyana pointed to deep-seated socio-economic disparities and governance challenges, stressing the need for practical implementation of laws, monitoring, and investment in education and social protection. SPARC Executive Director Asiya Arif called for collective action, targeting specific industries and advocating for SDG compliance and constitutional rights through enforcement, social protection, and education. SPARC Program Manager Dr. Khalil Ahmad Dogar linked child labour to a lack of decent work and social protection for adults. NCRC member Nadia Bibi and CLR's Sobia Ahmad urged stakeholder collaboration and SDG target 8.7 implementation. Children from SPARC's Clubs shared their experiences, demanding immediate, collective action to protect them, ensure equal opportunities in education, and foster their potential contribution to Pakistan's future as responsible citizens.

## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: A High-Level Delegation of the Federation of All Pakistan Universities Academic Staff Associations (FAPUASA), led by Central President Prof. Dr. Akhtiar Ghijmro in a meeting with the Honorable Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani on Saturday.



## Punjab CM's Vision: Multan Open Court Addresses Over 400 Citizen Complaints

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: In line with the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to ensure prompt resolution of public grievances, a large-scale Open Court (Khuli Katcheri) was held in Multan, bringing together senior civil and police Administration officials to address citizens concerns under one roof.

Chairperson of the Chief Minister's Complaints Cell Saima Farooq, presided over the session at Raza Hall. Commissioner Multan Aamir Kareem Khan, Regional Police Officer Usman Gondal, Deputy Commissioner Nauman Siddique, City Police Officer Sadiq Ali Dogar, and heads of various government departments were also present.

More than 400 citizens attended the open forum and submitted complaints relating to land disputes, encroachments, law and order issues, revenue matters, municipal services, and other public service concerns. Officials listened



to complaints directly, while several cases were addressed on the spot through immediate directions to the relevant departments.

Speaking on the occasion, Saima Farooq said that open courts had become an effective platform for strengthening public trust and improving governance. She emphasized that the Punjab government was

committed to ensuring timely redressal of public grievances and that delays in resolving citizens' issues would not be tolerated.

She said the initiative reflects Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision of delivering public services at people's doorsteps and making government institutions more responsive and accessible.

## Humnava Wraps Season 1 with Cinematic Screening and Announces the Journey Will Continue



**News Desk**

HUNZA/LAHORE: Humnava, Pakistan's inaugural global music platform, concluded its first season with a premiere event in Lahore. The platform, co-founded by Xulfi and Muhammad Ibrahim, aims to unite global artists through music, with Season 1 featuring a diverse group of over 30 musicians from Pakistan and abroad participating in a 40-day music camp in Hunza. The finale also marked the release of "Darmaan," the season's closing song, which explores themes of longing and love, filmed in Hunza and featuring various Pakistani and international artists. Xulfi highlighted Humnava's connection to nature as a companion and collaborator, emphasizing its potential to showcase Pakistan's rich musical talent and become a significant global music destination. Season 1 consisted of nine songs, each reflecting a unique location and cultural context, serving as a bridge between people and places. Humnava plans to launch Season 2, continuing its commitment to global collaboration and shared artistic experiences. "Darmaan" is now available on YouTube, Spotify, and other broadcast platforms.

## Digital Health Summit 4.0 Brings Together National Experts to Advance Healthcare Innovation

ISLAMABAD: Shifa Tameer-e-Millat University (STMU), in collaboration with MICD and TISC, hosted Digital Health Summit 4.0, focusing on digital innovation in healthcare. The summit gathered stakeholders to discuss the future of digital healthcare in Pakistan. STMU's Vice Chancellor highlighted the university's commitment to research and digital transformation.

The HEC's Executive Director stressed academia-industry collaboration. Keynote speakers addressed advancements in AI, brain-computer interfaces, and AI/robotics in healthcare. Panel discussions covered digital transformation and preparing healthcare professionals with digital skills, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

An innovation exhibition showcased new healthcare technologies, research, and entrepreneurial ideas, with awards given for top poster presentations and the best exhibitor. The summit successfully promoted digital health and fostered partnerships for Pakistan's healthcare future.

## Awaam Pakistan will continue its struggle against poverty, unemployment, and injustice, Miftah Ismail

**Spokesman Report**

RAWALPINDI: Awaam Pakistan Party Secretary General Miftah Ismail said that Pakistan belongs to all its citizens and that genuine progress cannot be achieved until vulnerable groups, minorities, and marginalized communities are provided with their fundamental rights and access to justice. He stated that Awaam Pakistan would continue its struggle against poverty, unemployment, injustice, and discrimination while working towards a Pakistan where every citizen feels secure and empowered.

The event was hosted by City Organizer Samina Shoab and Azhar Ali Qadri. During the ceremony, Mumtaz Bhatti highlighted the concerns and senti-

ments of the Christian community and drew attention to the challenges faced by minorities in Pakistan. Pastor Asif and Pastor Nasir offered prayers for the prosperity of the country, the nation, and Awaam Pakistan.

Central Vice President Chaudhry Inam Zafar welcomed the guests and thanked them for their participation. He said that after a 42-year political career, he joined Awaam Pakistan because of his trust in the honesty and transparency of Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Miftah Ismail, and Dr. Zafar Mirza. He added that Awaam Pakistan had emerged as an alternative political force committed to ending dynastic politics and corruption. He also informed participants that Azhar Ali Qadri is the Awaam Pakistan-backed representative from Ward 4.



Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almass Ayoub Sabir**  
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**  
 Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Khurram Jaffrani**  
 (jaffrani@adpluse.pk)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
**Head Office:** AIMS Building, Street No. 4, H-8/1, Islamabad.  
 spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com  
**Phone:** +92 51 2227123,  
**WhatsApp** +92 346 5008408  
**Karachi office:** A111, Block C, Gulsha-e-Jamal, PRECHS,  
 Karachi Phone: 021-33399390  
 Email: spokesmankarachi@gmail.com  
**Lahore Office:** 7-E, Samanberg, Johar Town.  
 spokesmanlahore@gmail.com  
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# Trump's Normalization of Lying, Stealing and Distrust

**Qamar Bashir**  
 The most disturbing aspect of the current Iran crisis is not the war itself, nor even the repeated claims that a peace agreement has been reached. The deeper concern is the emergence of a political culture in which three of the most fundamental pillars of civilization—respect for property, commitment to truth, and preservation of trust—appear increasingly vulnerable to political expediency.

In recent weeks, President Donald Trump has repeatedly spoken about Venezuelan oil, Iranian energy resources, and prospective peace agreements in a manner that has generated serious ethical, diplomatic, and constitutional questions. To many observers, the issue is no longer simply about foreign policy. It is about whether stealing, lying, and breaching trust are being normalized and even celebrated as instruments of statecraft.

President Trump has publicly claimed that the United States has made a "fortune" from Venezuelan oil and has suggested that revenues associated with those operations have more than compensated for the costs of the conflict with Iran.

He has also spoken openly about taking control of Kharg Island, the strategic hub through which the overwhelming majority of Iran's oil exports flow. In several remarks, he portrayed such control not merely as a military objective but as an economic opportu-

nity that could generate immense wealth for the United States.

Whether these statements were intended as policy declarations, negotiation tactics, political theater, or rhetorical exaggerations, they carry profound implications. Oil beneath the soil of Venezuela belongs to the Venezuelan people. Oil beneath the soil of Iran belongs to the Iranian people. Those resources are national assets intended to finance development, infrastructure, healthcare, education, and future prosperity. When leaders of powerful nations speak openly about controlling or profiting from those resources, many around the world hear echoes of an earlier age in which might determined ownership and power determined morality.

Critics see something far more troubling. They see a public celebration of conduct that, if performed by an individual rather than a state, would be condemned without hesitation. If a powerful neighbor seized the property of a weaker neighbor and then proudly announced the profits generated from it, few would regard such conduct as ethical. Yet when similar language enters geopolitical discourse, many appear willing to accept it as normal.

The issue extends beyond foreign policy and enters the realm of moral philosophy. Every civilization teaches its

children that stealing is wrong. Every major religious tradition condemns theft. The Ten Commandments leave no ambiguity on the matter: "Thou shalt not steal" is not qualified by military strength, economic necessity, or political advantage. It is a universal principle. The same moral traditions also prohibit bearing false witness and demand honesty in public and private life.

