



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے اسٹیل نے بیان کیا، کچھ سے لام
مالک نے بیان کیا، ان سے ابو الزناد نے، ان
سے اعراب نے اور ان سے ابو ہریرہ رضی اللہ
عنه نے کہ نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا
قیامت قائم ہوگی یہاں تک کہ ایک شخص
دوسرے کی قبر کے پاس سے گزرے گا اور
کے گناہ کاوش! میں اس کی نگہ نہ ہوتا۔
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 7115)

Barkat Rice Mills
(Pvt) Limited

NA speaker shares party-wise speaking time in Budget 2026-27 debate

National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said the ongoing budget debate for the next financial year has crossed 32 hours and was expected to reach around 40 hours by the end of the day. Addressing the House, he provided a detailed breakdown of speaking time used by different political parties during the Budget 2026-27 discussion.



Bride's plea moves AJK Police: SSP orders humanitarian review of fiancé's detention case

An unusual human-interest development emerged in Mirpur amid an ongoing security crackdown linked to the banned Jammu and Kashmir Awami Action Committee, when a young woman appealed to authorities for the release of her fiancé, drawing public attention to the case.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Muharram-ul-Haram 2, Thursday, June 18, 2026

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Called on

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in on Wednesday.



Photo: Online

Bilawal thanks PM Shehbaz for supporting PPP in formation of GB government

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Wednesday thanked Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for his support in government formation in Gilgit-Baltistan.

During a meeting at the Prime Minister's House in Islamabad, both leaders also discussed bilat-

eral political cooperation and coordination between the ruling coalition partners.

Bilawal appreciated Pakistan's positive contribution to a US-Iran peace agreement, and lauded the prime minister's diplomatic engagement. The two leaders also held talks on budget-related matters and the prevailing situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

PPP leaders Sherry Rehman and Naveed Qamar and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Azam Nazeer Tarar, Ahsan Iqbal were also present.

Meanwhile, Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Election Commissioner Raja Shabbaz Khan on Wednesday announced the long-pending verdicts on three election petitions, handing the PPP a boost

by confirming 11 seats in the GB assembly.

The election chief declared PPP candidate Attaullah Khan the winner from GBA-16 Diamer-II, while upholding Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) victories in GBA-17 and GBA-13 Astor-I.

The decisions followed petitions filed by rival candidates

challenging Form-47 results. After hearing arguments from both sides, the chief election commissioner had earlier suspended the disputed results and reserved his verdict before issuing the final ruling on Wednesday. With the latest notification, PPP now holds 11 seats in the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly, followed by PML-N with six seats.

UK and Pakistan Forge Deeper Security, Migration Partnership

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the United Kingdom have agreed to enhance their cooperation in security, law enforcement, and migration.

During a high-level meeting in Islamabad, British Deputy Foreign Secretary Hamish Falconer praised Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace, particularly its efforts to de-escalate tensions between the US and Iran.

He commended Pakistan's leadership for their "historic role"



in fostering stability. Pakistani Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi highlighted the success of the Upskill Project in strengthening institutional capacity and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to international partnerships.

Both sides agreed to expand collaboration on counter-terrorism, combating illegal migration, institutional development, and police training.

A particular focus will be placed on addressing fraudulent student visas. Naqvi emphasized Pakistan's firm stance against illegal migration and human

trafficking networks.

He also raised concerns about terrorist organizations operating from Afghan territory, urging the Afghan government to prevent its soil from being used for attacks against Pakistan. Both nations reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening existing ties and deepening cooperation across various sectors for mutual benefit.

The meeting was attended by several Pakistani ministers and senior officials, as well as the British High Commissioner to Pakistan.

Sindh Unveils Rs3.56 Trillion Budget: No New Taxes, Salary Hikes, and a Boost for Green Tech

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presented a Rs3.56 trillion budget for fiscal year 2026-27, featuring no new taxes and a 7% salary/pension increase for government employees. The budget includes a Rs400 billion development program, aiming for fiscal stability and public welfare. Ad hoc relief allowances will be merged into

salaries, and the minimum wage will rise to Rs43,000. The budget is guided by constitutional rights, fiscal sustainability, national stability, and public welfare. Opposition lawmakers boycotted the presentation due to lack of consultation and representation concerns for urban Sindh. The province plans to establish the Sindh International Financial Centre in Karachi to foster infrastructure, Islamic, and climate

finance, and attract investment in data centers, AI, and green digital technologies. Ketu Bandar is slated for transformation into a global hub, connecting with Dhabeji SEZ and Thar.

A significant solar initiative will distribute 275,000 free solar home systems and offer subsidized financing. The social sector receives Rs13.2 billion for protection packages, including kitchen gardens and agricultural

worker programs. Special relief is planned for education, agriculture, insurance, and employment sectors, with reduced sales tax on educational services. The government completed one million homes for flood victims and enhanced infrastructure, including ambulance networks and schools. Significant contributions are earmarked for national stability, while safeguarding Sindh's interests in the

National Finance Commission Award. Despite fiscal constraints reducing the development portfolio to Rs400 billion, investments in infrastructure, industry, and employment will continue. Major infrastructure projects like Shahrah-e-Bhutto are highlighted for improved connectivity. The budget aims to build a modern economy driven by investment, technology, renewable energy, and inclusive growth.

PM Shehbaz to leave for Switzerland as Pakistan delegation arrives for US-Iran MoU signing



News Desk

A Pakistani advance delegation has arrived in Switzerland ahead of the signing ceremony of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the United States and Iran, diplomatic sources said on Wednesday.

According to sources, the advance delegation departed for Switzerland a day earlier to make preparations for Pakistan's participation in the high-profile diplomatic event. The delegation includes senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant government departments.

Sources said Foreign Secretary Amina Baloch has also left for Switzerland and will join

the Pakistani delegation ahead of the ceremony.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is expected to depart for Switzerland on Thursday to attend the event, sources added. Pakistan's delegation is scheduled to participate in the formal signing ceremony, which is being viewed as a significant diplomatic development in efforts to ease tensions and promote dialogue in the region.

According to diplomatic sources, the signing ceremony of the US-Iran MoU will be held on June 19 in the Swiss resort town of Bürgenstock, which has hosted several high-level international conferences and diplomatic engagements in recent years.

Federal Budget offers significant relief to salaried class and businesses

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: MNA Bilal Farooq Tarar praised the federal budget for providing relief to the salaried class, businesses, and the real estate sector. Key measures include changes in income tax slabs, removal of a surcharge, abolition of super tax on businesses, and tax reductions for real estate. Incentives for IT and financial export sectors, along with lower tax rates on exports and exemptions for cancer medicine raw materials, were also highlighted. Tarar lauded Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and COAS General Asim Munir for their role in

a US-Iran peace agreement, improving Pakistan's international standing. Domestically, he noted the budget's relief measures despite fiscal pressures, the absence of new taxes, and significant allocations for hydropower projects like Dasu and Diamer-Bhasha dams, emphasizing the link between water resources, agriculture, and the economy. He urged political unity on national security and water issues, transcending party and provincial divides. Tarar credited the Prime Minister, COAS, Deputy PM Ishaq Dar, and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi for recent diplomatic and governance successes.

Pakistan facilitating repatriation of 30 Iranian nationals: Dar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is facilitating the repatriation of

30 Iranian nationals, including fishermen rescued at sea and crew members recently interdicted by US authorities. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar wrote on X that the group included eight Iranian fishermen who were rescued at sea by the British vessel MMA Valour after their boat ran aground. It also includes 22 Iranian crew members from the vessel Lenore/Davina, which was recently interdicted by US authorities.

Both groups are expected to transit through Karachi in the coming days, he added.

Dar said that Pakistan remained in close coordination with the Iranian, US, and UK authorities to ensure the safe transit and early return of the Iranian nationals to their homeland.

He reiterated that Pakistan was committed to humanitarian cooperation and to extending every possible assistance to its Iranian brothers.



30 Iranian nationals, including fishermen rescued at sea and crew members recently interdicted by US authorities. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar wrote on X that the group included eight Iranian fishermen who were rescued at

Chairman Gillani Champions Digital Governance with New Senate Mobile App

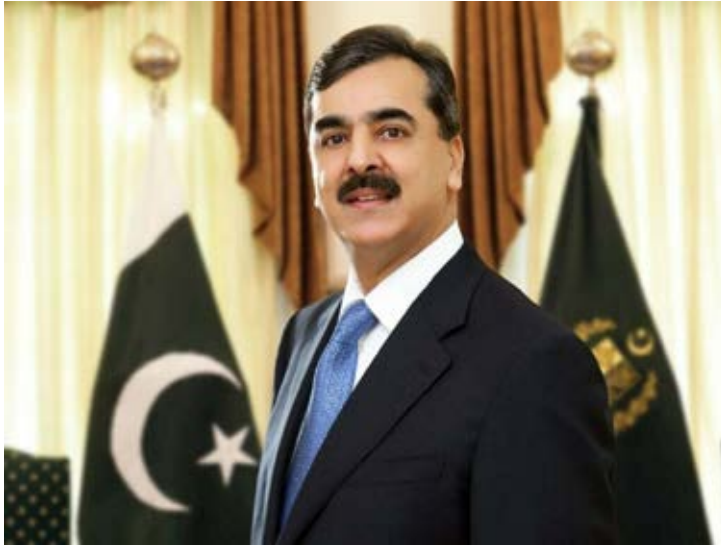
Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Secretariat, under the leadership of Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, is introducing a comprehensive mobile application for senators.

This initiative aims to foster digital governance, enhance administrative efficiency, promote transparency, and provide timely access to information. Developed using the Secretariat's own resources and expertise, the app signifies a commitment to innovation, self-reliance, and the effective use of public funds.

Chairman Gillani emphasized that digitalization is crucial for modernizing the parliamentary institution, making it more effective and environmentally friendly.

The app, slated for official inauguration soon, will offer senators secure and convenient access to parliamentary affairs, legislative matters,



committee information, official notifications, and meeting schedules via their mobile devices.

Unique features are incorporated to streamline communication and information access. The initiative

aligns with the broader e-Office system objective, aiming to reduce paper usage, minimize administrative delays, and contribute to environmental sustainability.

A comprehensive training session will follow the inauguration to ensure senators can fully utilize the app's functionalities.

The Senate Secretariat remains dedicated to adopting technological advancements and sustainable management practices to meet evolving governance needs.

The meeting reviewing the app's progress was attended by Chairman Gillani, Secretary Senate Syed Hasnain Haider, and several senators and senior officials. The meeting was attended by Senator Nasir Mahmood Butt, Senator Aamir Waliuddin Chishti, Senator Abdul Qadir, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri and senior officers of the Senate Secretariat.

