



A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ

ابو ہریرہ رضی اللہ عنہ نے بیان کیا کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کہ تم سب سے محبوبی بات ہے۔ آپس میں ایک دوسرے کی برائی کی تلاش میں نہ لگے۔ ہر روز ایک دوسرے سے بغض رکھو اور پیچھے پیچھے کسی کی برائی کرو۔ بلکہ اللہ کے بندے بھائی بھائی بن کر رہو۔ (صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 6724)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

Daily The Spokesman



Trump thanks China's Xi, Russia's Putin for being 'neutral' in Iran war

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday described Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin as "neutral" during the war with Iran, saying they had not thwarted his efforts to curb Tehran's nuclear ambitions.



Hezbollah chief says Lebanon at 'pivotal' moment after US-Iran deal

Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem on Wednesday urged Lebanese authorities to take advantage of a "pivotal" moment following a US-Iran deal to end the Middle East war, ahead of Israeli-Lebanese negotiations next week.

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PM signed Islamabad MoU

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif signed the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (Islamabad MoU) as mediator on Thursday. The Islamabad MOU has been signed by President of USA Donald J. Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pazeshkian.



Photo: PID

Iran releases signed copy of peace deal, hails it as historic

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian shared the signed copy of the peace agreement with the United States on social media, describing its key provisions as a historic milestone.

The document bears the signatures of US President Donald Trump, President Pezeshkian and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who facilitated the deal through Pakistan's mediation.

According to the document, Iran and the US have agreed to a permanent ceasefire and the complete cessation of hostilities — a development being described as a significant step towards reducing tensions in the Middle East.

The agreement includes the full lifting of economic sanctions on Iran, while Tehran has given assurances that it will not develop nuclear weapons.

Frozen Iranian assets abroad are to be immediately unfrozen,



a move expected to substantially ease the country's financial difficulties.

On energy, the deal restores Iranian oil exports, a development likely to have ripple effects on global markets.

The agreement also references a \$300 billion economic package for Iran, described as an extraordinary development for the country's economy.

The US has also committed to reducing military tensions in the region, while both sides have indicated their intent to seek ratification under the United Nations framework for a final agreement. A 60-day negotiating framework on Iran's nuclear programme has also been established under the accord, alongside provisions for the restoration of maritime routes.

FM Fidan felicitates Pakistan on historic signing Islamabad MOU between US, Iran

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar received a call from the Foreign Minister of Türkiye, Hakan Fidan.

FM Hakan Fidan congratulated Pakistan on the historic signing of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Iran, and endorsed by Pakistan as the mediator, a



DPM's Office news release said.

Both leaders expressed hope that this significant development would contribute to lasting peace, stability, and progress in the region and beyond.

Egypt commends Pakistan's role in advancing peace, stability in region

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday spoke with Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty.

The Egyptian Foreign Minister congratulated Pakistan on the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Iran.

He commended Pakistan's contribution to advancing peace and stability in the region and beyond. The two leaders also



noted the positive significance of this development for the global economic outlook.

They also discussed the forthcoming Regional Four (R-4) Foreign Ministers' Meeting (Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and Egypt), to be held in Al Alamein, Egypt, in the coming days.

Rumours of 18th Amend's abolition laid to rest by consensus, says Bilawal

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said on Thursday that rumours spread by certain quarters about the abolition of the 18th Constitutional Amendment had been answered by a consensual, democratic solution reached by the government and all political forces that safeguarded both national security imperatives and provincial rights.

"This is not merely a financial or administrative achievement — it is a victory for politics," he said while addressing the National Assembly during debate on the federal budget 2026-27, adding that when the national interest was at stake, all federating units came together to decide collectively.



Continue on Page 7

PM Shehbaz signs historic US-Iran 'Islamabad MoU' as mediator

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday signed the historic 'Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding' (MoU) as a mediator, formalizing a major diplomatic breakthrough between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

US President Donald Trump signed the document while visiting French President Emmanuel Macron at the Palace of Versailles. Concurrently, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian signed the accord in Tehran, with the Iranian state news agency, IRNA, releasing images of the president signing and displaying the document, which already featured President Trump's signature.