These principles form the ethical foundation upon which stable societies are built.

Yet the controversy surrounding the Iran negotiations raises another concern: truth itself. On June 11, President Trump announced that a peace agreement between the United States and Iran had effectively been reached and would soon be signed. Markets immediately reacted. Investors welcomed what appeared to be the end of a conflict that had threatened global energy supplies, disrupted trade routes, and generated uncertainty across financial markets. Stocks rose and optimism returned.

Within hours, however, Iranian officials challenged that narrative. Tehran insisted that no final agreement had yet been approved and that critical issues remained unresolved. Iranian media subsequently published details of what it claimed were provisions of the draft understanding, many of which differed significantly from the public impression

created by Washington.

The result was confusion. This was not the first time that declarations of imminent breakthroughs had been followed by contradictory developments. Since the conflict began, announcements of progress have repeatedly been followed by delays, disputes, or denials. Each cycle has generated renewed uncertainty in financial markets and among international observers.

Such declarations risk becoming instruments of perception management rather than accurate descriptions of diplomatic reality. Whether one accepts that interpretation or not, the consequences are significant. Markets function on confidence. Democracies function on informed consent. Both require a reasonable degree of confidence that official statements reflect reality.

But there is a third issue that may be even more important than property and truth: trust. Having spent years in diplomacy and public communication, I have observed that trust is the invisible currency that sustains international negotiations. Governments do not negotiate successfully because they like one another. They negotiate successfully because they develop sufficient confidence that commitments will be honored and understandings respected.

One of the most sacred norms of diplomacy is confidentiality during negotiations. Sensitive discussions involving war, peace, sanctions, territorial disputes, and nuclear programs are conducted

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## CEC reserves verdicts on 7 election petitions in GB

The Chief Election Commissioner of Gilgit-Baltistan on Saturday reserved decisions on seven election petitions related to the 2026 Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly elections after the completion of arguments by all parties.

During hearings held at the Election Commission, lawyers representing the petitioners and respondents presented detailed arguments and documentary evidence in support of their positions.

The Chief Election Commissioner reserved judgement on a petition filed by Pakistan People's Party (PPP) candidate and former speaker of the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly, Nazir Ahmed Advocate, from GBA-20 Ghizer-II, seeking re-election. According to Forms 47, 48 and 49 issued for the constituency, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidate Abdul Jahan was declared successful.

A decision was also reserved on a petition filed by PML-N candidate Muhammad Zafar from GBA-19 Ghizer-I, who has sought re-polling in the constituency. Official election results issued through Forms 47, 48 and 49 show Syed Jalal as the returned candidate.

Similarly, the Election Commission reserved its verdict on a petition filed by Aftab Haider, a candidate from GBA-3 Gilgit-III, seeking rechecking of votes and re-polling at certain polling stations. According to the official results, Syed Sohail Abbas was declared the successful candidate from the constituency.

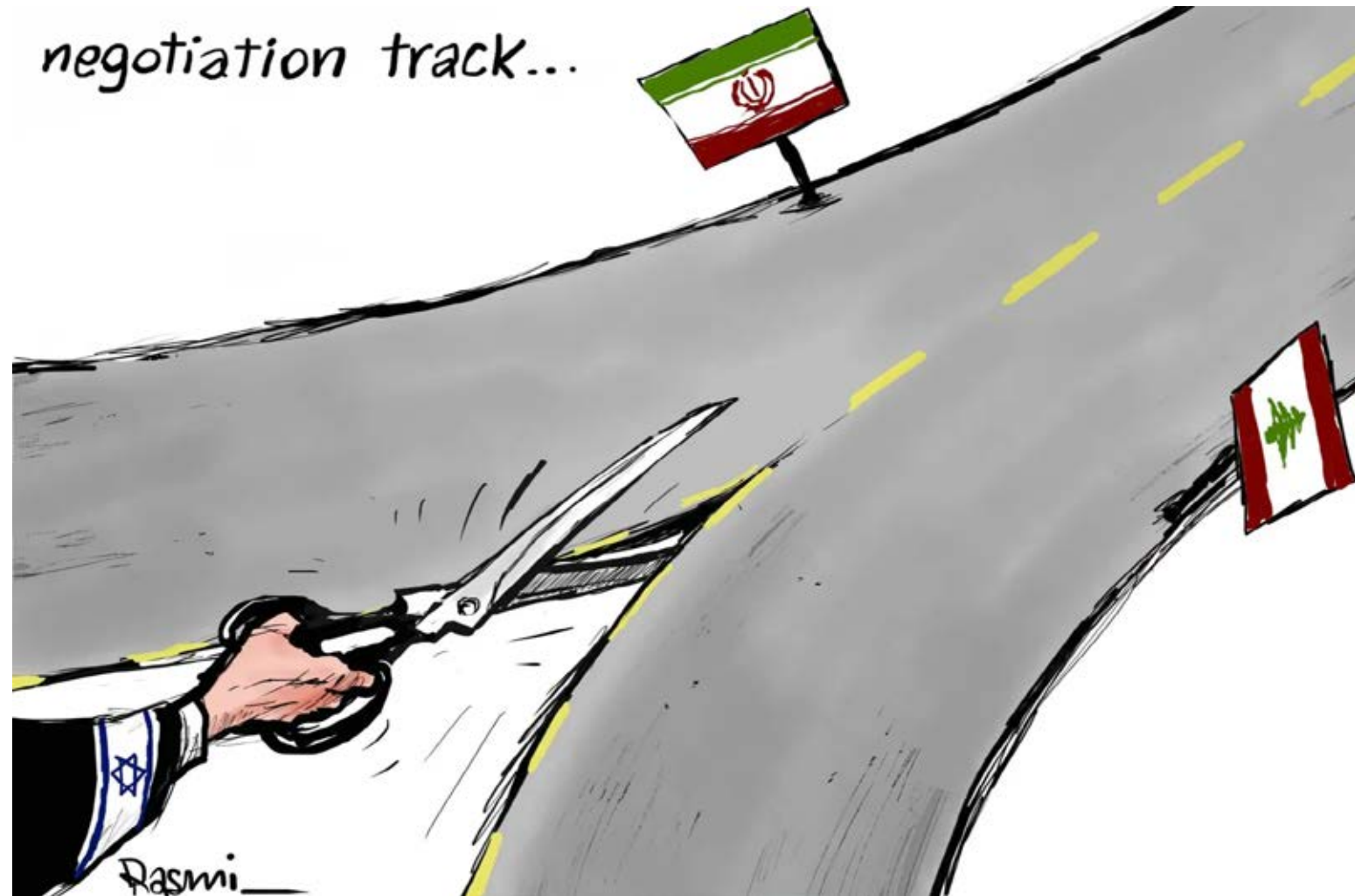
The Chief Election Commissioner also reserved judgement on a petition filed by Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party candidate Wazir Muhammad Khan from GBA-10 Skardu-IV, seeking recount of votes, rechecking and fresh elections. PPP candidate Raja Nasir Ali Khan was declared the winner from the constituency under the official election results.

Another reserved decision relates to an election petition filed by candidate Muhammad Dilpazir from GBA-15 Dimer-I.

In addition, the Election Commission completed hearings on a petition filed by Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen candidate Riaz Akbar from GBA-4 Nagar-I, who challenged the election results and sought a recount of votes and re-election. According to Forms 47, 48 and 49, PPP candidate Zulfiqar Ali was declared successful from the constituency.

The Chief Election Commissioner reserved the verdicts after conducting a detailed review of the arguments, documentary evidence and legal points presented by all parties.

According to Election Commission officials, the reserved decisions are expected to be announced by June 15.



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

## The Need for Understanding Interrogative Psychology in Pakistani Society

Interrogative psychology denotes to the study of questioning behaviour, critical inquiry, curiosity, and the psychological processes involved in seeking information and understanding. In modern societies, the ability to ask meaningful questions is considered a fundamental skill for education, innovation, social development, and democratic participation. In Pakistan, however, cultural, educational, and social factors often discourage critical questioning and independent inquiry. This paper examines the importance of understanding interrogative psychology in Pakistani society and highlights how fostering a culture of inquiry can contribute to educational advancement, social cohesion, mental well-being, and national development.