AJK Election Commission Deploys Deputy Commissioner for Nomination Paper Scrutiny

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission (AJKC) has sent Deputy Election Commissioner-in-Charge to receive and examine nomination papers related to Jala 05 constituencies of Raulakot district Poonch. While the previously appointed returning officers of the Jalam constituencies, Sahebans, were carrying out election-related matters as usual. According to the Election Commission, this decision was taken to ensure a timely and transparent conduct of the election process under the current circumstances so that candidates can submit their nomination papers and participate in the process. coins to provide essential facilities. Persons wishing to participate in the election from District Poonch are informed about the execution, receipt and verification of nomination papers and other related matters related to the details of the election. Contact the House President.



AJK Assembly Approves Key Ordinances, Bills for Governance Boost

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Several important ordinances and bills were presented and approved during a meeting of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Legislative Assembly held under the chairmanship of Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar.

Senior Most Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Mian Abdul Waheed Advocate, introduced The Quran Trust (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026, which was unanimously passed by the House. On behalf of the Law Minister, The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Finance (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026 was also presented. Members including Chaudhry Qasim Majid, Khawaja Farooq Ahmed and Hafiz Hamid Raza participated in the proceedings.

The Law Minister further introduced The MIMS University of Allied Health Sciences and Technologies Act, 2026 and The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Ehtesab Bureau (Eighth Amendment) Act, 2026, both of which were referred to the relevant Standing Committee for further consideration.

Under Rule 143(4) of the Legislative Assembly Rules, the House unanimously passed several bills, including the Civil Servant Contributory Pension Fund Act, 2026, Protection of Agricultural Land (Amendment) Act, Superior Courts Code Dress and Mode of Address (Amendment) Act, 2026, Service Tribunal (Amendment) Act, 2026, Stamp (Amendment) Act, 2025, Power Development Organization (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026, and Women University of AJK Bagh (Amendment) Act, 2026. These legislative measures aim to strengthen governance, administration and institutional development in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

JKDFP Voices Concern Over Azad Kashmir Developments, Calls for Dialogue

Spokesman Report.

SIRINAGER: The Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (JKDFP) is closely monitoring the evolving situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and views the current developments with serious concern.

At the outset, we appeal to all stakeholders, including the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the Government of Pakistan, and the leadership of the Action Committee, to approach the situation with wisdom, restraint, and a spirit of dialogue. Any issue that affects the lives and aspirations of the people must be addressed through peaceful means, mutual respect, and meaningful engagement.

The JKDFP firmly believes that the people have a legitimate right to raise their concerns and seek the protection of their social, economic, and political rights through peaceful and democratic means. We express our solidarity with all just and peaceful struggles aimed at securing the welfare and dignity of the people.

At the same time, we emphasize that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute is not confined to Azad Jammu and Kashmir alone. It is an internationally recognized dispute concerning the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir as it existed on 13 August 1947. The unresolved status of the State has been acknowledged by numerous United Nations resolutions, and the people of Jammu and Kashmir have continued their struggle for a just and lasting settlement for the past seventy-eight years.

Beyond the MOU: Forging a Lasting Regional Security

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, China and the United Nations, and former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Masood Khan has said that the emerging Iran-United States Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) represents far more than a ceasefire arrangement, offering an opportunity to transform a fragile diplomatic breakthrough into a comprehensive framework for long-term regional stability in West Asia.

In an op-ed published in Al Jazeera Arabic, he observed that the simultaneous announcement from Islamabad, Washington and Tehran regarding the readiness of the MOU for electronic signing marks the culmination of months of intensive diplomacy led by Pakistan with the support of regional and international partners. He noted that the positive response from global capitals and international markets demonstrates growing confidence in the prospects of peace and economic stability.

Sardar Masood Khan stated that Pakistan successfully maintained the confidence of both Tehran and Washington throughout a difficult mediation process, while working closely with Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt, Türkiye and China. He particularly acknowledged Qatar's role in bridging differences on some of the most sensitive provisions of the agreement, describing the collective effort as a landmark achievement in contemporary diplomacy.

NIH issues advisory on monsoon diseases' prevention

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Health (NIH) has issued an advisory on the prevention and control of monsoon-related diseases.

The institute asked the provincial and federal health departments, healthcare facilities, district administrations and other stakeholders to enhance preparedness and response measures during the rainy season.

According to the advisory, the monsoon season in Pakistan is associated with increased morbidity and mortality due to a wide range of communicable and vector-borne diseases.

Heavy rainfall, flooding, waterlogging, disruption of sanitation systems, contamination of drinking water sources and increased vector breeding create favorable conditions for outbreaks of several infectious diseases.

The NIH warned that diseases such as acute watery diarrhea, cholera, typhoid fever, malaria, dengue, chikungunya, leptospirosis, viral hepatitis A and E, and other infectious illnesses are more likely to spread during the monsoon season.

Security alert

KARACHI: Security officials stand alert to avoid any untoward incident as security has been tightened during the Majlis-e-Aza (mourning gathering) of the Holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram, at Nishtar Park area of the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Nawaz Sharif Chairs Meeting on Kashmir Situation, Emphasizes Public Rights

Abdul Majeed Tahir

LAHORE: A high level meeting was held in Lahore under the chairmanship of PML-N President Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. The political and administrative situation of Azad Jammu and Kashmir was discussed in detail. Senior leadership of Pakistan PML-N Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan PML-N attended in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting Mian Nawaz Sharif said that Pakistan PML-N has a clear position on the issue of Kashmir.

He said that PML-N has always preferred the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir to constitutional and



fundamental rights and constructive development. He expressed concern over the

current political situation in AJK that full civil liberties are achieved under the Interim Constitution of AJK Act

All efforts and abilities should be put to work for the welfare of the people. We should struggle for public rights within the constitution. He said that PML-N would join hands with all democratic forces and play its full role. The PML-N president said he was saddened and shocked by the loss of government and civilian lives, such a situation should not have arisen.

Quaid-PML-N Muhammad Nawaz Sharif asked Minister Gulgit Kemir Baltistan Mr Amir Maqam to organize the election campaign in Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir in a better manner and work tirelessly to the services.

Pakistan Psychological Association and Women University Multan ink academic cooperation pact

Asim Tanveer

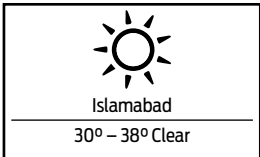
MULTAN: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Pakistan Psychological Association (PPA) and Women University Multan to promote academic cooperation, research activities and expand professional development opportunities in the field of psychology. The MoU signing ceremony was held at Women University Multan, where Vice Chancellor of Women University Multan, Prof. Dr. Syeda Shahida Batool and President of Pakistan Psychological Association, Prof. Dr. Rafia Rafique formally signed the agreement. Prof. Dr. Sarwat Sultan, Vice President PPA Punjab, Dr. Mustafa Butt, Dr. Ruqayya Safdar Bajwa and



members of the executive body of PPA Multan Chapter were also present on

the occasion. Addressing the ceremony, Vice Chancellor Dr. Syeda Shahi-

da Batool and Dr. Rafia Rafique reiterated their commitment to promote educational quality, promote psychological research, and create opportunities for professional development and social service and said that under this collaboration, joint academic activities, research projects, training programs, seminars, workshops and other initiatives will be undertaken. will be held, which aim to play an effective role in the development of the field of psychology and social welfare. Strong links between universities and professional organizations not only promote academic and research activities but also create new opportunities for practical and professional development for students and psychologists.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:13 am
Zohr 12:09 pm
Asr 5:09 pm
Maghrib 7:21 pm
Isha 9:05 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA 921334-43
CDA 9208301-04
Met Office 9250360-6
RDA 5555864
TMA 5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan
Corporation 9209224
Potohar Town 9209224
Rawal Town 5773343

COMPLAINTS

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

WASA Multan Rejects Allegations of Rs. 460 Million Fake Bills, Warns of Legal Action

Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: WASA Multan has vehemently refuted claims of issuing fake cheques or fraudulent bills totaling Rs. 460 million, labeling them as baseless and fabricated after a thorough internal investigation. The authority asserts that all financial transactions for its numerous, billion-rupee development projects, funded by the Punjab Government, adhere strictly to rules, regulations, technical scrutiny, auditing, and official approvals. These projects, aimed at improving sewerage, mitigating urban flooding, and enhancing public services, are being executed transparently and expeditiously under expert supervision. WASA Multan views these unsubstantiated reports as damaging to its reputation and public perception of vital development initiatives, urging media and social media users to verify information with WASA before publication. The organization also reserves the right to pursue legal action against those who spread false or misleading information, aiming to protect its integrity and interests.

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz urges use of modern technology to combat desertification, drought

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has stressed the need for agricultural research and the use of modern technology to combat desertification and drought.

Reaffirming her commitment to environmental protection, land restoration and water conservation, the chief minister, in her message on the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, said the observance aims to raise public awareness about land degradation, declining soil fertility and the devastating impacts of drought.

She said the Punjab government was taking practical measures to address drought through improved agricultural practices, efficient water management and efforts to mitigate climate change. Small dams and ponds were being constructed across the province to enhance water storage capacity, she added.

CM Punjab said special funds had been allocated to make barren lands

cultivable in areas such as Cholistan and Thal. Campaigns to plant trees in desert regions and promote the cultivation of crops such as olives were also under way.

"Drought poses a major threat to agriculture and food security," she said, adding that highlighting the importance of afforestation to curb environmental pollution and transform barren lands into green landscapes was the need of the hour.

The chief minister said state-of-the-art equipment, including thermal sensors, was being used for the protection of forests and monitoring of wildlife. She emphasised that international cooperation was essential for restoring degraded lands and addressing the challenges posed by water scarcity.

She noted that fertile lands across the world were turning into deserts due to climate change and human activities. Under the Resilient and Inclusive Agriculture Transformation (PRIAT) programme, the government was improving water conveyance systems



and installing new High Efficiency Irrigation Systems (HEIS) powered by solar energy.

Punishment

ISLAMABAD: Traffic police personnel lift a wrongly parked motorcycle outside Markazi Asna Ashri Imambargah G-6/2 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

The Aga Khan University Hospital Signs MoUs to Introduce Advanced Robotic Surgery

City Desk

KARACHI: The Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) has signed two MoUs to bring advanced robotic surgery systems to Pakistan, expanding access to state-of-the-art, minimally invasive care.