Later, Prime Minister's Office released images of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif inking the MoU as the mediator. The images showed the prime minister displaying the finalized document bearing the signatures of both the US and Iranian presidents.

"I am honoured to announce that the historic 'Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding' has been electronically signed today between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Memorandum has been signed by honourable Presidents of both the countries and also endorsed by me as the

mediator," the prime minister earlier announced on his X timeline.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the Islamabad MoU would enter into force with immediate effect and as a first step, Iran would instantly reopen the Strait of Hormuz and the United States (US) would immediately lift the naval blockade.

The prime minister offered heartfelt congratulations to US President Donald J. Trump for his commitment to diplo-

macy, and expressed profound appreciation to Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian for their wisdom and statesmanship.

He also commended the key contributions of the respective negotiating teams, regional partners including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and Egypt, as well as Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for his instrumental role in advancing regional stability.

High-Level Military Talks Held Between Pakistan and Ghana



Naveed Ahmad Khan

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Ghana have agreed to strengthen military-to-military relations and expand defence cooperation, with a focus on joint training, counter-terrorism and defence production, the military said on Thursday.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR),

Lieutenant General William Agyapong, Chief of Defence Staff of the Republic of Ghana, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Staff, at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

Upon his arrival, the visiting dignitary was presented a guard of honour by a smartly turned-out tri-services contin-

gent.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed matters of mutual interest, regional security and bilateral defence cooperation. They agreed to further strengthen military ties and enhance collaboration in key areas, including joint training programmes, counter-terrorism efforts and defence production.

The Ghanaian military chief



commended the professionalism of the Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their contribution to regional peace and stability.

Separately, Ghana's National Security Coordinator Abdul Razak Osman met Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters

and Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu at Air Headquarters in Islamabad.

Lieutenant General Agyapong also attended the meetings, which focused on strengthening defence and security cooperation between the two countries.

PML-N President Nawaz Sharif issues tickets to 37 candidates

Abdul Majeed Tahir.

LAHORE: Muzaffarabad: PML-N President Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has approved the final list

of party candidates for the 2026 general elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

According to a notification issued by the central secretariat, the deci-

sion was taken in the light of the recommendations of the PML-N Parliamentary Board.

According to the regular list issued, the following candidates will

contest the elections on the party symbols for the seats of various constituencies of Azad Kashmir and refugees settled in Pakistan as detailed under:

Sr. No	Constituency	Constituency Name	Name of Candidate
1.	LA-02	Chaksawari	Azeem Bakhsh Chaudhary
2.	LA-03	Mirpur City	Ch. Muhammad Saeed
3.	LA-04	Khari	Rukhsar Ahmed
4.	LA-05	Barnala	Waqar Ahmed Noor
5.	LA-06	Samahni	Muhammad Razza Choudha
6.	LA-07	Bhimber City	Ch. Tariq Farooq
7.	LA-09	Nakial	Umair Naeem
8.	LA-10	Kotli	Fateh Mahmood UI Hassan
9.	LA-11	Sehnsa	Muhammad Asif
10.	LA-12	Charhoi	Muhammad Riasat Khan
11.	LA-13	Khuratta	Ayaz Ahmed
12.	LA-14	Dhirkot	Raja Fiasal Azad
13.	LA-15	Wasti Bah	Mushta Ahmed Minhas
14.	LA-16	Shar i Bah	Sardar Mir Akbar Khan
15.	LA-17	Havell	h. Mohsin Aziz
16.	LA-19	Hajira	Sardar Amer Altaf Khan
17.	LA-20	Khaigala	Abdul Rashid Khan
18.	LA-21	Rawalakot City	Tahir Anwar Khan
19.	LA-23	Plandn	Muhammad Najeeb Khan