Questioning is one of the most essential cognitive abilities of human beings. Through questions, individuals acquire knowledge, challenge assumptions, solve problems, and develop critical thinking skills. Interrogative psychology studies the motivations, behaviours, and cognitive mechanisms behind questioning and information-seeking. Understanding this field is particularly important in Pakistan, a country with a population exceeding 255 million people and a rapidly growing youth demographic. Pakistan currently has one of the largest youth populations in the world, creating both opportunities and challenges for national development.

Despite these opportunities, traditional educational and social structures often emphasize rote memorization rather than inquiry-based learning. As a result, many students are encouraged to reproduce information instead of questioning it. Understanding interroga-

tive psychology can help address this issue by promoting curiosity, innovation, and intellectual growth.

Education is one of the most important areas where interrogative psychology can have a transformative impact. Research and educational experts worldwide recognize that critical thinking develops through questioning, analysis, and exploration. However, Pakistan continues to face educational challenges, including literacy concerns and declining participation at higher levels of education. Recent educational reports indicate that student enrolment drops significantly after primary education in several provinces, limiting opportunities for intellectual development.

In many Pakistani classrooms, students hesitate to ask questions due to fear of criticism, authority-based teaching methods, or social pressure. Understanding interrogative psychology can help educators create environments where students feel comfortable expressing curiosity. Such environments encourage deeper learning, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Nations that promote inquiry-based education generally perform better in innovation, scientific research, and technological advancement.

Pakistani society faces complex social challenges, including misinformation, polarization, and the rapid spread of unverified information through digital media. Individuals who possess strong questioning skills are more likely to evaluate information critically before accepting it as true. Interrogative psychology helps explain how people seek information and why some individuals accept information without verification.

By encouraging constructive questioning, society can develop stronger critical thinking abilities. Citizens who ask informed questions are more likely to participate effectively in civic activities, understand public policies, and contribute positively to community development. A questioning mind set also supports democratic values by encouraging accountability and transparency.

Understanding interrogative psychology is also important for mental health. Psychological research in Pakistan has identified significant levels of anxiety and depressive disorders within the population. A systematic review found that the average prevalence of anxiety and depressive disorders in community populations was approximately 34%, with higher rates among women. Financial stress, low education, and social difficulties were identified as major contributing factors.

Healthy questioning enables individuals to reflect on their beliefs, emotions, and experiences. Psychological counselling often relies on guided questioning to help individuals understand their thoughts and behaviours. When people learn to ask reflective questions about themselves and their circumstances, they become better equipped to solve problems, make informed decisions, and seek appropriate support.

Furthermore, Pakistan faces increasing psychological challenges related to climate disasters, displacement, and economic uncertainty. Mental health experts have emphasized the importance of awareness, emotional understanding, and community dialogue in addressing these issues.

Pakistan's future largely depends on its youth population. According to demographic studies, millions of young people will enter the labour force annually over the coming decades.

*Continued on Page 7*

## From Self-Knowledge to God-Knowledge

Human beings are the most beautiful masterpiece in the universe. Allah Almighty has honored them above countless other creations, and in the Holy Qur'an He declares: "Indeed, we created man in the best form" (Qur'an 95:4). This concept of Ahsan Taqvim (the finest form) is not merely a statement about physical beauty; it is also a declaration of humanity's spiritual, moral, and intellectual excellence. When a person reflects upon their own existence, they are in fact observing the signs of their Lord, for the human being is a mirror reflecting Allah's power, wisdom, and love.

Knowing oneself is, in reality, a means of recognizing one's Creator. When a person reflects on their eyes, ears, heart, mind, and entire personality, they begin to witness the artistry and creative perfection of Allah everywhere. Our eyes are not merely instruments of sight; they remind us of a tremendous divine blessing without which the world would be immersed in darkness. Our tongue is not only a means of communication; it is the instrument through which we remember Allah, speak the truth, and spread love and goodness. Thus, reflecting upon our own existence is, in essence, seeking the manifestations of God's power.

The truth is that a human being is not merely a collection of flesh, bones, and blood; rather, they are a manifestation of Allah's will. Allah did not create humanity by chance. He brought mankind into existence through His knowledge, wisdom, and divine decree. Human creation first existed within the divine intention, and then that intention gradually unfolded until

the human being appeared in their present form. Therefore, the true reality of a person is far greater than the physical body. Humanity is a living reflection of Allah's love, wisdom, and purpose.

When a person realizes that their existence is a gift from Allah, they no longer see themselves as insignificant. Instead, they begin to value themselves. Self-respect is not arrogance; it is gratitude for Allah's blessings. The one who honors their existence, refines their character, guards their speech, and improves their actions is, in fact, safeguarding the trust that Allah has placed within them. This is the true demand of Ahsan Taqvim: that a person strives to improve both their outward and inward self.

Ahsan Taqvim is a profound mystery. Its significance extends beyond physical beauty to include spiritual strength and moral steadfastness. The secret of this perfection lies in inner strength. A person should strengthen their soul, determination, and character to such an extent that regardless of circumstances, they remain committed to noble intentions and higher purposes. The one who does not abandon truth and goodness even in times of hardship has truly understood the essence of Ahsan Taqvim.

It was within this very human form that Allah sent His Beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to the world. The human body is so honored that the greatest personality in all of creation lived in this very form. This reality demonstrates how noble and sacred human existence truly is. Therefore, caring for one's body, character, and personality is, in a sense, an expression of love for the Best of Humanity, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Muhammad Asif

# African Day Celebrations Highlight Unity, Pakistan-Africa Ties



**Naveed Ahmad Khan**

ISLAMABAD: African Day was celebrated in Islamabad with full fervour to commemorate the 1963 founding of the Organisation of African Unity, now the African Union. The African Group of

Ambassadors hosted a reception attended by government officials, diplomats, business leaders, and members of civil society. The event showcased traditional music, dance, and cuisine from various African countries. The Tunisian stall emerged as a

special hub, where guests enjoyed authentic dishes and cultural displays. People kept returning to savour the rich flavours, aromas, and hospitality, making it one of the most memorable attractions of the evening. The success of the Tunisian

segment was largely credited to H. E. Dorsaf Maaroufi, Chargé d'Affaires of Tunisia, for her efforts in promoting cultural exchange in Pakistan. H. E. Ammad Rasheed—The Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Tunisia Peshawar

for KP Chapter also participated along with his family promoting & greetings guests at the Tunisian stall during the event. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar, attended as chief guest. The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan, Mr. Atadjan Movlamov, was also present. Ambassadors and High Commissioners from Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe participated, along with representatives of Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Addressing the gathering, Minister Attaullah Tarar underscored Pakistan's commitment to strengthening ties with African nations. He said Pakistan greatly values its relations with Africa, describing the continent as an emerging economic powerhouse with immense potential

for growth and collaboration. Tarar noted that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had issued special instructions to intensify focus on Africa, a directive that led to the launch of Pakistan's "Look Africa Policy," which is progressing successfully. Other speakers highlighted Africa's achievements over six decades in political independence, regional integration, and economic development. They called for deeper Pakistan-Africa linkages, particularly in agriculture, textiles, pharmaceuticals, and information technology—sectors with significant untapped potential. "Pakistan and Africa share historical bonds of solidarity. Today we celebrate not just Africa's past, but its dynamic future," said the Dean of African Ambassadors. He urged Pakistani businesses to explore opportunities under the African Continental Free Trade Area, which covers a

market of 1.4 billion people. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to South-South cooperation. Officials noted that Pakistan's technical assistance programmes and scholarships for African students continue to expand. Bilateral trade between Pakistan and Africa reached \$4.2 billion last year, but both sides agreed the volume can grow manifold with stronger connectivity. Analysts observed that African Day offers Pakistan a chance to diversify exports and investment. With Africa's population projected to double by 2050, stronger linkages in energy, infrastructure, and human resource development are seen as key to mutual prosperity. The celebrations concluded with a renewed message of solidarity and shared aspirations for peace, stability, and sustainable development across the Global South.