Under the first MoU with MicroPort, AKUH's Department of Surgery will introduce the globally used Toumai Surgical Robotic System. It assists surgeons in urology, general surgery, gynaecology, paediatrics, and thoracic procedures, offering greater precision and faster recovery. The system also has 5G remote surgery capability. Dr Saleem Islam, Chair of Surgery, said robotic-assisted surgery is now the global benchmark for quality, safety, and precision.



The second MoU with Smith+Nephew will bring the FDA-approved CORI Surgical System to the Department of Orthopaedics. This handheld robotic platform helps surgeons perform robotic-assisted total knee replacements

by creating real-time 3D maps of a patient's anatomy, enabling personalized surgical plans and higher accuracy. Dr Mansoor Ali Khan, Chair of Orthopaedics, called it a major advancement for patient care. Both MoUs were signed

by Dr Farhat Abbas, CEO AKUH Health System, with department leaders present. Dr Abbas said the partnerships reflect AKUH's commitment to world-class surgical technology and precision medicine.

Imam Hussain's Unmatched Sacrifices: A Timeless Legacy of Resistance

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: The sacrifices made by Hazrat Imam Hussain (A. S.) for the preservation of Islam are unparalleled and continue to convey a timeless message of patience, sacrifice, and resistance against tyranny.



These views were expressed by religious scholars and speakers while addressing participants of a mourning procession held in K-Block, Attock City, on the 1st of Muharram-ul-Haram.

The speakers emphasized that the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (A. S.) and his companions at Karbala was not merely a historical event but a universal and eternal lesson in courage, justice, and sacrifice that remains unmatched in human history. They urged the community to draw inspiration from Imam Hussain's legacy and incorporate those values into their daily lives.

Later in the day, a mourning procession was taken out from the residence of the late Tehseen-ul-Hasan Zaidi in K-Block. Following traditional routes, the procession concluded at Imambargah Hussainia in Attock Cantonment in the evening.

To ensure the safety of participants, Attock Police made comprehensive security arrangements. Security personnel were deployed along the procession route and on nearby rooftops. DSP Sadar Circle Illyas Baig, SHO Sadar Circle Taimoor Ali Zai, CSO Malik Naeem, CTD official Shahzad Anjum, and SHO City Sajjar Haider personally inspected security checkpoints along the route.

In addition, ADCG Anil Saeed, AC Muhammad Arif Qureshi, Chief Officer TMA Sardar Aftab, Adviser to the Chief Minister Amir Illyas, Incharge Suthra Punjab Kashif Iqbal, and Incharge Special Branch Aftab Khattak remained present during the procession to assist with coordination and monitoring.

As part of public facilitation measures, the Government of Punjab established cold-water stalls (sabeels) along the procession route to provide relief to mourners amid the summer heat.

PTI Leader: Muharram Teaches Sacrifice for Truth and Justice

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: President of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Pindi Gheb, Malik Zeeshan Dehra, while speaking about the month of Muharram, said that it is a month of sacrifice. He stated that Imam Hussain ibn Ali sacrificed his life for the glory of truth during this sacred month. He added that the greatest injustice in Muslim history took place in Karbala.

Malik Zeeshan said that Muharram teaches the importance of standing for truth and justice. He emphasized that during this month, people should pledge that they will not hesitate to make any sacrifice, even of their lives, for the sake of truth.

The PTI president Zeeshan further said that followers of all Islamic sects express their devotion to Imam Hussain in their own way. He urged everyone to respect each other's beliefs and viewpoints and to strive to be among the righteous followers of the last Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him).

COMSATS hosts Bangladeshi Academicians under Pakistan-Bangladesh Knowledge Corridor

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) hosted a high-level delegation of 16 Professors and Senior Academicians from leading public and private universities of Bangladesh at its Islamabad Campus on Tuesday.

The visit was conducted under the Pakistan-Bangladesh Knowledge Corridor, facilitated by the Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan, with the broader aim of deep-

ening people-to-people connectivity between the two brotherly nations.

The delegation comprised the Vice Chancellor and CEO of Asian University of Bangladesh; Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) of Jahangirnagar University; Deans, Senior Professors and Academic Administrators from the University of Dhaka, University of Chittagong, North South University; Shahjalal University of Science and Technology; University of Chittagong; University of Rajshahi; Univer-

sity of Dhaka; Shahjalal University of Science and Technology; BRAC University and Southeast University, Bangladesh.

Prof. Dr. Raheel Qamar, Rector CUI accompanied by senior university officials and Heads of Academic Departments, received the delegation. Ms. Muniba Nasir, Head International Office presented an overview of the institution encompassing various modern digital governance and various cutting edge initiatives.



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The Lamp That Illuminated Millions of Hearts

The world of knowledge and scholarship is once again in mourning. A towering personality who dedicated his entire life to the service of Islam, academic research, teaching, social reform, and the guidance of the Muslim Ummah has departed from this world. Indeed, we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we shall return. The news of the passing of Ustadh al-Asatidhah (Teacher of Teachers), the Grand Mufti of Pakistan, Mufti Abdul Qayyum Khan Hazarevi (RA) has saddened millions of hearts. His passing is not merely the loss of an individual; it marks the closing of a remarkable chapter of knowledge, wisdom, moderation, sincerity, and service to humanity.

Mufti Abdul Qayyum Khan Hazarevi (RA) was born in 1944 in the village of Potha Kalan, located in the Gujrat District. His father was Saadullah Khan, and his mother was Barkat Sultan. He was raised in a family distinguished by its religious devotion and scholarly environment. From an early age, intelligence, seriousness, and a deep passion for Islamic learning became defining characteristics of his personality. This passion eventually elevated him to the ranks of the most distinguished scholars and jurists of the Subcontinent.

Alongside his early education, he began studying the Holy Qur'an and the foundational Islamic sciences. Even in his youth, his teachers recognized his exceptional intellectual abilities and remark-

able memory. He pursued his education at various centers of learning and later became associated with the renowned institution, Jamia Nacemia Lahore, where he acquired mastery in Qur'anic exegesis, Hadith, Islamic jurisprudence, principles of jurisprudence, Arabic literature, logic, philosophy, and numerous other disciplines.

At Jamia Nacemia Lahore, he benefited from the guidance of some of the most eminent scholars of his era, including Mufti Muhammad Hussain Nacemi, Maulana Ghulam Rasool, and other distinguished teachers. Their mentorship further refined his scholarly interests, research-oriented mindset, and balanced intellectual approach. He not only excelled in formal studies but also developed extraordinary expertise in research, analysis, and the derivation of legal rulings.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Mufti Abdul Qayyum Khan Hazarevi's life was his commitment to moderation and scholarly inquiry. He consistently sought solutions to contemporary issues through the guidance of the Qur'an, Sunnah, the jurists of Islam, and the great scholars of the tradition. He remained distant from emotionalism, extremism, and unnecessary polemics. To him, religion represented ease, mercy, wisdom,

and sincere concern for humanity. This is why his fatwas and scholarly opinions earned exceptional trust among both scholars and the general public.

The scope of his scholarly services was immense. He spent more than half a century in the field of teaching and education. Thousands of students studied under him and today serve Islam in Pakistan and across the world. He was not only an outstanding teacher but also a compassionate mentor, a sincere guide, and a healer of troubled souls.

His students will always remember his intellectual depth, moral excellence, and nurturing approach.

His gatherings were treasure troves of knowledge and wisdom. One of his distinctive qualities was the ability to explain complex religious and social issues in a simple, logical, and accessible manner. People traveled from distant regions to seek guidance on their questions and difficulties, leaving reassured and satisfied. His manner of speech was gentle, balanced, and captivating. Even with those who disagreed with him, he upheld respect, courtesy, and scholarly dignity.

His contributions to social reform are unforgettable. In particular, his role in resolving family and marital disputes will always be remembered. Countless families on the verge of separa-

tion due to misunderstandings, anger, emotional decisions, or a lack of understanding of Islamic rulings found reconciliation through his wisdom, research, and sincere guidance. He consistently emphasized the importance of the family as the foundation of society and worked tirelessly to promote love, tolerance, and family stability.

For this reason, many people knew him not merely as a Mufti or a scholar, but as "the architect of broken homes restored." Those who came to him were often burdened by despair, yet through his knowledge, insight, and gentle nature, he instilled hope in their hearts. Today, thousands of families continue to pray for him, grateful for the happiness and unity that returned to their homes through his efforts.

He always presented Islam as a religion of mercy, ease, and moderation. He firmly believed that Islam exists to unite people, bring hearts closer together, and spread goodness throughout society. Consequently, he devoted his life to promoting unity within the Muslim Ummah, fostering tolerance, and advancing a positive and constructive understanding of faith. Every fatwa he issued and every scholarly position he adopted was rooted in sound research, established principles of Islamic law, and the broader interests of the Muslim community.

In scholarly circles, he was also recognized as a deeply learned researcher. He

Continued on Page 7



Analysis

Muhammad Asif

President Message On International Day For Countering Hate Speech

On the occasion of the International Day for Countering Hate Speech, I join the international community in reaffirming the importance of promoting respect, tolerance and understanding among people of all faiths, backgrounds and cultures. Hate-driven narratives, prejudice, incitement and discriminatory attitudes not only undermine social harmony but also pose serious threats to peace, human dignity and peaceful coexistence among nations. In today's interconnected world, the spread of hatred is no longer confined to a particular society or region. It transcends borders and affects collective peace, stability and development.

Islam is a religion that upholds the values of compassion, tolerance, justice, moderation and respect for humanity.

The Holy Qur'an guides us to adopt civility, wisdom and righteousness in our speech and conduct. Allah Almighty says: "O believers! Be mindful of Allah, and say what is right." (Qur'an 33:70)

The Holy Qur'an further instructs: "Speak kindly to people." (Qur'an 2:83)

Allah Almighty also says: "Repel evil with what is better." (Qur'an 41:34)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak good or remain silent." (Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim)

He also said: "A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe." (Sahih al-Bukhari)

In the digital age, social media and modern communication platforms have significantly expanded opportunities for expression. However, this freedom carries a responsibility to ensure that our words are guided by truth, wisdom and respect for others. Irresponsible discourse and hate-filled content fuel division, mistrust and violence, thereby weakening the fabric of society.

Pakistan is a diverse society comprising people of different faiths, sects, cultures and linguistic backgrounds. Our Constitution guarantees equal rights, religious freedom and the dignity of every citizen. Our collective strength lies in unity, mutual respect and tolerance. It is therefore imperative that we continue to promote interfaith harmony, inter-sect understanding, constructive dialogue and national cohesion.

Hate speech affects people in their daily lives, whether in schools, workplaces, places of worship or online spaces, creating divisions and undermining mutual trust within communities.