Sr. No	Constituency	Constituency Name	Name of Candidate
20.	LA-24	Baloch	Farooq Ahmad Tahir
21.	LA-25	Upper Neelum	Shah Ghulam Qadir
22.	LA-26	Lower Neelum	Shah Ghulam Qadir
23.	LA-27	Kutla	Noreen Arif
24.	LA-29	Muzaftabad City	Syed Iftikhar Ali Gillani
25.	LA-30	Hatian Dopatta	Dr. Mustafa Bashir Abbasi
26.	LA-31	Khawara	Saqib Majeed Raja
27.	1A-32	Chikar	Raja M Faroo Haider Khan
28.	LA-33	Leepa	Ch. Muhammad Rasheed
29.	LA-34	Jammu-1	Nasir Hussain Dar
30.	LA-35	Jammu-2	Ch. Muhammad Ismail
31.	LA-37	Jammu-4	Maryam Javed
32.	LA-38	Jammu-5	Zeeshan Ali
33.	LA-39	Jammu-6	Raja Muhammad Siddique
34.	LA-40	Valley-1	Muhammad Naeem Khan
35.	LA-42	Valley-3	Syed Shaikat Ali Shah
36.	LA-43	Valley-4	Muhammad Yasin Loon
37.	LA-44	Valley-5	Muhammad Ahmed Raza Qadri

Key Dates Announced: New election schedule and nomination deadlines released

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: According to a press release issued by the ECP, the ECP has revised the election schedule. According to the press release, the Election Commission has revised the electoral schedule bringing into force the powers obtained under Section 37 of the Election Act 2020. The last date for submitting nomination papers to the Returning Officers as per the revised schedule has been fixed for 23 June 2026 at 05:00 pm, while 2 nomination papers will be examined on 2 It will start from 08:00 am and the list of all candidates will be published by the Returning Officers on the same day. Returning Officer on behalf of the candidates against their decision dated 25.06.2026 to 28.06.2026 (before 02:00 pm) will reduce the space for filing appeals with the Election Commission. Appeals will be heard on 29.06.2026, 30.06.2026 from 09:00 am to 04:00 pm. Candidates who will participate in the elections on 04.07.2026 should return their nomination papers before 02:00 pm on 03.07.2026. 05.07.2026 from 02:00 pm onwards the return of ballot papers to the candidates and the final list of candidates contesting the elections on the same day will be published at polling station 7 Extension of nomination and examination of papers at Poonch House on June 16, 2026 for the convenience of the people of Poonch (Raulakot) district. Expected candidates of Poonch (Rawalakot) district Poonch (Rawalakot) district latest updates on nomination forms and examination centers for Jamla constituencies The Election Commission of AZ (AJK) has accepted the proposal to extend the date of submission of nomination forms for the candidates from Poonch (Rawalakot) district. As usual, submit the nomination papers to the relevant constituency returning officers in District Poonch (Rawalakot). Gee All candidates are requested to make sure to submit their nomination papers within the stipulated date and time.



Azad Kashmir Leader Condemns Violence, Calls for Dialogue

Bureau Report

RAWALPINDI: The President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that the unpleasant incidents in Azad Kashmir and the resulting loss of precious lives and expressed regret over the irreplaceable loss.

In a special message, Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan said "Neither the state should be weak nor should the voice of the people be suppressed. A strong state and a dignified people are the foundation of a peaceful and stable society.

The former Prime Minister urged all concerned parties to show extreme restraint, responsibility and wisdom in the current situation. He appealed to prevent further escalation of the situation so that no more innocent lives are lost.

Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan made it clear that the solution of all outstanding problems can be sought only through dialogue, rule of law and mutual respect.

He hoped that all parties would demonstrate seriousness for the establishment of peace and the betterment of the region.

Amanullah Khan Visited Various Departments of the Children Hospital Multan.



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Special Secretary South Punjab Amanullah along with Dean Children's Hospital Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti visited various departments of the hospital in detail at Children's Hospital Multan. Medical Superintendent (MS) Dr. Kamran Asif was also present on this occasion. During the visit, the Special Secretary inspected various departments including Medical and Surgical HDU, Medical Wards, Nursery Wards for Newborns and Young Children, Surgery Ward. He met the relatives of the children under treatment and inquired about the medical facilities provided in the hospital, treatment and attitude of the staff. On this occasion, Special Secretary Amanullah emphasized the need to provide the best medical facilities to the patients and further improve the quality of treatment, while Dean Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti gave a briefing on the performance of the hospital and ongoing measures.