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, organised a catalyst conversation titled 'Fiscal Survival or Economic

Reform? Decoding Pakistan's Budget Priorities' on 11 June 2026. The session brought together experts and researchers to examine Pakistan's fiscal priorities and the challenges of moving from crisis management toward structural

economic reform. In his opening remarks, Air Marshal Javaid Ahmed (Retd), President CASS, noted that the budget had assumed particular importance amid global economic uncertainty, regional instabil-

## CASS Organises Catalyst Conversation on Pakistan's Budget and Fiscal Reform

ity, internal political pressures, and security challenges. He stated that the budget would be crucial in determining the government's priorities for the common citizen and Pakistan's economic direction over the next twelve months. The session was moderated by Air Marshal Zahid Mehmood (Retd), Director at CASS, who outlined the session's key aims. The talk was delivered by Dr Usman Chohan, an economist and Research Fellow at the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad. Dr Chohan examined Pakistan's budgetary structure and highlighted persistent fiscal constraints, including reliance on indirect taxation, non-tax revenue measures, and petroleum-related levies. He also discussed the challenge of broadening the tax base by bringing under-taxed sectors and retailers into the formal tax net. He noted that a large share of

government expenditure is absorbed by interest payments, creating a cycle of borrowing and rising debt servicing costs. While public debate often focuses on defence and administrative expenses, he stressed that Pakistan's fiscal imbalance requires a broader examination of debt servicing, revenue generation, and expenditure priorities. Dr Chohan also discussed federal-provincial fiscal relations, noting that large unconditional transfers to provinces place significant pressure on the federal government, while provincial revenue generation remains limited. He argued that meaningful reform would require greater provincial responsibility for revenue mobilisation, including property taxation and other local revenue measures, alongside improved accountability in provincial spending. The discussion also covered Pakistan's broader macroeconomic outlook.

Dr Chohan observed that the country continues to face global uncertainty, energy pressures, weak investment, and dependence on remittances. He cautioned that sustainable growth would require stronger investment, improved productivity, and a shift away from repeated cycles of stabilisation. In his concluding remarks, President CASS thanked the participants and noted that budget-making in Pakistan has traditionally focused on tax collection. He stressed that revenue generation must be supported by stronger expenditure control and rationalisation of spending priorities. While sectors such as health and education require greater attention, public spending has largely remained concentrated on hard infrastructure projects, many of which could be reviewed. He also highlighted the need to clearly define national priorities, particularly energy security, amid a volatile regional environment.

## WHO calls on voluntary donors to save lives

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN: On the occasion of World Blood Donor Day – observed on 14 June – the World Health Organization (WHO) is calling on voluntary donors across Pakistan to give blood to save lives, warning that the country has a deficit of 2.3 million donations a year that is severely limiting the ability of hospitals to save lives. Under the slogan "One Drop of Humanity. Give Blood. Save Lives", this year's global campaign places humanity at the heart of every blood donation, reminding people that donating blood is much more than a medical act. Today, thanks to medical science, a single donation can save up to three lives. WHO estimates that Pakistan's medical facilities need over 5 million blood donations annually, but, as of today, they only receive around 2.7

million donations a year. Only 18% of these donations are voluntary and non-remunerated, with 82% coming from family or replacement donors. "Voluntary blood donors are public health heroes. On World Blood Donor Day, WHO pays tribute to the millions of voluntary, unpaid blood donors whose generosity saves lives every day in Pakistan and across the world. No patient, no mother, no sister, no son or daughter should die because of a lack of access to blood. Today, medical science can save lives more than ever before, but without human solidarity and blood donations, hospitals and their health workers cannot do their job of saving lives. Every donation counts," said WHO Representative in Pakistan Dr Luo Dapeng. WHO encourages all governments and health authorities to invest in robust blood systems that support

voluntary donation, equitable access and safe transfusion practices. Blood transfusions are essential for managing pregnancy-related bleeding, treating severe childhood anaemia, bleeding disorders, infectious diseases and various chronic conditions – including cancers – supporting complex medical and surgical procedures, and providing lifelong care for conditions such as sickle cell disease, thalassemia, hemophilia and immune disorders. They are also critical in emergencies, disasters and conflicts. On World Blood Donor Day, and every day, WHO stands with Pakistan and its health workforce to reinforce the country's blood banks and use standardized blood screening methods and protocols to ensure safe and adequate blood supplies for all, regardless of social or economic status, no matter where they live or who they are.



## NAB Multan Intensifies Action in Gulberg Executive Housing Scheme Mega Fraud Case

**Special Correspondent**

MULTAN: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Multan has issued a detailed press release highlighting significant progress in the investigation of the Gulberg Executive Housing Scheme mega fraud case, including the freezing of assets, declaration of key suspects as proclaimed offenders, and ongoing efforts to arrest

the accused. According to the press release, NAB Multan remains committed to ensuring justice for the victims and recovering the funds allegedly embezzled in the housing scam. The investigation is currently at an advanced stage, with more than 1,800 victims having submitted claims to NAB Multan. The total value of these claims exceeds Rs5 billion.

During the course of the investigation, one of the principal accused, Zain Murtaza, was arrested. Meanwhile, the Accountability Court declared Ghulam Asghar Gormani, a Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) from constituency PP-283, and his brother Faisal Tahseen as proclaimed offenders. NAB Multan stated that several raid operations were

conducted to apprehend the accused and bring them before the law. However, the suspects remain at large and are reportedly absconding abroad, preventing their arrest so far. The bureau further revealed that during court proceedings, land providers Ijaz Sarwar and others admitted before the Accountability Court and the investigating officer that they had received more than Rs1

billion. They also expressed their willingness, through formal applications submitted before the court, either to transfer land equivalent to the amount received or to refund the money. As a result of NAB Multan's continued efforts, the Accountability Court has frozen several movable and immovable properties belonging to the accused during the investigation. The measure aims to safeguard the

possibility of recovering victims' funds in the future. NAB Multan reiterated that it is utilizing all available resources to protect public interests and remains determined to bring all key suspects, including Ghulam Asghar Gormani, before the court of law. The bureau emphasized that every effort will be made to ensure that victims receive compensation and the return

of their allegedly looted investments. The accountability watchdog also affirmed that proceedings in the Gulberg Executive Housing Scheme case are being conducted with complete transparency, impartiality, and in accordance with the law. NAB pledged to continue pursuing the case without fear or favor until justice is delivered to all affected individuals.

## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
172,399.90	169,703.60	
Day's High	Day's Low	
173,093.45	170,946.54	
Index Value	Change	
30,730,700,680	+2696.30	
Percentage	Time	
+1.59%	12 Jun, 2026 4:30 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
10,471.72	+167.84	
Percentage	Time	
+167.84	12 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
51,261.71	+412.96	
Percentage	Time	
+0.81%	12 Jun, 1:27 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
66,020.04	+1,802.77	
Percentage	Time	
+2.81%	12 Jun, 3:45 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	193.79	198.75
Bahrain Dinar	736.75	747.85
Canadian Dollar	197.57	207.05
China Yuan	38.05	38.80
Danish Krone	43.39	43.79
Euro	322.43	328.45
Hong Kong Dollar	35.01	36.01
Indian Rupee	2.80	3.10
Japanese Yen	1.7114	1.8161
Kuwaiti Dinar	886.85	896.99
Malaysian Ringgit	67.05	67.90
New Zealand \$	160.15	164.88
Norwegians Krone	27.88	28.18
Omani Riyal	722.00	732.32
Qatari Riyal	75.04	76.35
Saudi Riyal	74.20	74.80
Singapore Dollar	214.65	219.64
Swedish Korona	30.27	30.57
Swiss Franc	346.94	351.95
Thai Bhat	8.45	8.65
U.A.E Dirham	75.80	76.80
UK Pound Sterling	373.92	378.90
US Dollar	278.45	279.35

# FPCCI lauds govt for presenting pro-business, growth-oriented budget

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) has congratulated the government on presenting a pro-business, growth-oriented federal budget for fiscal year 2026-27. FPCCI President Atif Ikram Sheikh, in a letter to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, expressed appreciation for measures promoting economic growth, investment, exports, documentation, and taxpayer facilitation.

He highlighted the budget's support for exporters with reduced bank markup rates and the withdrawal of the Super Tax. The FPCCI also commended the extension of FTR for IT exports, the removal of Capital Value Tax on foreign assets, rationalization of withholding taxes, the introduction of a Fixed Tax Asaan Scheme for traders, and tax relief for the salaried class.