On this occasion, I call upon religious scholars, educators, media professionals, civil society organizations, academic institutions and particularly our youth to play an active role in countering hate-based narratives and fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and constructive engagement. The challenge of hate speech cannot be addressed through legal measures alone. It also requires education, moral development and sustained efforts to build awareness and understanding.



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

Education and Peace: Why One Cannot Survive Without the Other

It is heartening to witness reports of a peace agreement between the United States and Iran. At a time when escalating tensions had raised fears of a wider regional conflict, efforts toward dialogue and de-escalation offer a welcome reminder of the value of peace. Such developments underscore an enduring truth: while wars often begin with mistrust, fear, and misunderstanding, lasting peace is built through wisdom, dialogue, and the courage to see beyond differences.

Yet this raises a deeper question: where do the foundations of peace truly originate? **The answer lies in education.**

Peace and education are not separate pursuits; they are deeply interconnected. A peaceful society requires citizens who can think critically, engage respectfully with differing viewpoints, and resolve disagreements without resorting to hatred or violence. These qualities are not inherited—they are learned. And schools play a central role in nurturing them. **Unfortunately, education is not always a force for peace.**

In many developing countries, including Pakistan, public debate often focuses on access to education while paying less attention to its content and purpose. What students learn can be just as important as whether they learn at all. A curriculum that encourages curiosity, reflection, empathy, and open inquiry can strengthen social harmony. One that promotes rigid thinking, selective narratives, or a perpetual sense of victimhood may unintentionally deepen divisions.

Too often, young people are exposed to simplified accounts of history and society that leave little room for complexity or critical inquiry. Students may be taught what to think rather than how to think. They may learn about grievances but not

reconciliation, about conflict but not coexistence. Such approaches can reinforce suspicion and resentment instead of understanding and mutual respect.

This is not an argument for ignoring historical injustices or genuine suffering. Nations must teach their history honestly and responsibly. However, education should do more than preserve memories of conflict; it should equip students with the intellectual and moral tools needed to rise above it. The goal should not be to produce citizens who merely inherit old grievances, but citizens who possess the wisdom and confidence to build a better future.

My own life has reinforced this conviction.

Like many others, I once viewed the world through a narrow ideological lens. Certain narratives shaped my understanding of society and left little room for alternative perspectives. Over time, however, reading, reflection, and exposure to different viewpoints challenged many assumptions I had long taken for granted. That personal journey—from extremism to tolerance—profoundly transformed my understanding of people, society, and the power of dialogue.

It taught me a lesson that no textbook alone could teach: peace cannot be imposed through conformity, nor can it emerge from indoctrination. It grows when individuals are encouraged to question, reflect, and engage with ideas honestly and respectfully. In other words, peace requires education—but it requires the right kind of education.

This is why teachers occupy a far more important place in society than they are often given credit for. Every day, in classrooms across the country, they help shape how young people understand themselves and others. They teach lessons that extend far beyond textbooks—lessons about respect, responsibility, empathy, dialogue, and

citizenship.

A teacher who encourages students to listen before judging contributes to peace. A classroom that welcomes questions rather than suppressing them contributes to peace. A curriculum that broadens horizons instead of narrowing them contributes to peace.

The connection between education and peace extends beyond the classroom. Educated societies are generally better equipped to address social challenges, participate constructively in democratic processes, and resist the appeal of extremism and intolerance. Knowledge alone does not guarantee harmony, but ignorance and prejudice have rarely produced it.

For this reason, investment in education should be viewed not merely as an economic necessity but as a peace-building strategy. Policymakers, educators, parents, and communities must recognize that the values transmitted in schools can influence society for generations. Curriculum reform, teacher development, and the promotion of critical thinking are not peripheral concerns; they are central to building a stable, prosperous, and peaceful future.

Peace treaties may end wars, but they cannot eliminate intolerance. Laws can punish violence, but they cannot create understanding. These deeper transformations occur gradually—in homes, communities, and, above all, in schools.

Today, more than ever, the world needs classrooms that teach understanding instead of hatred, dialogue instead of division, and hope instead of fear. If we genuinely aspire to a more peaceful future, we must move beyond viewing education merely as a pathway to employment and begin recognizing it as a pathway to responsible citizenship and peaceful coexistence. The choices we make in our classrooms today will shape the character of our societies tomorrow. Investing in education, therefore, is not simply an investment in human capital—it is an investment in peace itself.



Analysis

Muhammad Rabnawaz Awan

The Power of Confidence: Small Habits That Create Big Success

Confidence is one of the most important qualities a person can develop. It helps people communicate effectively, build meaningful relationships, and face challenges with courage. While many believe confidence is something people are born with, experts agree that it can be strengthened through simple daily habits and a positive mindset.

A confident person often stands out not because of appearance, wealth, or status, but because of the way they carry themselves and think about their abilities. Confidence begins with both the body and the mind working together.

One of the simplest ways to appear confident is by maintaining eye contact during conversations. Eye contact shows attentiveness, honesty, and respect. Speaking clearly and calmly also leaves a positive impression and demonstrates self-control. Good posture, such as keeping the head up and the back straight, can instantly make a person seem more self-assured. Moving with purpose rather than rushing through actions further reflects confidence and composure.

However, true confidence goes beyond physical appearance. It is deeply connected to a person's thoughts and beliefs. Practicing self-affirmation and focusing on personal strengths can help build a healthy sense of self-worth. At the same

time, reducing negative self-talk is essential. Constant self-criticism can weaken confidence and prevent individuals from reaching their full potential.

Remembering past achievements is another effective way to strengthen self-belief. Reflecting on previous successes reminds people that they are capable of overcoming difficulties and achieving goals. Equally important is learning not to fear failure. Every successful person experiences setbacks, but they view mistakes as opportunities to learn and grow rather than reasons to quit.

Assertiveness also plays a key role in developing confidence. Being able to express thoughts, opinions, and needs respectfully allows individuals to communicate effectively while maintaining positive relationships with others.

In today's fast-paced and competitive world, confidence is more valuable than ever. It empowers people to take opportunities, overcome obstacles, and pursue their dreams with determination. The good news is that confidence is not a rare gift reserved for a few; it is a skill that can be developed by anyone through consistent practice and positive habits.

By focusing on both physical presence and mental strength, individuals can create a lasting sense of confidence that benefits every aspect of life. Small changes made each day can lead to remarkable personal growth and a brighter future.



Analysis

Dr. Mushtaqe Ahmed Rahu

Rs 12 Trillion Cash Economy must be Brought Into Tax Net for Sustainable Growth: Mian Zahid Hussain

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mian Zahid Hussain, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum (PBIF) & All Karachi Industrial Alliance (AKIA), Chairman National Business Group Pakistan (NBG), Chairman FPCCI Policy Advisory Board and Former Provincial Minister of Information Technology, stated that Pakistan's economy is now at a crucial milestone from where sustainable economic development is possible. He noted that according to the recently released economic survey, average inflation over

the past 11 months has dropped to 6.7 percent, while the dollar exchange rate has remained stable at the Rs 280 level for the last three years. The central bank has significantly reduced the interest rate, bringing it down from 22 percent to 11.5 percent. Furthermore, foreign exchange reserves are at a four-year high, and remittances are expected to reach a record \$42 billion by the end of the current fiscal year. In addition, Pakistan has successfully re-entered the international Eurobond market after a long gap of four years.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the dark side of the economic

situation is that exports have been stuck between \$25 billion and \$30 billion for the past 20 years, causing the export-to-GDP ratio to decline from 16 percent to 10 percent. The investment climate is also unsatisfactory, as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) recorded a significant decline of 31 percent during the first ten months of the current fiscal year. The unemployment rate in the country has reached 7.1 percent, meaning approximately 5.9 million Pakistanis are jobless. Furthermore, the savings rate is at a three-decade low, with citizens able to save only 6 percent of their income.



Mian Zahid Hussain further added that the government has attempted to provide some relief in the recent budget, which includes corporate tax relief and extending the income tax exemption on IT exports for another

three years.

However, economic experts and industrialists believe that these measures alone will not achieve the desired targets. The country's Rs 12 trillion cash economy is a massive challenge, from which a conservative estimate suggests Rs 4 trillion in sales and income tax could be extracted. According to the FBR, untaxed transactions worth Rs 7.1 trillion have been identified which may be brought into the tax net through digitization. He pointed out that the minimum tax rate on turnover for exporters has been increased from 1 percent to 1.25 percent, while the corpo-

rate tax rate stands at 29 percent, which is much higher compared to other countries such as Turkey (9 percent), Bangladesh (10-12 percent), Sri Lanka (15 percent), and Vietnam (20 percent).

Mian Zahid Hussain emphasized that for the future, it is imperative that the government adopts a 3 to 5-year long-term economic vision and creates consistency in economic policies across year-to-year budgeting.

Economic development requires at least a 5 to 6 percent growth rate and a 20 percent savings rate. Pakistan's position in human development indicators (HDI 0.544) is among the

lowest in the world (ranking between 168 and 193), making long-term reforms in the health and education sectors absolutely inevitable. The government must bring the undocumented economy into the tax net to reduce the burden on taxpayers, especially the salaried class and the documented corporate sector, and simultaneously cut government expenditures, including the implementation of pension reforms. Export-led growth is the only path to sustainable development, and providing a favorable environment for industrialists must be the government's top priority.

Al-Shifa Trust starts construction of South Asia's largest eye hospital

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital has formally started construction of its new Lahore facility, planned as Asia's most modern eye hospital, marking a major expansion of its efforts to provide specialized eye care to millions of people.

President Al-Shifa Trust Maj. Gen. (Retd) Rehmat Khan described the project as a significant milestone in the Trust's mission to expand access to quality eye care and reduce preventable blindness across Pakistan.

The Trust has awarded the construction contract to a Lahore-based firm, with the agreement requiring completion of the grey structure within 13 months, with provisions to discourage delays.

A commencement ceremony was held at the project site, where Al-Shifa Trust officials, engineers, consultants, and construction staff prayed for the successful completion of the hospital. Maj. Gen. (Retd) Rehmat Khan

informed that the hospital is being built on 70 kanals of land provided by the Punjab government on the Ring Road, Raiwind. The state-of-the-art facility will feature 20 modern operation theatres and will provide advanced treatment for a wide range of eye diseases.

Once operational, the hospital is expected to serve around 20 million people and treat more than 600,000 patients annually. Free treatment will be available for deserving and underprivileged patients, continuing the Trust's policy of ensuring access to quality eye care regardless of a patient's ability to pay.