Free Dialysis Center inaugurated, providing free treatment facility to kidney patients.

Ch Muhammad Anwar Chohan

KHARIAN: Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce, Investment, Auqaf and Religious Affairs Punjab Chaudhry Shafie Hussain formally inaugurated Muhammad Ashraf Gondal Free Dialysis Center. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Chairman Overseas Pakistani Foundation Syed Qamar Raza, Deputy Commissioner Gujrat, Assistant Commissioner Kharian, Member National Assembly Chaudhry Ilyas, Member Provincial Assembly Raja Aslam, Member Provincial Assembly Tashfeen Safdar Marala, Former Member Provincial Advisor Chaudhry Naeem Raza, Chaudhry Akhlaq Ahmed Raniyan, Chief Executive Officer Health, Medical Superintendent THQ Hospital Kharian Raja Zafar Mehndi, Medical Superintendent THQ Hospital Sarai Alangir Bilal Bin Tariq, President Kharian Bar Chaudhry Khalid Hussain Sheikhchuk Advocate, Chaudhry Shahid Mahmood and other important personalities from political, social and public circles.

Addressing the ceremony, Chaudhry Shafi Hussain said that providing free dialysis facility to patients suffering from kidney diseases is a great welfare service. He termed the establishment of Muhammad Ashraf Gondal Free Dialysis Center as a great example of service to humanity and said that such projects prove to be a ray of hope for the suffering humanity.

Interested

ISLAMABAD: Girls take interest in art work during an exhibition "REJECTED" by Offdrid Studio's Residency Chapter #4 at PNCA in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Usefulness Account Education is increasing Day By Day In Pakistan

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Joint Director ICMA Samina Khan Kiani has said that the usefulness of account education is increasing day by day in Pakistan and the whole world, whether it is the government sector or the private sector, we cannot function without accounts.

The coming era is of AI in which we have to come forward. Therefore, work hard and play our role in the development and development of Pakistan by getting the best employment for ourselves and our families. Chairman ICMA Multan Branch Council Muhammad Yousuf Siddiqui said at



the ceremony that ICMA is becoming a landmark in Pakistan and developed countries. Today, it has completed 75 years

of providing the best education in accounts. People have made a good decision to study here. Work hard, God willing, success will follow your footsteps.

Addressing the ceremony, Professor Dr. Ramzan Sheikh, Professor Yasin Jamal, Imtiaz Bashir, Mrs. Amira Sheikh, Mukhtar Kashif and other teachers said that under the leadership of ICMA Joint Director Samina Khan Kiani, the institution is progressing day and night. She is a highly educated and experienced woman who is leading ICMA Multan towards progress due to her abilities. Her mission is an educated Pakistan.

National media coalition seek increased investment in population, social services

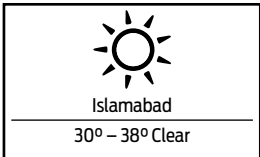
Rafullah Mandokhel

QUETTA: Journalists, policy experts, and development practitioners gathered at a Media Coalition Meeting titled 'Population Stabilization and Resource Allocation: Media's Role in Promoting Accountability,' organized by the Population Council in collaboration with UNFPA. The meeting stressed that Pakistan's rapid population growth (around 2.5% annually) strains the economy, public services, and resources. Participants called for increased and sustained public investment in family planning and social sectors like health and education. Dr. Ali Mir of the Population Council highlighted the need for

political commitment and adequate financing, emphasizing that health and education are crucial investments. He also pointed out that birth spacing aligns with Islamic teachings on maternal and child health. Ikram ul Ahad from the Population Council noted the significant gap between population growth and public financing, with Pakistan investing far less in population welfare than regional peers. He urged for better use of data to hold officials accountable to national targets, such as reducing fertility. Family planning was identified as a cost-effective investment with substantial returns. Ammar Ali Qureshi, Senior Economic Advisor, framed population stabiliza-