Additionally, the federation acknowledged the government's efforts in tariff rationalization, economic digitalization, and reforms at the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to enhance transparency and reduce taxpayer harassment. Sheikh stated that these steps are crucial for transforming the economy, especially given the government's limited fiscal space.

He also mentioned FPCCI's collaboration with the economic team, including Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and FBR Chairman Dr. Najeeb Memon, in formulating the budget.

The FPCCI also lauded the Prime Minis-



ter's engagement with the business community and expressed gratitude for an "unparalleled victory" in a May 2025 war with India and Pakistan's mediation role in the US-Iran conflict, assuring collaboration to translate these successes into economic prosperity.

## Inauguration

FAISALABAD: Divisional Commissioner Faisalabad Musarrat Jabeen inaugurating Bar Room for female lawyers at District Bar.



Photo: Online

# PYMA rejects Budget 2026-27, says govt ignored textile trade demands

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association (PYMA) Chairman Saqib Goodluck has termed the Federal Budget 2026-27 an "elitist budget," accusing the government of completely ignoring small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and failing to fulfill longstanding commitments made to the textile trade community.

In a strongly worded statement, Goodluck said PYMA has repeatedly demanded the removal of discriminatory policies that grant privileges to manufacturers and the industrial sector while importers and traders. "Unless this divide is eliminated, equal business opportunities cannot be ensured, and the gulf between trade and



industry will only widen," he warned.

He noted that PYMA had submitted detailed proposals to the government and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) ahead of the budget, urging measures to create a level playing field for all stakeholders. "Regrettably, none of these proposals were considered, leaving traders disappointed once again," he added.

The PYMA chairman demanded that the government honor its pre-budget commitments, extend genuine relief to SMEs, and abolish discriminatory policies between manufacturers and traders. "Only by ensuring equal opportunities across all business sectors can Pakistan's economy and trade truly flourish," he concluded.

# Pakistan's budget 2026-27 is balanced and business-friendly, says Ahsan Bakhtawari

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Patron-in-Chief Azerbaijan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, has described the Federal Budget 2026-27 as a balanced and largely positive budget, stating that the government has introduced several encouraging measures aimed at promoting business activity and improving the investment climate.

In his statement, he said that the relief provided to the real estate sector, particularly on the purchase and sale of property, along

with the reduction in withholding tax, would boost business activity and strengthen investment trends. He added that the reduction in super tax and relaxation in withholding tax are also welcome developments for the business community.

He further stated that tax relief for the salaried class and the reduction in super tax represent positive steps, while incentives for the IT and export sectors are expected to improve exports and create new employment opportunities. According to him, the allocation of PKR 88 billion for the Export Finance Scheme

is commendable; however, further expansion is needed to achieve substantial growth in exports.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that the fixed tax system is a good initiative, but its effective implementation requires a clear mechanism and complete transparency. He emphasized the need for more practical and clearly defined relief measures for small businesses, adding that comprehensive reforms are also necessary to further improve ease of doing business.

He stressed that effective restrictions should be imposed on the import of agro-products to protect local farmers and ensure they receive

# PCJCCI and Sanascendant Launch Real Estate Expo to Boost Pakistan-China Ties

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI), in partnership with Sanascendant Development Group, hosted a briefing for the Sanascendant Real Estate Expo 2026, set for August 28-30, 2026, at ExCeL London. The event aims to showcase Pakistan's real estate investment potential to global investors, foster connections with overseas Pakistanis, and enhance economic cooperation with China under CPEC. Nazir Hussain, President of PCJCCI, highlighted the sector's role in economic growth and the expo's significance for joint ventures, smart infrastructure, and urban

expansion. The expo is envisioned by Sana Fatima, CEO of Sanascendant Development Group, as a bridge to the global investment community, also emphasizing women's leadership in the industry and projecting a positive image of Pakistan. Salahuddin Hanif, Secretary General of PCJCCI, stressed the importance of international collaboration for innovation and market access, noting opportunities in housing, commercial projects, and smart cities driven by CPEC progress. Discussions focused on deepening Pakistan-China cooperation in real estate, urban planning, and sustainable housing, promoting technology transfer and investment.

# Federal Budget for New Fiscal Year Will Ensure Economic Stability: Zubair Tufail

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Zubair Tufail, President of the United Business Group (UBG) and former FPCCI President, lauded the Federal Budget 2026-27 as a guarantor of economic stability, citing improved GDP growth to 3.7%, reduced fiscal deficit, and increased foreign exchange reserves. He praised initiatives like the "Apna Ghar Housing Scheme" and allocations for exports and higher education. However, Tufail urged the government to implement stronger measures for investment, industrial expansion, and export growth, also highlighting the need for effective solutions to the energy crisis and



improvements in the agricultural sector. He welcomed tax reforms, including the abolition of super tax on lower incomes and reduced rates for higher brackets, but stressed the importance of practical implementation for revenue generation. Tufail also expressed concern over the minimal allocation for the K-IV water supply project, warning of further delays for Karachi's residents.

## Hyderabad Chamber welcomes budget positives, demands more for small traders

Commerce Desk

HYDERABAD: Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industries President Muhammad Saleem Memon, Senior Vice President Ahmed Idrees Chohan and Vice President Shan Selghal have expressed their reaction to the federal budget 2026-27 and said that some positive economic and tax reforms have been included in the budget which are welcomed by the business community, however, more concrete and direct steps are needed to solve the problems of small traders, SMEs and small industries.

President Chamber Muhammad Saleem Memon said that the government's move to reduce customs duty, additional customs duty and regulatory duty on raw materials and industrial inputs under the National Tariff Policy 2025-30 reflects an industry-friendly policy.



## Gold prices up by Rs 4,370 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The prices of gold registered a significant increase in the local market on Friday, with 24 karat gold per tola rising by Rs 4,370 to settle at Rs 444,336 compared to Rs 439,966 on the previous trading day, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association.

Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 3,933 to Rs 379,880 from Rs 375,947 whereas 10 grams of 22 karat gold went up by Rs 3,570 to Rs 348,493 against Rs 344,923.

In the international market, the price of gold increased by \$43.70 to \$4,219 per ounce from \$4,175.30.

Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola rose by Rs 200 to Rs 7,279 from Rs 7,079, while the price of 10 grams of silver increased by Rs 171 to Rs 6,199 from Rs 6,028.



fair prices for their produce.

According to him, restricting imports of cotton and other food items, similar to measures taken for wheat and sugar, would not only save valuable foreign exchange but also encourage farmers to remain engaged in agriculture. He urged the government to give special attention to this sector, as it holds immense potential for Pakistan's economic growth.

# Sialkot's Craftsmanship Puts Pakistan on FIFA World Cup Map: British High Commissioner

By Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has already made its mark on the FIFA World Cup through Sialkot's world-class craftsmanship, with match balls produced in the city used in iconic moments of football history.

In an exclusive interview with Pakistan Television for its documentary 'Made in Pakistan: Sialkot to FIFA', British High Commissioner Jane Marriott highlighted the deep connection between Pakistan and the global game.

"Sialkot's footballs have been part of some of the most historic World Cup goals and unforgettable matches," Marriott said. She noted that the city's artisans have supplied official match balls for multiple



The High Commissioner also drew parallels between Pakistani skill directly to the sport's biggest stage.

football infrastructure, pointing to the use of Sialkot-made balls in contemporary stadiums across the UK and North America. She emphasized that this legacy showcases Pakistan's manufacturing excellence and its contribution to a sport followed by billions worldwide.

The documentary explores Sialkot's journey from local workshops to the center of global football production, featuring craftsmen whose stitching has shaped World Cup history.

Trade officials say Sialkot accounts for over 60% of the world's hand-stitched footballs, generating millions in exports annually. The city's role in FIFA events continues to serve as a symbol of 'Made in Pakistan' quality on the international stage.