The project comes at a time when vision impairment remains a major public health challenge in Pakistan. More than 26 million people live with blindness or partial vision impairment, placing the country sixth globally in terms of vision-loss burden. Cataract accounts for more than half of all blindness cases, while the vast majority of cases are considered



avoidable, and Central Punjab has the highest prevalence of blindness in the country.

Over the past 35 years, Al-Shifa Trust has grown from treating just 25 patients a day to more than 5,000 patients daily. It operates seven eye hospitals in Rawalpindi, Sukkur, Kohat, Muzaffarabad, Chakwal, Gilgit, and Haveli Lakha. It has also conducted more than 15,000 free screening and surgical camps in remote and underserved areas, bringing eye care to communities



with limited access to medical facilities. Between 80 and 90 percent of patients receive treatment free of charge. The Lahore hospital is

expected to further strengthen efforts to reduce avoidable blindness and improve access to modern eye care services.

The trust also organized a fund-

raising event featuring performances by Rahat Fateh Ali Khan and Ustad Noor Buksh, where philanthropists contributed one hundred million rupees to the project.

WHO and Sindh inaugurate a vaccination centre to serve 2.5 million people in District South, Karachi

Spokesman Report

Karachi: The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Government of Sindh yesterday inaugurated a model vaccination centre of the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) at the National Institute of Child Health (NICH), Karachi, to serve 2.5 million people from District South.

The centre – supported by WHO with financial assistance from Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance – was inaugurated by Sindh's Minister for Health and Population Welfare, Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho, and WHO's Representative in Pakistan Dr Luo Dapeng.

The model EPI centre will provide free routine vaccination – protecting children against 13 vaccine-preventable diseases – and tetanus-diphtheria vaccination for pregnant women.

Designed to enhance service quality, the medical facility is equipped with child vaccination areas, a waiting area for parents and caregivers, water and

sanitation facilities, furniture, and cold-chain equipment to preserve the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. Information materials are also displayed to guide parents regarding vaccine requirements and schedules for their children.

WHO Representative in Pakistan Dr Luo Dapeng during the inauguration of the WHO-supported model vaccination centre at the National Institute of Child Health (NICH), Karachi. Photo credit: WHO/Hamid Inam

Each year, WHO supports Sindh's EPI programme to vaccinate 1.5 million children, including 0.7 million in Karachi. As the largest public-sector children's hospital in Karachi, NICH is expected to serve hundreds of children daily at the new center, which has a catchment population of approximately 2.5 million people in District South.

As of 2025, the routine immunization coverage in Sindh had reached

80 percent, with first-dose pentavalent coverage above 93 percent and Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine coverage for childhood tuberculosis prevention above 90 percent.

Nationally, in partnership with WHO, Pakistan's EPI vaccinates around 7 million children and 5.5 million women of childbearing age each year.

The centre inauguration follows the opening of the WHO-supported model immunization facility that opened in Punjab at Services Hospital, Lahore, in December 2024. An additional model centre will be inaugurated soon in Quetta, Balochistan.

"The Government of Sindh is placing strong emphasis on improving EPI centers across the province, so parents have a good experience bringing their children for vaccination under the age of two. Understanding the importance of vaccination, and the diseases it protects against, helps ensure children live healthy lives, free

from vaccine-preventable diseases," said Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho, Sindh Minister for Health and Population Welfare, during the inauguration.

"Thanks to medical science, over the last 50 years, Pakistan's Expanded Programme on Immunization Pakistan has protected over 160 million children and 130 million mothers with life-saving vaccines in collaboration with WHO and partners, and WHO will continue to stand with Pakistan and with Sindh province to protect and save lives," said WHO Representative in Pakistan Dr Luo Dapeng. "This centre adds a fixed vaccination site at one of Sindh's main children's hospitals and will help reach children who are missed by routine services, regardless of social or economic status. WHO will continue to work side by side with Sindh on vaccine service delivery, vaccinator training, and data collection through the digital child immunization registry so we leave no child and no mother behind."

Select Technologies Limited Announces IPO to Raise PKR 2.489 Billion for Expansion in Technology Manufacturing

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Select Technologies Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Air Link Communication Limited plans to raise PKR 2.489 billion at the floor price through its Initial Public Offering (IPO), marking an important step in the Company's growth strategy to expand local manufacturing of smart devices and consumer appliances in Pakistan.

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) and Pakistan Stock Exchange Limited (PSX) have approved the issuance, circulation and publication of the Prospectus for the IPO of 88,888,889 ordinary shares, representing 10% of the post-IPO paid-up capital of the Company. The issue will be offered through the book building method.

Under the approved structure, 75% of the issue size, comprising 66,666,667 shares, will be offered to eligible investors through Book Building at a floor price of PKR 28.00 per share, with a maximum price band of up to 50%, translating into a cap price of

PKR 42.00 per share. The remaining 25% of the issue, comprising 22,222,222 shares, will be offered to retail investors at the strike price determined through the Book Building process. The retail portion of the IPO will be fully underwritten.

Registration of eligible investors will commence on June 17, 2026, and close on June 23, 2026, while the Book Building will be conducted on June 22 and June 23, 2026. The public subscription is scheduled for July 2 and July 3, 2026.

Arif Habib Limited and Intermarket Securities Limited are acting as joint consultants to the issue.

The IPO proceeds will primarily be utilized to finance the establishment of a new state-of-the-art production facility at Sundar Green Special Economic Zone, Lahore, for the manufacturing and assembly of air conditioners. The proceeds will also support expansion of the Company's TV production line, investment in smartphone plant and machinery, and working capital requirements.

Illegal Housing Societies: Lists Alone Are Not Enough — Where Is the Enforcement?

Ch Muhammad Anwar Chohan

The recent decision by the District Council Gujrat to declare nineteen housing societies illegal and caution the public against investing in them is undoubtedly a welcome step. At a time when thousands of families are searching for secure investment opportunities and affordable housing, any effort aimed at protecting citizens from fraudulent schemes deserves appreciation. However, the announcement also raises a series of important questions that demand serious answers from the district administration and relevant regulatory authorities.

The fundamental issue is not the publication of a list. The real issue is why these housing schemes were allowed to operate, advertise, market, and collect investments from the public for such a long period before being declared illegal.

Across Gujrat, Kharian, Sarai Alamgir, and surrounding areas, the housing sector has witnessed unprec-

edented growth over the past decade. Large billboards have appeared along major roads, promotional campaigns have dominated social media platforms, booking offices have operated openly, and attractive investment packages have been offered to the public. Many citizens, trusting these visible and seemingly legitimate operations, invested their hard-earned savings in the hope of securing a better future for themselves and their families.

If these schemes lacked the required approvals, legal permissions, or No Objection Certificates (NOCs), one cannot help but ask: Where were the regulatory mechanisms responsible for preventing such activities? How were these projects able to advertise so openly? How were sales offices permitted to function? More importantly, how were millions of rupees collected from unsuspecting investors without timely intervention from the authorities?

The concerns of ordinary citizens are both understandable and justified. For many families, purchasing a

plot represents a lifetime investment. It often involves retirement savings, overseas remittances, or money accumulated through years of hard work and sacrifice. When such investments are placed at risk because of unauthorized or illegal housing schemes, the consequences extend beyond financial loss; they undermine public trust in regulatory institutions.

Equally concerning is the perception that enforcement actions are often symbolic rather than substantive. In many cases, authorities seal an office, remove a few advertisements, or issue a warning notice. Yet after a brief period, the same projects appear to resume operations, sometimes under different names, through alternative offices, or via aggressive digital marketing campaigns. Such temporary measures fail to address the root problem and provide little reassurance to affected investors.

This is why the public deserves greater transparency and accountability. Citizens have a right to know what concrete actions have been taken against

the promoters and developers of these illegal schemes. How many criminal cases have been registered? How many investigations are currently underway? How many unauthorized billboards have been permanently removed? How many offices remain sealed? And most importantly, what measures are being taken to safeguard investors who may have already committed their savings to these projects?

The publication of a list, while important, should only be the beginning of a broader enforcement strategy. Effective regulation requires continuous monitoring, strict legal action against violators, and public access to reliable information. The district administration should consider maintaining an updated online database identifying approved and unapproved housing schemes, along with their legal status, NOC details, approved layout plans, and development progress. Such transparency would empower citizens to make informed decisions and significantly reduce the risk of fraud.

At the same time, the public must

also exercise caution. Investors should never rely solely on attractive brochures, social media advertisements, or promises of easy installment plans. Verification through the relevant government departments should be treated as an essential step before making any financial commitment. A few hours spent confirming a project's legal status can prevent years of regret and financial hardship.

This issue is particularly important for the district administration of Gujrat, the Assistant Commissioner Kharian, and the Assistant Commissioner Sarai Alamgir. The publication of the list has created public awareness, but awareness alone will not protect investors. What citizens now seek is visible, consistent, and impartial enforcement of the law.

The people of Gujrat do not merely want warnings; they want action. They want assurance that illegal housing schemes will not be allowed to continue operating under different names or through alternative channels. They want confidence that those responsible for misleading investors will be held

accountable. Most importantly, they want protection for the hard-earned money of ordinary families.

The true measure of success will not be how many housing societies are declared illegal. The true measure of success will be how effectively those illegal operations are stopped, how transparently the law is enforced, and how well the interests of the public are protected.

The district administration has taken the first step by identifying these schemes. The next step—and the more important one—is to ensure that enforcement is visible, meaningful, and sustained. Only then will public confidence be restored, and only then will citizens feel that their savings, their investments, and their future are genuinely protected.

This version is suitable for publication as an editorial or opinion column in a reputable English newspaper and maintains a firm but respectful tone toward the district administration while emphasizing public interest and accountability.

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
180,511.02	180,392.97
Day's High	Day's Low
181,357.70	179,564.16
Index Value	Change
52,665,449,387	+118.05
Percentage	Time
+0.07%	17 Jun, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,508.61	+14.40
Percentage	Time
+0.14%	17 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
51,632.63	-367.04
Percentage	Time
-0.71%	17 Jun, 3:27 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
69,902.25	+497.75
Percentage	Time
+0.72%	17 Jun, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	195.12	199.75
Bahrain Dinar	737.16	747.65
Canadian Dollar	197.97	203.25
China Yuan	38.05	38.80
Danish Krone	43.39	43.79
Euro	323.43	329.46
Hong Kong Dollar	35.10	35.95
Indian Rupee	2.75	3.05
Japanese Yen	1.7264	1.8256
Kuwaiti Dinar	884.59	894.85
Malaysian Ringgit	67.05	67.90
New Zealand \$	160.69	164.65
Norwegians Krone	27.88	28.18
Omani Riyal	722	732.45
Qatari Riyal	75.05	76.20
Saudi Riyal	74.25	75
Singapore Dollar	216.17	220.64
Swedish Korona	30.27	30.57
Swiss Franc	347.50	352.15
Thai Bhat	8.5	8.75
U.A.E Dirham	75.90	76.70
UK Pound Sterling	374.22	378.25
US Dollar	279.00	279.35

Dr. Sidhu to use Fintech to bring Capital Market Investing Within Reach of Every Pakistani

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, has said that the effective use of financial technology will make capital market investing simpler, safer, and more accessible for all Pakistanis, enabling ordinary citizens to participate in the country's economic growth and wealth creation.