tion as a macroeconomic necessity, linking Pakistan's declining economic trajectory to rapid population growth and structural challenges. He stressed that educating girls and increasing women's economic participation are key to reducing fertility and fostering long-term growth. Media representatives highlighted governance, financing, and service delivery gaps impacting population and development, including provincial disparities and limited access to quality services. They called for addressing social and structural barriers, promoting women's empowerment, and encouraging male involvement in family planning. The strategic use of media, especially digital plat-

forms, was deemed crucial for public understanding and behavior change. The meeting concluded with a consensus that population stabilization is a national priority for economic growth and human development. Participants urged for increased, protected financing for population and social sectors, improved coordination, and effective service delivery. The media's role in fostering accountability and informed public discourse through evidence-based reporting was strongly emphasized. Media professionals committed to strengthening their coverage of population and development issues to drive accountability and inform decision-making.



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

ADC-G-During Muharram visited various processions routes

By Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Additional Deputy Commissioner General Anil Saeed visited various procession routes to review the arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram. During the visit, he conducted a detailed inspection of the facilities and arrangements made along the procession routes, including water stalls, cleanliness and sanitation measures, security arrangements, and other essential services.

Officials from the relevant departments accompanied him during the inspection. The Additional Deputy Commissioner General directed the concerned authorities to ensure that mourners are provided with every possible facility and that all arrangements along the procession routes are completed on time and remain fully operational.

He also issued strict instructions to the relevant officers to perform their duties with responsibility and diligence during Muharram-ul-Haram. He emphasized that all departments should work in close coordination to maintain public convenience and ensure law and order, adding that any negligence or lapse in duty would not be tolerated.

Anil Saeed further stated that the district administration is utilizing all available resources to ensure the best possible arrangements during Muharram-ul-Haram so that mourners can observe the occasion in a peaceful and secure environment.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif Directs Comprehensive Muharram Arrangements

Bureau Report

LAHORE: On the special directions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Special Education Sania Ashiq visited the Central Imambargah Model Town to review arrangements being made for Muharram-ul-Haram.

During the visit, license holders and organizers of the Imambargah met Sania Ashiq and expressed satisfaction over the measures undertaken by the district administration. Officials briefed the Special Assistant on the preparations, informing her that planning for central monitoring, rescue services, medical cover, lighting, temporary public toilets, drainage and other essential facilities had been completed.

Sania Ashiq directed all relevant departments, including Rescue Services, to ensure exemplary arrangements for mourners and to maintain a peaceful and secure environment during Muharram. She emphasized that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif had issued clear instructions for



the provision of the highest standards of security, sanitation, medical facilities and civic services to facilitate the public and ensure the smooth observance of Muharram.

She further stated that all arrangements were being implemented in

accordance with government directives and standard operating procedures (SOPs), adding that progress would be reviewed on a daily basis to ensure timely completion of all necessary measures.

The Punjab government, she said,

remained fully committed to promoting peace, religious harmony and public convenience during the holy month.

Laurel Commissioner Maryam Khan informed the Special Assistant that all requirements along the routes of processions originating from central

Imambargahs were being addressed. She added that the administration was maintaining close coordination with organizers and license holders to ensure seamless arrangements and effective management of Muharram-related activities.

Exhibition

ISLAMABAD: Girls take interest in art work during an exhibition "REJECTED" by Offdrid Studio's Residency Chapter #4 at PNCA in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Quaid-i-Azam University Retains Pakistan's Top Position, Ranks 381st

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Quaid-i-Azam University has retained its position as Pakistan's top higher education institution, ranking 1st nationally and 381st globally in the QS World University Rankings 2027, despite severe financial constraints.

The university also secured a place among the world's top 60 universities for citations per faculty, scoring 97.2 out of 100 — a key indicator of research quality and global academic impact.

The achievement is notable given QAU's ongoing fiscal crisis. Government funding has remained frozen at 2018 levels amid rising inflation, operational costs and student intake. The university has faced

mounting deficits and delayed salary disbursements over the past year.

QS's "citations per faculty" metric measures how frequently a university's research is referenced by scholars worldwide. QAU's score of 97.2 places it alongside the world's most influential research institutions, reflecting sustained faculty output and international recognition of its work.

"This reflects the institution's sustained commitment to advancing knowledge, fostering innovation and contributing meaningfully to global scholarship," the university said in a statement.