## Shahzad Azam and Saiba Batool emerge on top in world corporate golf of Lahore region



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Lahore region world corporate golf event was conducted at royal palm golf club on Saturday 13th June. In spite of the blazing sun and hot June conditions expertise loaded golfers and potentially capable golf champions assembled at the royal Palm golf course for a fling and a wonderful opportunity to show their worth. The game and the match teed off early in the morning and the players played as players on stableford format basis. The most interesting aspect was that one lady golfer showed the guts to take part and compete alongside many expertise loaded men. Another highlight was that she played superbly and extreme accuracy was noticeable in all aspects of her superb performance. Her partner Shahzad Azam played equally well and as a pair they emerged on top. Other successful winners were Nasir Irshad and son Qasim Nasir. Placed third were the pair of champion Abdul Islam Nazir and Haseeb Gardezi of pearl continental.

The prize for the longest drive went to the usual winner Abdul Islam Nazir and the prize for nearest to the pin was won by Haseeb Gardezi. A great championship that is wonderful for corporate golf. Final of the event to be held in Islamabad and the winning pair goes off to Beijing for a grand end.

## Sialkot's footballs find their way to the world's biggest stage

By Muhammad Shafique Raja / Muhammad Qadeer Yousaf

As the FIFA World Cup 2026 rolls into action Thursday night in North America with 48 teams competing across three co-host nations for the first time, the footballs at the centre of the action carry a story that stretches back to the workshops of a Pakistani city thousands of miles away. That city is Sialkot.

In a modest workshop in this northeastern Punjab city, 48-year-old Ghulam Qadir carefully examined the final stitches on a football destined for export. He could not say where the ball would eventually land. It may reach a school team in Europe, a professional club in South America, or perhaps a stadium hosting one of football's greatest occasions. For Ghulam Qadir, however, the destination has never been the point.

"My father taught me this craft, and I have devoted my life to it," he said. "Whenever I watch an international football match, I feel proud knowing that a ball made by Pakistani workers could be part of the action."

But Ghulam Qadir's aspirations for the next generation tell a story of an industry in transition. He does not want his son to follow him into hand-stitching. He wants him to master the technology that now drives football manufacturing forward.

"This craft gave our family a livelihood," he said. "But I want my son to understand the machines, the

computers, the modern side of this industry. That is where the future lies." Ghulam Qadir's story reflects that of thousands of skilled workers in Sialkot, a city that has become synonymous with football manufacturing and earned global recognition for producing some of the world's finest footballs. Located in northeastern Punjab, Sialkot has long been the heart of Pakistan's sports goods industry. What began as a small cottage industry decades ago has grown into a major export-oriented sector supplying footballs and other sporting equipment to countries around the globe.

Industry leaders say Sialkot's success lies in its ability to blend traditional skills with modern manufacturing techniques.

Modern football manufacturing in Sialkot involves sophisticated processes including computer-aided design, precision cutting, thermo-bonding technology and rigorous quality testing. Each football undergoes a series of inspections to ensure compliance with international specifications relating to weight, shape, durability and performance.

Despite technological advancements, the human touch remains central to the industry's success. Workers like Ghulam Qadir spend years mastering their craft, ensuring every panel is perfectly aligned and every stitch contributes to the ball's performance. Their expertise has helped Sialkot establish itself as one of the world's leading football manufacturing hubs.

The industry has also played a significant role in Pakistan's economy. Economy journalist Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Wani said the sports goods industry holds significant potential to contribute to Pakistan's broader economic development.

"Pakistan, particularly Sialkot, enjoys a global reputation for producing high-quality footballs and other sporting equipment used in international events," Dr. Wani said. "The sector not only earns valuable foreign exchange but also creates



employment opportunities and supports small and medium-sized enterprises. By investing in modern technology, improving product quality, diversifying export markets and promoting sports manufacturing clusters, Pakistan can further enhance the sector's contribution to economic growth. With the right policies and support, sports goods can become an even stronger driver of exports, industrial development and national prosperity."

For former Pakistan Football Federation Secretary and ex-captain national team Col (ret'd) Mujahid-ullah Tareen, the pride runs deeper than economics.

"A football is not just equipment. It

is the soul of the game," Tareen said.

"The fact that Pakistani footballs are used on the world's biggest stages, including the World Cup, is a source of immense national pride. Every stitch on a Sialkot football carries the dedication of workers who may never see the stadiums their balls reach, but whose contribution to world football is undeniable."

However, the industry is not without challenges. Rising production costs, increasing competition from other manufacturing countries, fluctuating raw material prices and changing market demands continue to test manufacturers and exporters. Industry experts say maintaining competitiveness will require continued investment in technology, workforce development and sustainable manufacturing practices.

Many manufacturers have already begun adopting environmentally friendly production methods, a direction aligned with global trends as the TRIONDA itself is produced using recycled materials. Others are investing in research and development to improve quality and efficiency.

Yet despite all the technological progress and international recognition, the industry's true strength remains its people.

"When people watch a football match, they rarely think about where the ball was made," Ghulam Qadir said. "But for us, every football represents the skill and hard work of Pakistani workers. That is where our pride lies and that will never change."

## Pakistan Women ready for Indian challenge in Birmingham, says Fatima Sana

By Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Captain Fatima Sana has said that the team is ready for the Indian challenge in their first game of the ICC Women's T20I World Cup.

Addressing the pre-match press conference at Birmingham, she said that the pressure match against India demanded of us to maintain calm and absorb the pressure. Pakistan Women are due to play their first game of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 against India in Birmingham. Pakistan are placed in Group 1 alongside Australia, South Africa, Bangladesh, India, and Netherlands.

On the expectation from the World Cup, she said that hoped to do well in this world cup as a unit, adding that execution of plans was very important and the team will try to execute better plans in this World Cup.

On the injury scare to captain Fatima Sana during the nets, the Pakistan Women's captain said that a shot from the bat of Ayesha (Zafar) Baaji hit her in the knee but she was fine and will play the important fixture against India tomorrow.

To a query, Fatima Sana said that the team has been in England for the past two weeks and they have acclimatized well for the tournament, adding that they play a series in Ireland in similar conditions as well prior to arriving in England and Wales.

On the future of Women cricket in Pakistan, Fatima Sana hailed ICC for granting hosting rights to Pakistan for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2028, adding that it will help in more popularity for cricket among girls.

"More and more parents are accepting their daughters play cricket back home today,



she added.

On cricket's popularity among girls, Fatima Sana's answer was in the affirmative and she said that more and more girls were taking cricket as professional sport today. She said it had happened because the parents were supporting their daughters like never before.

Fatima Sana said that Pakistan cricket has a good fan base in Birmingham, and she expected a good crown in tomorrow's game against India. "We have played really good cricket in the recent past and I expect a lot of support in the ground tomorrow," she responded.

On the morale in the Birmingham game, Fatima Sana said her own performance has been really good at the venue as played good cricket in the last Commonwealth Games here. "I think our whole team is used to these conditions because some of the girls are playing already here and we have good senior players who can execute their plans," she said.

Fatima Sana said the cricket fans at Birmingham support good cricket and hopefully more and more people will turn up tomorrow.

## From Self-Knowledge to God-Knowledge

Continued from Page 4

Whoever refines themselves, maintains cleanliness, adopts noble manners, and beautifies their character is following the Prophetic example.

A person should prepare themselves like a beautiful gift, for one day they will stand before their Lord. This worldly life is a field of preparation. Through our actions, morals, and character, we prepare ourselves for that ultimate meeting. The finest gifts are always presented with care, and the most precious gift one can present before Allah is a pure heart, a noble character, and a refined soul. This is why it is often said, "Give as a gift what you yourself would cherish." If a person does not value themselves or strive for self-improvement, how can they hope to present themselves as a beautiful trust before their Creator?

This world is temporary, and one day every human being will return to the earth. Yet for a believer, returning to dust is not annihilation but the beginning of a new life. When a believer's body merges with the soil, it is honored by that connection. It is narrated in Islamic tradition that the grave of a believer can become one

of the gardens of Paradise. Thus, when a person beautifies both their outward and inward being, the effects of that refinement continue even beyond death, illuminating their resting place with spiritual light.

Both outward and inward purification are essential. Some people believe that purity of heart alone is sufficient, but Islam teaches the importance of both external cleanliness and internal purity. If outward cleanliness were unimportant, ablution (wudu) would not have been made obligatory. The command to purify the body before standing in the presence of Allah indicates that the body and soul are deeply connected. The soul resides within the body, and beautifying and purifying this garment enhances the beauty of the soul itself.