He said that digital technology can bring stock market and investment services directly to investors' mobile phones, particularly those of young Pakistanis. This will not only simplify the investment process but also strengthen investor protection and enhance public confidence in Pakistan's capital markets. This is in line with SECP's target of increasing the investor base to 2.5 million.

Dr. Sidhu expressed these views while chairing a meeting of the Board of Directors and senior management of the Central Depository Company of Pakistan Limited (CDCPL) during his visit to Karachi.



The meeting reviewed CDCPL's operational performance, technological infrastructure, cybersecurity framework, digital transformation initiatives, and strategic plans aimed at further strengthening Pakistan's capital market ecosystem.

depository and a key pillar of capital market infrastructure. The Board highlighted CDC's robust IT architecture, multiple data centers, strong cybersecurity controls, and round-the-clock business continuity arrangements that have enabled uninterrupted services for nearly three decades.

Dr. Sidhu appreciated CDCPL's contribution to Pakistan's capital market infrastructure and commended its technological capabilities, governance standards, and close collaboration with SECP. He assured SECP's full support for technological innovation, digital transformation, and initiatives aimed at making investing easier, safer, and more accessible for all Pakistanis.

Mr. Badiuddin Akber, CEO of CDC, briefed the visiting team on recent technology-driven initiatives designed to improve market accessibility, strengthen investor protection, and simplify investment processes. He reaffirmed CDC's commitment to working closely with SECP to support the development and modernization of Pakistan's capital markets.

Visit

A group photo of Pakistani delegation visiting Canada for the second round of Foreign Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement Bilateral Investment Treaty (FIPPA/BIT) Negotiations in Ottawa.



ABHI MFB Partners with GoldFin to Expand Gold-Backed Financing Services Across Pakistan

KARACHI: ABHI Microfinance Bank Ltd. has entered a strategic partnership with GoldFin under a Super Agency Agreement to expand access to gold-backed financing solutions across Pakistan, enabling customers to benefit from secure, convenient, and digitally enabled lending services.

The Agreement was signed by Ms. Mariam Pervaiz, Chief Commercial Officer, ABHI Microfinance Bank, and Mr. Tariq Mohar, Chief Executive Officer, GoldFin Limited, during a formal signing ceremony. The event was also attended by Mr. Kabeeer Naqvi, Entrepreneur in Residence at ABHI, along with senior representatives from both organizations.

The agreement brings together ABHI Microfinance Bank's financial expertise and GoldFin's branch network to enhance the accessibility of gold-backed financing. Through this collaboration, GoldFin branches will operate as service points for ABHI Microfinance Bank, utilizing shared vault infrastructure to facilitate efficient and secure gold-backed lending services for customers nationwide.

As part of the partnership, customers



will also have access to a doorstep gold loan facility. Through a dedicated mobile application, GoldFin's trained agents will be able to digitally receive and process customer requests, offering a seamless and customer-centric financing experience without requiring customers to visit a branch.

PCJCCI Celebrates 75th anniversary of Pakistan-China Diplomatic Relations

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) hosted an event in Lahore to celebrate the strong diplomatic and economic ties between Pakistan and China.

The event was attended by His Excellency Mr. Sun Yan, Consul General of China in Lahore, who lauded PCJCCI's contributions to business, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges.

He highlighted the Pakistan-China partnership as a model of cooperation amid global instability, reaffirming China's commitment to CPEC and other joint initiatives.

PCJCCI President Nazir Hussain noted the

continuous creation of new economic, technological, and connectivity opportunities through this friendship.

Former National Security Advisor Lt. Gen. Nasser Khan Janjua (Retd) emphasized the relationship as a source of stability and a foundation for constructive engagement, describing CPEC as a transformative project for regional prosperity.

He advocated for increased collaboration in new sectors and stronger people-to-people ties. Adeel Munawar, Commercial Ambassador PCJCCI, pointed to a new era of collaboration focused on innovation, digital transformation, and enhanced trade, urging both private sectors to leverage opportunities in technology, manu-



facturing, agriculture, renewable energy, and e-commerce.

Salahuddin Hanif, Secretary General

PCJCCI, reiterated a collective commitment to fortifying this partnership for a future of peace, prosperity, and shared progress.

easypaisa and Binance Sign MoU to Explore Emerging Financial Technology Growth in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: easypaisa digital bank signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Binance, the world's largest blockchain ecosystem and crypto exchange, to explore emerging financial technologies and innovative digital savings/investment solutions in Pakistan.

The MoU was signed by Jahanzeb Khan, President & CEO of easypaisa, and Tarik Erk, Binance's Regional Head for MENAT & SEO Abu Dhabi, in the presence of senior officials from both firms.

It reflects easypaisa's push for responsible innovation and a compliant digital financial ecosystem. Under the MoU, both parties will hold exploratory talks on potential collaboration areas to develop Pakistan's digital savings and investment landscape.

Any future partnership will depend on regulatory approvals, evolving frameworks, and full compli-

ance/licensing requirements. Binance, which serves 300M+ users globally, already holds AML registration under Pakistan's Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (PVARA). Proposed initiatives may include awareness, education, and capacity-building from an exploratory angle, enabling easypaisa to design future offerings within regulatory guidelines.

Both leaders stressed Pakistan's potential: Jahanzeb Khan said easypaisa aims to learn from Binance's fintech expertise to expand safe digital financial access, while Tarik Erk noted Binance's global expertise combined with easypaisa's local reach can support responsible innovation.

With 1 in 5 Pakistanis as customers, 31% female users, and 4.5B+ transactions worth PKR 15T in 2025, easypaisa continues to set benchmarks for digital banking and financial inclusion. Disclaimer included on crypto risks and regulatory compliance.

Naseerabad Residents Face 15-Day Gas Blackout, SSGC Accused of False Promises

FB Area, Block 14, Naseerabad residents are suffering due to a 15-day gas outage by SSGC. Repeated complaints to SSGC's helpline 1199 have yielded only false promises, with complaints falsely marked as "resolved".

Daily life is disrupted, forcing families to buy food and children to go without home-cooked meals.

The community has appealed to Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaz Malik,



demanding immediate restoration of gas and accountability for SSGC's mismanagement and negligence, highlighting the company's inefficiency and lack of customer service.

Pakistan Single Window Wins Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Innovation Award 2026



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Single Window (PSW) has won the prestigious Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Innovation Award 2026, becoming one of only three global winners. The award was presented during Paperless Trade Week 2026 in Bangkok, organized by the Asian Development Bank and UN ESCAP under the theme "Next Generation Trade Digitalization". PSW CEO Syed Aftab Haider received the award on behalf of Pakistan.

PSW was recognized for its Integrated Risk Management System (IRMS), a transformative tool for border clearance. IRMS replaces slow, manual inspections with an intelligent, automated engine that evaluates every trade declaration against regulatory rules, risk-scoring models, and AI analytics. It assigns consignments to clearance channels without human intervention, flagging high-risk shipments for scrutiny while allowing most low-risk, compliant trade to move quickly. This improves efficiency, reduces delays, and focuses enforcement resources where risks exist.

The system is legally backed by the Pakistan Single Window Act, 2021 and notified through a Statutory Regulatory Order, creating a uniform, binding framework across all border agencies and eliminating bureaucratic silos.

Haider said the award reflects PSW's dedication to building "digital trust" and turning fragmented processes into a structured, accountable national capability. At Bangkok, PSW also showcased its broader digital trade solutions, reinforcing Pakistan's role as a leader in trade digitalization, ease of doing business, and economic modernization.

Historic Pakistan-Kazakhstan boxing Partnership begins in Islamabad

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan boxing received a major boost as a landmark Pakistan-Kazakhstan collaboration officially commenced with the arrival of two elite Kazakh boxing coaches in Islamabad to conduct a comprehensive coaching and athlete development clinic at the Dosty Sports Centre, Pakistan Sports Complex.

The initiative marks the practical implementation of a strategic partnership between Pakistan and Kazakhstan aimed at reviving and strengthening Pakistan's boxing landscape through world-class training, knowledge exchange, and youth development programmes.

Talking to the media, President of the Pakistan Boxing Federation (PBF) Lt Col (R) Nasir Ijaz Tung, accompanied by Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin, and PBF Secretary Major Irfan Younis, termed the programme a "historic milestone" for the future of boxing in Pakistan.

The development follows the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between Pakistan and Kazakhstan earlier this year to enhance bilateral



eral cooperation in sports, particularly boxing, while promoting youth empowerment and people-to-people ties between the two friendly countries.

Nasir Tung said the partnership would facilitate talent exchange, capacity building and joint training programmes, enabling Pakistani boxers and coaches to benefit from Kazakhstan's globally acclaimed boxing system.

"These agreements are opening new doors for our young athletes. This is not

just about boxing; it is about creating a complete ecosystem of shared growth, excellence, friendship and opportunity," he said.

Under the agreement, Pakistani boxers will gain access to high-performance training environments, structured preparation for major international competitions, and regular exposure to top-level sparring partners—critical ingredients for success on the world stage.

Expressing his gratitude, Nasir Tung said the federation was delighted to host renowned Kazakhstan boxing coaches Damir Budanbekov and Nurzhan Kondybayev, describing their visit as a significant step towards rebuilding Pakistan's proud boxing legacy.

"We are extremely happy to welcome our Kazakh friends, whose expertise and experience will help elevate the standard of coaching and athlete development across Pakistan. This collaboration will inspire a new generation of champions," he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Kistafin reaffirmed his country's commitment to supporting Pakistan's boxing development.

"Pakistan has a rich boxing tradition and tremendous talent. We are proud to support our brotherly nation through this development programme, which will greatly benefit young Pakistani athletes and contribute to the growth of boxing in the region," he said.

He added that the initiative would play a key role in preparing Pakistani boxers for future international competitions while strengthening institutional cooperation between the two countries.