University officials said faculty continued to produce world-class research while students pursued academic

excellence and staff maintained operations despite financial strain.

"This is the spirit of resilience that defines Quaid-i-Azam University," the statement added.

The QAU community urged the federal government and Higher Education Commission to prioritise funding for the flagship institution. In a joint statement, it called QAU "a national asset that brings Pakistan international recognition, respect and visibility".

The statement urged the government to allocate emergency funds, clear pending dues, establish a research and student scholarships endowment fund, and ensure sustainable financing.

The Academic Staff Association

has previously warned that without immediate financial intervention, research output that has earned Pakistan global academic standing could be compromised.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Zafar Nawaz Jaspal congratulated the faculty, students, staff and alumni for the achievement. He credited the faculty's research excellence, students' academic ambition, staff's operational support, and alumni's continued backing for the university's success.

The QS World University Rankings 2027 assess institutions on academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty/student ratio, citations per faculty, international faculty ratio and international student ratio.

Climate Risks Threaten Education: Experts Call for Inclusive Adaptation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sightsavers Pakistan and Allama Iqbal Open University convened a high-level Roundtable on Climate-Resilient Inclusive Education, bringing together federal and provincial officials, academia, development partners and civil society to address growing climate risks in Pakistan's education sector.

The consultation reviewed findings from two DARE-RC funded studies showing that floods, heatwaves, smog and water scarcity increasingly disrupt school attendance, health and learning outcomes. Impacts are disproportionate on girls, children with disabilities and marginalised communities. Researchers stressed that climate hazards are recurring, not isolated, and called for locally informed, disability-inclusive and gender-responsive adaptation.

Speakers urged stronger coordination. Dr. Zaigham Qadeer of the Pakistan Institute of Education highlighted the need for actionable recommendations for federal and provincial planning. Sightsavers' Munazza Gillani called for a multi-sectoral platform to unite efforts on climate, education and disability inclusion, noting current work remains fragmented.

Sindh's Dr. Fouzia Khan cited the province's Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group and need to integrate resilience into planning and teacher training. Punjab's Salman Ali reaffirmed commitment to climate-resilient education and stronger collaboration between education and disaster management bodies.

A key outcome was consensus to form a multi-sectoral working group on Climate-Resilient Inclusive Education. Participants prioritised evidence-based policy, coordinated advocacy, improved data systems, teacher capacity building and school-level preparedness to ensure "no learner is left behind".

Foolproof Security Plan Announced for Muharram in Kamalia

Zafar Chishti

A Tehsil-level Peace Committee meeting for Muharram-ul-Haram, chaired by Assistant Commissioner Kamalia Erum Shahzadi and DSP Kamalia Javed Akhtar, reviewed arrangements for maintaining law and order.



Discussions covered security for processions and Majalis, sanitation, lighting, water, traffic, healthcare, and administrative matters. Shahzadi directed departments to conduct surveys and ensure timely provision of facilities, stressing that all public service institutions must remain active without negligence. DSP Akhtar outlined a foolproof security plan with additional police deployment and surveillance, promising strict enforcement of the Punjab government's code of conduct and action against peace disruptors. Officials provided updates on preparations, and committee members pledged cooperation to foster religious harmony and ensure peaceful Muharram observance.

BISP Launches Digital Wallets for 10 Million Women Beneficiaries

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has partnered with ILINK and several banks to launch an interoperable digital wallet system for beneficiaries, enhancing financial inclusion and service delivery for women.

This initiative, chaired by BISP Chairperson Senator Rubina Khalid, aims to provide beneficiaries with greater convenience, accessibility, transparency, and choice in receiving their stipends. Payments will be directly credited to digital wallets, allowing women to withdraw funds from any participating bank's retailer or agent nationwide, regardless of the issuing bank.

This reform addresses historical challenges like long queues and limited access points, making transactions safer and more convenient. It is envisioned as a significant step towards empowering women financially and enabling greater economic participation. Over 10 million beneficiary families are expected to benefit. BISP has directed partners to conduct outreach, ensure timely account activation, and train staff and agents for successful grassroots implementation, emphasizing dignified and confident access to payments for every beneficiary.