Allah created human beings from clay, but this is no ordinary clay. It is clay infused with the resonance of life and the fragrance of love. A person's speech, character, smile, and behavior all reveal the beauty hidden within this earthly origin. When a person lives with kindness, sincerity, and noble manners, a spiritual fragrance emanates from them, winning hearts and inspiring others. This is the true beauty of human greatness.

O human being! You are the guardian of your own existence. Your body, your soul, your heart, and your abilities are all trusts from your Lord. The right of a trust is that it be protected, preserved, and returned in the best possible condition. Developing your talents, refining your character, elevating your conduct, and illuminating your soul through the remembrance of Allah are all part of fulfilling this responsibility.

Ultimately, the reality becomes clear: valuing yourself is, in fact, valuing the gift bestowed by the Almighty. The person who recognizes the signs of Allah within themselves no longer sees themselves as insignificant. Instead, they live with gratitude, love, and responsibility. They understand that their existence is not a random occurrence but a manifestation of the wisdom, love, and purpose of the Lord of the worlds.

A person who lives with this awareness discovers the secret of Ahsan Taqdim. Their life becomes illuminated by self-knowledge, knowledge of God, and love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Through this journey, they come to understand who they truly are, why they were created, and how deeply they are connected to their Creator.

## The Need for Understanding Interrogative Psychology in Pakistani Society

Continued from Page 4

This demographic trend presents a significant opportunity for economic growth if young people are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge.

Innovation begins with questions. Scientific discoveries, technological inventions, and entrepreneurial ventures all emerge from curiosity and inquiry. Interrogative psychology can help policymakers and educators understand how to cultivate innovative thinking among young Pakistanis. Encouraging students to ask "why," "how," and "what if" can foster creativity and prepare them for participation in the global knowledge economy.

Interrogative psychology offers valuable insights into how individuals seek knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, and

engage with society. In Pakistan, understanding and promoting healthy questioning behaviour is essential for improving education, strengthening social awareness, supporting mental health, and empowering youth. Given Pakistan's large and growing population, fostering a culture of inquiry can contribute significantly to national progress and sustainable development.

Educational institutions, policymakers, parents, and community leaders should work together to encourage curiosity and constructive questioning. By embracing the principles of interrogative psychology, Pakistan can cultivate a generation of informed, innovative, and critically thinking citizens capable of addressing the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The writer is an accomplished psychologist from NUST

## Trump's Normalization of Lying, Stealing and Distrust

Continued from Page 4

privately for a reason. Premature disclosure can derail progress, embarrass negotiating partners, and create political pressures that make compromise more difficult.

The accepted diplomatic practice is straightforward. Negotiators work through disagreements behind closed doors. Draft texts remain confidential until finalized. Once consensus is achieved, representatives of both governments jointly announce the agreement. This process

protects the integrity of negotiations and preserves trust between the parties.

The repeated pattern witnessed during the Iran negotiations appears to move in the opposite direction. Before agreements are finalized, public declarations are made. Before negotiating partners have completed internal consultations, details are discussed publicly. Before joint announcements can occur, one side seeks to shape the narrative through media appearances and political messaging.

From a diplomatic perspective, such conduct can be viewed as a breach of trust. When one party repeatedly announces outcomes before they are formally accepted by the other side, confidence erodes. Negotiators become cautious. Communication becomes more difficult. Suspicion replaces cooperation. Agreements that might otherwise succeed become vulnerable to misunderstanding and political backlash.

Trust, once lost, is extraordinarily difficult to restore. The

broader concern is that these three developments—celebrating the acquisition of foreign resources, making claims that are subsequently disputed, and undermining the confidentiality of negotiations—are interconnected. Together they create an impression that power has become more important than principle, that narrative has become more important than truth, and that immediate political advantage has become more important than long-term credibility.

History teaches a different lesson. Great nations are not defined solely by their military strength or economic power. Empires have risen and fallen throughout history. What distinguishes enduring civilizations is their commitment to principles even when circumstances make it tempting to abandon them. Respect for property, respect for truth, and respect for trust are not signs of weakness. They are the foundations upon which stable societies, successful economies, and credible governments are

built. The debate surrounding Iran, Venezuela, sanctions, oil, and diplomacy will eventually pass. Markets will recover. Agreements will be signed or abandoned. Political leaders will come and go.

But the ethical questions raised by this episode will remain. Can power justify possession? Can political advantage justify deception? Can diplomacy succeed without trust?

The answers to those questions will shape not only the future of American foreign policy but

also the moral character of the international order itself. For if stealing becomes a virtue, truth becomes optional, and trust becomes disposable, then the damage extends far beyond any single negotiation. It reaches into the very foundations of civilized society.

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 Michigan, USA

## World Blood Donor Day

LAHORE: Traffic police personnel donating blood at Sundas Foundation in the Provincial Capital on the eve of World Blood Donor Day is celebrated annually on June 14 to raise awareness about the need for safe blood and thank voluntary, unpaid donors for their life-saving gifts.

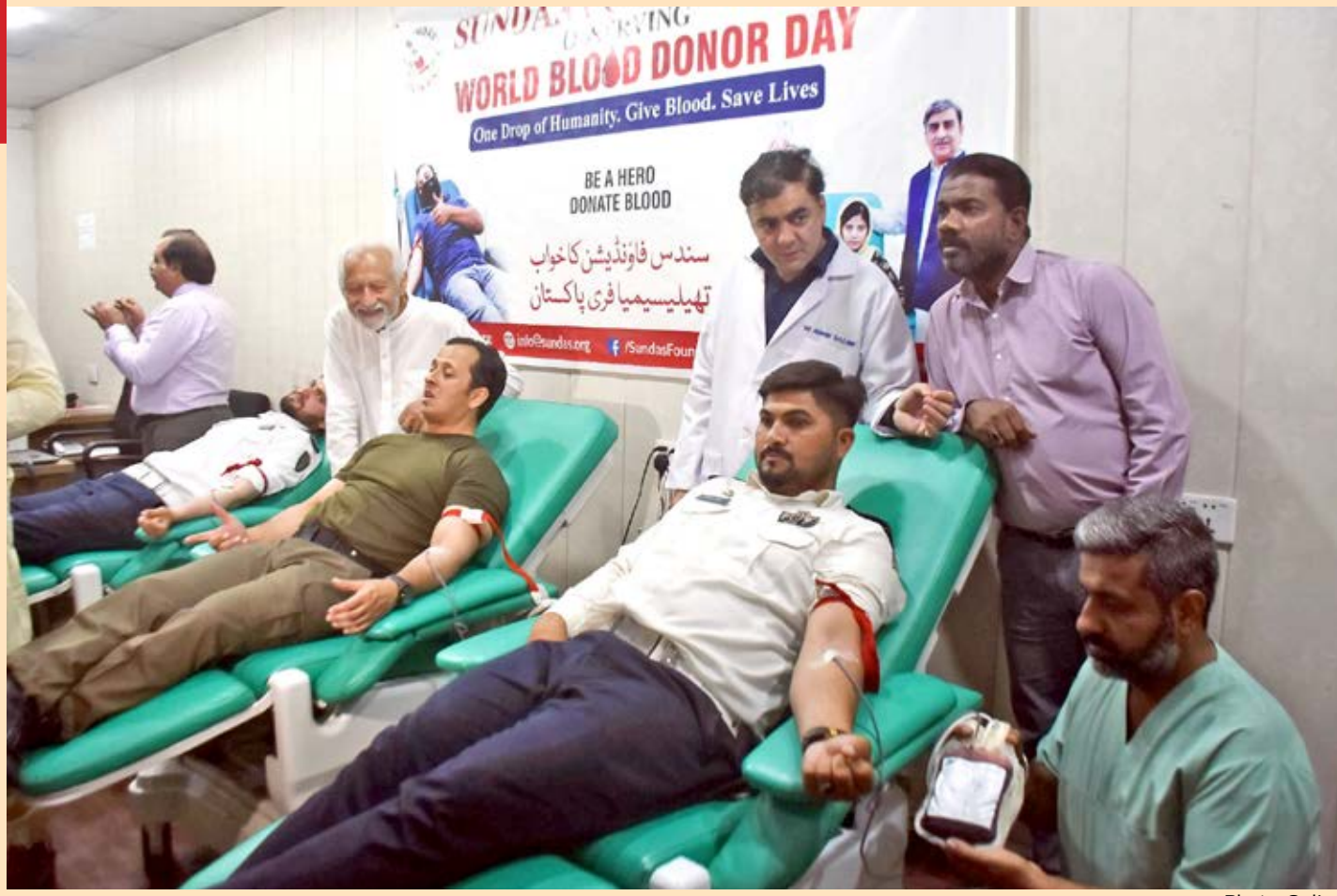


Photo: Online

Pakistan Security Forces  
Neutralize top Indian-  
sponsored militant leaders

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: In continuation of series of intelligence based operations being conducted by Security Forces, multiple Khwarijs' locations were engaged in general area Miran Shah and surroundings in North Waziristan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Following fierce fire exchanges, in last seventy two hours, twenty one more khwarji belonging to Indian-sponsored Fitna-al-Khwarji including four khwarji