PTF Summer Camp continues



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The PTF Summer Camp 2026 continued here at the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) Tennis Complex on Wednesday.

A large number of young children from Islamabad and Rawalpindi are participating in the camp to enhance their tennis skills, physical fitness, and overall development during the summer holidays. This healthy initiative by the PTF provides youngsters with an excellent opportunity to learn tennis in a structured environment while staying active and reducing screen time.

The camp is being supervised by Ms. Sara Mansoor, National Development Director (NDD), and Mr. Shahzad Khan Head Coach NTC. The following assistant coaches and officials are actively involved in conducting the camp: Waqar Ahmad, Masood Abbasi and Omer Abbasi.

Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, President, PTF, and Col. Zia-ud-Din Tufail (R), Secretary General, PTF, conveyed their best wishes to all participating children. They encouraged the youngsters to work hard, enjoy the game, develop their skills, and make the most of this valuable learning opportunity.

Pakistan's Muzammil Murtaza defeats India's Aditya Kothari at ITF M15

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's leading tennis player, Muzammil Murtaza, made an impressive start to his campaign at the ITF M15 Future Tournament in Kayseri, Türkiye, defeating India's Aditya Kothari in straight sets, 6-0, 6-1, in the first round of the main draw.



Muzammil earned direct entry into the main draw through a wild card arranged by the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) in collaboration with the Turkish Tennis Federation, providing him with an excellent opportunity to compete at the international level, said a press release.

Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, President of the Pakistan Tennis Federation, congratulated Muzammil on his outstanding performance and praised his dominant victory.

Aisam said, PTF remains committed to creating opportunities for Pakistani players both at home and abroad. Through our mutual collaboration with the Turkish Tennis Federation, we secured a main draw wild card for Muzammil and also facilitated sponsorship support with the help of Bard Foundation for his participation in this tournament. It is encouraging to see him start his campaign with such a convincing victory against a strong Indian opponent. We hope he continues this momentum in the upcoming rounds.

The President further emphasized that PTF will continue to work towards providing international exposure and competitive opportunities to talented Pakistani players to help them improve their rankings and gain valuable experience on the professional circuit.

Col. (R) Zia-ud-Din Tufail, Secretary General of the Pakistan Tennis Federation, along with the PTF management, also congratulated Muzammil Murtaza on his excellent performance and wished him success in the remainder of the tournament.

The Demise of a National Pride

Tahmeed Sadiq

Hockey has been Pakistan's national sport since the country's inception. The Pakistan hockey team has an illustrious history and has brought immense glory to the nation under the aegis of the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF).

For nearly three decades, Pakistan maintained a remarkable winning streak in almost every major international hockey competition. The country won the Hockey World Cup four times, secured three Olympic gold medals, and claimed three gold, three silver, and four bronze medals in the Asia Cup. In addition, Pakistan earned three gold and seven silver medals in the Champions Trophy, alongside numerous other international titles.

Many of our national heroes hold distinguished records and have made invaluable contributions to the sport. It is regrettable that despite their extraordinary achievements, they were never accorded the recognition, respect, and support they truly deserved at any level of governance.

As a sports enthusiast since

childhood, I have always observed that cricket received preferential treatment over hockey. The latter, regardless of its achievements, was often neglected. Governments and sponsors alike displayed a discriminatory attitude towards the sport. People frequently compared the two games by saying, "Hockey Abad and Cricket Colony," or likening them to the difference between "Urdu medium and English medium" institutions.

Cricketers were provided with luxurious accommodation, modern facilities, air-conditioned transport, and every possible comfort during training camps and international tours. In contrast, Olympic and World Cup-winning hockey players were often accommodated in modest hotels or youth hostels. While cricketers received princely treatment, national hockey players were frequently treated as an ordinary team despite their unparalleled achievements.

It is worth mentioning that the concept of the Hockey World Cup and the Champions Trophy was initiated by the late Air Marshal (Retd.) Noor Khan. Ironically, although

he served as Chairman of both the BCCP (now PCB) and the PHF, his contributions towards the long-term development and promotion of hockey remained limited.

The decline of Pakistan hockey began approximately two decades ago, and today the sport has reached a state of near collapse. Internal conflicts among PHF officials, many of whom are former players, driven by personal interests, power struggles, and perks, have crippled the federation. PHF offices now present a deserted and neglected appearance, symbolizing the sport's unfortunate decline.

During hockey's golden era, the game was actively promoted at the grassroots level. Schools, particularly in rural areas, produced extraordinary players who went on to achieve international fame and bring honour to Pakistan.

I salute all our international and national hockey players for their dedication, sacrifices, and contributions in bringing accolades to the country.

It is a tragic irony that the nation which conceived and launched the Hockey World Cup now finds itself unable even to qualify for the tournament.

Zone-I, Zone-IV and Zone-VII Win in Regional Inter District U-19 One Day Cricket Tournament (Karachi Region)

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Three matches were decided on the opening day of the Regional Inter District Under-19 One Day Cricket Tournament (Karachi Region) at the various Grounds of the City.

The highlights of the days play was Brilliant Centuries by Ahmed Shahzad 103, Muhammad Hassan 102 and deadly bowling by Muhammad Bilal uddin 4/28, Akhtar Ali 4/32, Muhammad Farman 4/37, Muhammad Affan Abbasi 4/42.

The Tournament is being organized by Pakistan Cricket Board.

Scores in Brief:
Zone-I beat Zone-III by 26 runs at KCCA Stadium.
Zone-I 209/8 in 50 overs. Sahil Nisar 59 6x4, Muhammad Humza Malik 34, Mubashir Kashif 32, Monis Nadeem 27.
Akhtar Ali 4/32, Asadullah Khan 3/33.
In reply Zone-III Muhammad Hassan 102 8x4

1x6, Anas Khan 31, M. Farman 4/37, Muhammad Affan Abbasi 4/42, Afrasayab 2/32.

In the 2nd Match Zone-IV defeated Zone-II by 2 Wickets at UBL Sports Complex. Zone-II 131 allout in 37 overs. Muhammad Bilal uddin 36, Muhammad Furqan 23. Huzaifa Bin Sajid 3/33, Sheraz Ali 3/41, Muhammad Masham Hussain Siddiqui 2/13.

In reply Zone-IV 132/8 in, 29 overs. Aun Abbas 38, Rana Areeb Aftab 28. Muhammad Bilal uddin (sla) 4/28, Muhammad Huzaifa (ob) 2/12.

In the 3rd Match Zone-VII beat Zone-V by 33 runs at Eid Gah Ground Korangi. Zone-VII 243 allout in 49.2 overs. Syed Shayan Faheem 59 9x4, Muhammad Niyad 51 4x4, Adil Khan 34, Ali Sher 26. Rehan Bashir 3/53, Tariq Ali 2/43.

In reply Zone-V 210/4 in 50 overs. Ahmed Shahzad 103 10x4 2x6, not out, Rayan Chuohan 44 4x4, Majid Ali 25 not out. Abdul Rahim 2/47.

So far, is CPEC 2.0 delivering as a catalyst from infrastructure to industrialization?

Eman Naveed

The first announcement of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in 2015 held the potential of changing Pakistan's economic destiny. Roads were constructed, power plants were inaugurated and Gwadar got impetus to go ahead with new goals. A decade later, the foundational infrastructure is firmly laid, but the ultimate test of CPEC 2.0 lies in its ability to successfully convert these concrete foundations and capable networks into genuine, sustainable industrialization.

CPEC 2.0, which was meant to be initiated in mid-2024, represents a strategic shift for certain. The first

phase has focused primarily on energy and connectivity, creating almost 70,000 local jobs and injecting over 9500 megawatts into Pakistan's electrical grid, while the second proposed a shift in focus to Special Economic Zones, technology transfer, agro-processing and export-driven manufacturing. This transition brings a change from being a passive infrastructure consumer to an active developmental state for Pakistan. The big question to consider truthfully is whether the reality on the ground is moving forward with the vision.

Driven by coordinated efforts from Board of Investment, the number of approved Special Economic Zones has formally scaled up from seven to 44 across the country marking Paki-

stan's most concentrated industrial policy push in decades. This strategy is anchored by priority industries across various segments such as textiles, engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, light manufacturing, etc., in the cities of Rashakai (KP), Allama Iqbal Industrial City (Faisalabad) and Dhabaji SEZ (Sindh). This expanded footprint aligns with the state's URAAN Pakistan 5Es framework, explicitly leveraging SEZs to anchor export oriented growth and technology transfer.

The Industrial Cooperation Action Plan signed last November targets specific measures to shift parts of the Chinese manufacturing to Pakistan and to bring the country into the regional and global value chains. It isn't just a marketing ploy. It is a struc-

tural move towards making Pakistan a production hub and not just a transit corridor.

The numbers that are coming out of the earth give cause for tempered optimism. Early stages of development in some of the major clusters of SEZs had been completed by 2025, and the acceptance rates were around 73 percent, especially around Faisalabad. Excluding the foreign nationals of other countries, Chinese FDI in Pakistan during the first quarter of FY2026 amounted to USD 188.6 million which represents more than one-third of the total FDI received in Pakistan during the first quarter of FY2026. The bilateral trade reached over \$23 billion in 2024, and hundreds of Pakistani businessmen inked cross-sectoral deals

with Chinese businessmen in sectors of IT, agriculture, mining, and textiles.

Yet, a stark structural gap remains between policy projections and on-the-ground implementation. The Rashakai SEZ alone will create 200,000 jobs which so far has not been able to start full commercial operation anywhere in CPEC SEZ in KP. There is substantial gap between projections and implementation.

Past efforts for industries related to CPEC have faced the hurdles of land disputes, bureaucratic blockages, and lack of local ownership. Genuine technology transfer has also often not been seen in Belt and Road projects at large. In the meantime, the overall business climate of Pakistan — regulatory instability, political uncertainty, and lack of

skilled work force — remains to be a hurdle in absorbing industrial investment in any significant way from abroad.

However, for the first time, CPEC 2.0 is seriously making an effort at full industrialization, which is still lacking. The jump from the concrete to the production is real, the investment stream is real, and the institutional mechanisms being formed to play around SEZs are more advanced than those of CPEC 1.0. What's still vulnerable is execution — getting signed contracts to working factories, and jobs to working workers. A second chance has been given to Pakistan. The state's ability to use it effectively — and its consistency of policy — remains to be seen over the next five years.

The Lamp That Illuminated Millions of Hearts

Continued from Page 4

possessed a strong command of Qur'anic exegesis, Hadith, jurisprudence, principles of jurisprudence, theology, Arabic literature, and numerous other disciplines. His reading was extensive, and he consistently encouraged students and scholars to embrace research, study, and intellectual integrity. He often emphasized that the true adornment of a scholar lies in knowledge accompanied by sincerity, patience, and broad-mindedness.