Ring leaders (Kharji Khalid Raza alias Salar, Kharji Muftoon, Kharji Musa and

Kharji Imran alias Ayan) have been sent to hell, thereby causing a significant blow to

the khwarijs' network operating in the area. Killed Kharji Ring leaders were highly wanted for their involvement in numerous terrorist activities including killing of security forces personnel and innocent civilians. So far, in total, forty eight khwarji have been killed in these highly skillful and precise operations.

Weapons and ammunition have also been recovered from killed Indian sponsored Khwarji, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities and killing

of innocent civilians.

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

PM says Iran-US peace  
deal nears finalization  
within 24 hours

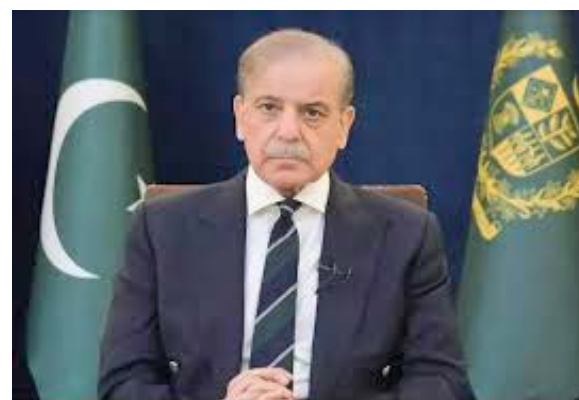
City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Saturday, said that Pakistan was close to a peace deal between Iran and the United States, as its finalization was likely within the next 24 hours.

Expressing confidence, the prime minister described the development as a historic milestone that would lay a strong foundation for lasting peace and stability across the region. On his X handle, the prime minister posted, "We are closer to a peace deal than

ever before. With finalisation likely expected in the next 24 hours, Pakistan is preparing for the electronic signing of the peace deal immediately after, followed by technical-level talks next week."

He also thanked the United States of America and the



Islamic Republic of Iran for their ongoing commitment during the negotiations, and extended sincere appreciation to their brothers in the region

for their support.

"We are confident that this historic peace deal will form a strong foundation for lasting peace," he added.

DPM/FM Dar reviews  
progress on steps for  
first closing of PIAC  
Ltd. divestment

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Saturday, chaired a committee meeting to review progress on steps required to complete the first closing of the divestment of Pakistan International Airlines Corporation Limited.

The DPM/FM chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Privatization (CCoP), the DPM Office said in a press release. The meeting was attended by the Ministers for Power, Commerce, Advisor to PM on Privatization, SAPM Tariq Bajwa, Secretaries Privatization, Planning, Cabinet and senior officials from the concerned ministries. The meeting considered matters related to the Federal Board of Revenue and requests submitted by the purchaser under the transaction framework.

Necessary decisions were taken to further advance the privatization process.

Kashmir Government  
Cracks Down on Public  
Action Committee  
Supporters

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir has decided against those supporting the Public Action Committee, shops will be sealed and cases will be registered against the accused criminals.

The Azad Kashmir government has decided to further intensify action against activities in support of the banned Public Action Committee.

According to official sources, action will be taken against all such traders, transporters, companies and businessmen by Monday who allegedly shutter down or suspend business activities in support of the Public Action Committee.

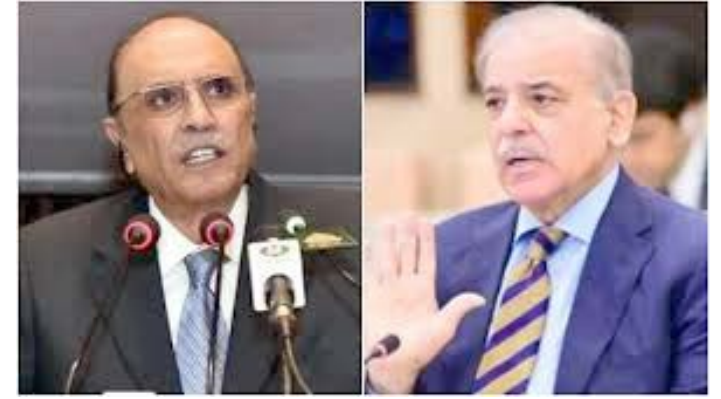
Officials say that cases will be registered against the elements who

supported the protest activities or lock-down under the Anti-Terrorism Act, while in some cases it has also been decided to seal shops and business centers.

According to sources, the administration will appeal to traders and transporters to open businesses in the first phase, however, immediate legal action will be taken in case of non-compliance.



Official officials have clarified that all measures are being taken within the ambit of the law and complete protection will be provided to citizens.

President, PM commend  
security forces for  
eliminating 21 terrorists  
in N. Waziristan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Saturday, commended the security forces for successful operations against Fitna al Khwarji terrorists in different areas of North Waziristan, including Miran Shah.

The president appreciated the professional capabilities and valour of the security forces in eliminating several terrorists, President Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release.

He observed that the eradication of terrorists' leaders of Fitna al Khwarji, active with the Indian backing, had

been a huge success against the terrorist network.

The president reiterated that the entire nation stood firmly with its brave security forces.

According to a press release of PM Office Media Wing, the prime minister, appreciating the security forces, said that 21 terrorists, including four most wanted figures of Indian proxy Fitna al Khwarji, had been killed during these operations.

Under the vision of Azme-Istehkam, the security forces had been achieving major successes in the fight against terrorism, he said, adding that operations against terrorists would continue till complete elimination of terrorism.

Child Sexual  
Exploitation by  
Fitnah-al-Khawarij  
Exposed in Palangzai,  
North Waziristan

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: In North Waziristan's Palangzai area, the banned Fitnah-al-Khawarij outfit has been systematically sexually exploiting children.

A minor boy, Ikramullah, rescued by the Pakistan Army, bravely exposed the abuse. He detailed being subjected to continuous sexual assault by terrorists after his father's death, starting at their Manzar

Khel base and later continuing in Palangzai within a mosque.

Three to four other young children were also held captive and similarly abused, with most perpetrators being of Afghan nationality.

Social experts have strongly condemned these abhorrent acts, particularly the desecration of mosques, emphasizing that such an entity, involved in civilian massacres and child abuse, deserves no legal leniency.

DPM/FM Dar, Swiss FM  
hope ongoing efforts to  
yield regional peace

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Saturday, spoke with Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis.

Welcoming the encouraging progress towards an understanding between the United States and Iran, they expressed hope that ongoing efforts would soon contribute to peace and stability in the region, the



Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

Both sides agreed to remain in close contact.

Budget 2026-27 focused  
on relief, growth & public  
welfare: Bilal Kiyani

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Budget 2026-27, presented by Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kiyani, prioritizing relief, growth, and public welfare. It targets tax reductions for the salaried class, businesses, exporters, and homeowners, as well as vulnerable groups. Key measures include significant tax burden reduction for various income levels, decreased minimum and overall taxes for exporters, abolition of the first six slabs of super tax,

and a reduced super tax rate for high earners. The budget also extends GST exemptions to women's reproductive health products and the shipping industry. It enhances export financing, housing initiatives, and funding for the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). Kiyani emphasized that these measures stem from extensive stakeholder consultations and aim to foster employment, industrial growth, exports, and improve public purchasing power following a stabilization phase.