His personality was distinguished

by piety, humility, and modesty. Despite his scholarly stature and widespread popularity, he never sought fame, position, or worldly gain. Simplicity was the hallmark of his life. He met everyone with kindness and sincerity and consistently prioritized the interests of Islam and the Muslim Ummah over personal considerations.

For the younger generation, his life serves as a shining example. He demonstrated that a true scholar is one who combines knowledge with practice, research with moderation, and faith with service to humanity. At

a time when society faces numerous intellectual, social, and moral challenges, his teachings and ideas have become more relevant than ever.

On June 15, 2026, this radiant lamp returned to his Lord. News of his passing spread rapidly throughout the country, and countless eyes were filled with tears. Scholars, students, spiritual leaders, political and social figures, and ordinary citizens all expressed profound grief. The void left by his departure cannot easily be filled, for such individuals emerge only once in generations individuals whose knowledge, character, and

sincerity leave a lasting impact on millions of lives.

Yet the true life of scholars continues through their ideas, students, scholarly contributions, and moral legacy. God willing, the intellectual and spiritual influence of Mufti Abdul Qayyum Khan Hazarevi (RA) will continue to benefit future generations. His students, his legal verdicts, his scholarly gatherings, and his reformative efforts will remain a source of ongoing reward for him.

Today, it is our responsibility to learn from his life. We must continue the tradition of combining knowledge

with research, disagreement with respect, and religion with love and moderation. If we carry forward his mission by promoting unity, reform, tolerance, and goodwill within society, that will be the most meaningful tribute to his memory.

Mufti Abdul Qayyum Khan Hazarevi (RA) dedicated every moment of his life to the service of Islam and the welfare of the Muslim Ummah. He was truly a shining star of knowledge and wisdom, a shelter for millions of hearts, a sincere guide for the Ummah, and a champion of balanced and moderate thought. His name will

forever be remembered with respect, love, and admiration.

May Allah Almighty, through the blessed intercession of His Beloved Prophet Muhammad, grand Mufti Abdul Qayyum Khan Hazarevi (RA) complete forgiveness, elevate his ranks, make his grave a garden from the gardens of Paradise, grant him the highest place in Jannat al-Firdaws, and bless his family, students, associates, and admirers with patience and strength. Ameen, O Lord of the Worlds.

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Celebration

ISLAMABAD: A view of portrait of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir displayed on a digital screen along roadside in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Federal Budget 2026-27: Key Initiatives for Social and Economic Progress

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani federal budget for fiscal year 2026-27 is designed to provide relief to various segments of the population, including the working class, industry, exporters, the construction sector, women, youth, and low-income individuals.

It also aims to broaden the tax base and foster sustainable economic growth, reflecting Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's commitment to public welfare and economic development.

Key budgetary meas-



ures include incentives for industry, exporters, and the construction sector to stimulate employment and related industries. For women, the budget introduces relief on reproductive health prod-

ucts by removing sales tax, an initiative termed the "pink tax" removal.

A comprehensive Prime Minister's Youth Package allocates Rs. 110 billion for agricultural financing and disbursing

funds to young entrepreneurs.

Addressing concerns about expenditure, Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kiyani clarified that education and health are now primarily provincial subjects following devolution.

The federal government's role is mainly in coordination and funding higher education through the Higher Education Commission.

Therefore, a complete picture of education and health spending requires examining provincial budgets as well.

The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has been allocated Rs. 838

billion, supporting over 10 million families, with women as primary beneficiaries. Inclusivity in the tax net, particularly for the retail sector, is a significant focus.

With approximately 3.5 million shopkeepers currently outside the tax system, a new scheme has been developed in consultation with traders, with expectations of positive outcomes and implementation efforts in major cities.

Public feedback gathered through social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook has also been considered in the budget formulation.

Political consensus, reforms vital for growth and poverty reduction: Qaiser Sheikh

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Investment Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh emphasized that political consensus, structural economic reforms, and investment-friendly policies are crucial for poverty reduction and economic growth in Pakistan.

He noted that despite past sincere efforts, poverty has risen, necessitating an examination of why sustained economic stability remains elusive.

Citing China's success in poverty alleviation through long-term planning and investment in education and skills, Sheikh highlighted Pakistan's



large youth population as a significant

asset, provided they are equipped with education, technical skills, and employment opportunities.

He stressed that investing in human capital and youth development is vital for the nation's future. Sheikh identified Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as the backbone of economic growth and employment, urging policymakers to bolster support for entrepreneurs, farmers, and small businesses.

He also advocated for greater political harmony, stating that national development requires cooperation among all political forces, rather than prolonged confrontation.

He pointed to Pakistan's demonstrated unity during challenges, such as recent India-Pakistan and Iran-US tensions, as evidence of its collective resolve and constructive diplomatic role.

Recalling Pakistan's past as a regional development model, Sheikh observed that many countries once behind Pakistan have now surpassed it due to policy continuity, investment openness, and export-led growth.

He identified excessive regulations and complex approval processes as major deterrents for investors, stressing the need for simplified procedures and a more business-friendly environment to attract investment.

Judicial Commission to consider key reforms in judges' appointment at next meeting

AFF

A joint meeting of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan has been called on June 19, where several important matters related to the appointment and evaluation of judges are expected to be considered.

The meeting will be chaired by Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi and will include participation from members of the superior judiciary, including representatives from High Courts and the Federal Shariat Court.

According to details, the commission will deliberate on four key agenda items. These include approval of interview rules for the appointment of judges, and the proposed framework for evaluating the perfor-

mance of High Court judges.

The meeting will also consider amendments to the Judicial Commission Rules 2024, alongside the approval of procedures for nominating judges to constitutional benches of High Courts.

Officials said that in the previous meeting held on June 11, proposals regarding these reforms were presented before the commission members. The upcoming joint session has now been convened to finalize and approve those recommendations.

The deliberations are part of ongoing efforts to streamline judicial appointments and improve performance assessment mechanisms within the country's superior judiciary.

DPM/FM Dar, Egyptian FM discuss preparations for R-4 Foreign Ministers' meetings

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday held a telephone conversation with Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty.

The two leaders exchanged views on the recent understandings reached between the United States and Iran and the forthcoming signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in Birgenstock, Switzerland, on Friday.

They also discussed preparations



for the upcoming Regional Four (R-4) Foreign Ministers' meeting later this month and agreed to remain in close contact, a statement issued by the Foreign Office Spokesperson said.

Balochistan presents Rs1.089tr budget with focus on health, education

Bureau Report

QUETTA: Balochistan Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Noshervani presents a Rs1.089 trillion budget for the fiscal year 2026-27 in the provincial assembly on Wednesday. Screenshot/PTV

Balochistan Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Noshervani on Wednesday presented a Rs1.089 trillion budget

for the fiscal year 2026-27 in the provincial assembly, with significant allocations for health, education and agriculture.

Presenting the budget during an ongoing assembly session, the finance minister said the provincial government had utilised 115 per cent of its development funds during the outgoing fiscal year.

The proposed budget earmarks Rs96 billion for the health sector, while Rs90 billion has been allocated for non-development health expenditures.

For education, the government has proposed an allocation of

Rs127 billion, reflecting its focus on improving access to and quality of education across the province.

An additional Rs91 billion has been set aside for higher and technical education, aimed at enhancing skills development and strengthening professional training institutions.

The agriculture sector is proposed to receive Rs23.6 billion, as the



government seeks to support farmers and boost agricultural productivity.

To strengthen law and order, the budget allocates Rs243 million in development funding and Rs1.2 billion in non-development expenditures for the security sector.

The budget proposals will now be debated in the provincial assembly before final approval.

Pakistan Warns 'Act of War' If India Diverts Chenab Waters; Plans Storage, Legal Response

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reiterated its formal legal and strategic stance after India's announcement to hold the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance, warning that any attempt to alter, deny or interfere with its lawful share of water will carry "grave consequences". The warning follows a National Security Committee declaration on April 24, 2026. The NSC termed the IWT a binding international agreement brokered by the World Bank with no provision for unilateral suspension. Calling water a vital national interest and lifeline for 240 million people, the statement said any effort to stop or divert Pakistan's share or usurp lower riparian rights will be considered an Act of War and met with "full

force across the complete spectrum of national power". Chenab-Beas Link Tunnel Sparks Alarm

Officials said New Delhi has moved beyond rhetoric by restricting hydrological cooperation and accelerating hydropower and sediment-management work. Most alarming, they added, is India's proposed Rs 2,352 crore Chenab-Beas Link Tunnel to divert water from the Chenab basin — a Western River allocated to Pakistan under the IWT — into the Beas system. Under the treaty, Western Rivers are reserved for Pakistan's unrestricted use. Officials termed the proposal a direct violation as it shifts water across river systems. They cited remarks by former Himachal Pradesh CM Jai Ram Thakur and BJP leader Anurag Thakur as evidence of the

project's strategic intent. While a single tunnel cannot deprive Pakistan overnight, officials said the core concern is India's upstream infrastructure building leverage over downstream flows. The Indus Basin supports over 90% of Pakistan's food production, with agriculture contributing about one-fourth of GDP and sustaining tens of millions of livelihoods. Multi-Pronged Domestic Response

In response, Pakistan is pursuing efficiency gains, additional storage and legal recourse under treaty provisions, despite difficulties posed by India's suspension move. Officials said calls are growing to raise the federal PSDP allocation of Rs 1.1 trillion to meet WAPDA's annual Rs 600-900 billion requirement, while provinces are urged to earmark more development funds



for hydropower and storage for the next decade. The proposed counter-strategy includes fast-tracking four Chenab storage projects identified by WAPDA with a combined capacity of nearly 4.5 MAF at Chinot, Wazirabad, Midh Ranjha and Shah Jiwana. Work on Diamer-Bhasha and Mohmand dams and the proposed Dudhnial Multi-

purpose Project will be accelerated. Capacity of the Marala Ravi Link Canal will be expanded to divert floodwaters, and a new Mangla-Marala Link Canal is planned to stabilize lean periods. On agriculture, officials said the plan envisages shifting from water-intensive crops to drought-resistant varieties in Chenab-dependent districts,

emergency canal lining to cut 30-40% seepage losses, stronger groundwater regulations, and flood storage/aquifer recharge to capture monsoon surpluses. "The message is clear: IWT violations can trigger war. This is a matter of survival for 250 million people, and Pakistan will not allow India to usurp its rights," officials said.