'Towards Stability: US, Iran and the Path Forward for Peace'

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies hosted an expert webinar titled "Towards Stability: US, Iran and the Path Forward for Peace" to assess evolving US-Iran dynamics and implications for regional and global stability. Dr. Lyudmila Aleksandrovna Pechishcheva, Senior Research Fellow at the Russian Academy of Sciences, was the Eminent Speaker.

Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, IRS President, warned that the US-Iran



conflict extends beyond regional security, threatening global energy supplies, gas flows, fertilizers and food

security. Continued disruptions, he said, could trigger inflation and food crises, making sustained diplomacy and a structured negotiation framework urgent. He highlighted emerging efforts to restore stability, including unblocking the Strait of Hormuz, resuming shipping, phased negotiations, sanctions relief, and security guarantees. He also noted Pakistan's role as a dialogue facilitator.

Dr. Pechishcheva outlined three scenarios: a "grand bargain" with nuclear limits and Iran's economic reinte-

gration; a fragile "no-war, no-peace" status with partial deals; and a pessimistic escalation driven by rivalry and sanctions.

Speakers stressed the Strait of Hormuz's role in oil and maritime trade. Emerging diplomatic frameworks may include phased sanctions relief, asset unfreezing, and renewed nuclear talks on enrichment and verification. The session concluded that sustained diplomacy, restraint and multilateral engagement are vital to prevent escalation and ensure long-term peace.

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Countering Israel's Weaponization of Civilian Technology

The assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader and several senior Iranian military officials in February 2026 may mark a watershed moment in the evolution of modern warfare. The joint Israel and the USA operation to assassinate the Iranian's top leadership was enabled by a sophisticated combination of surveillance technologies, communications interception, cyber capabilities, satellite imagery, human intelligence, and artificial intelligence-assisted analysis.

The Israel Mossad aided by the US's CIA integrated information from multiple sources to create highly detailed profiles of senior Iranian officials, their routines, movements, and interactions. Advanced analytical systems transformed enormous volumes of raw information into actionable intelligence, identifying patterns and pinpointing locations with remarkable precision. The result was the reported targeting of a high-level leadership gathering in Tehran.

Only months earlier, the world witnessed another disturbing example of technology's role in conflict. In September 2024, thousands of pagers and walkie-talkies exploded across Lebanon. Ordinary communication devices suddenly became instruments of death and destruction. Dozens were killed and thousands injured. The incident shocked the world because it demonstrated how civilian technology

could allegedly be transformed into a weapon.

Taken together, the reported Tehran operation and the Lebanon device explosions reveal two dimensions of modern warfare. One demonstrates how surveillance systems, communications monitoring, artificial intelligence, and big-data analytics can allegedly be used to identify and locate targets. The other demonstrates how civilian technologies themselves can become part of military operations. This should concern every nation.

The explosions of pagers and walkie-talkies across Lebanon in September 2024 were not an ordinary military operation. They were a warning to the entire world. Devices normally used for communication suddenly became instruments of death. They exploded in pockets, homes, streets, hospitals and funeral gatherings. Dozens were killed, including children, and thousands were injured. Lebanon was thrown into panic because no one knew which device might explode next. This was the terrifying message of the attack: in the modern age, civilian technology itself can be turned into a battlefield.

The ability of Israel to weaponize civilian technological products points to a highly sophisticated operation involving deep intelligence penetra-

tion, supply-chain manipulation and remote activation. The explosive material is hidden inside the batteries of walkie-talkies, making detection extremely difficult. The United Nations human rights office warned that simultaneous targeting of thousands of people through such devices, without knowing who was carrying them or who was standing nearby, violated international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

This is where the matter becomes far larger than Hezbollah or Lebanon. If a pager, a phone, a radio or any communication device can be secretly converted into a bomb, then the distinction between civilian life and military operation begins to collapse. A device manufactured for communication becomes a weapon. A battery becomes an explosive chamber. A message becomes a trigger. A civilian street becomes an execution ground.

Israel has long projected itself as a global technology power. Its leaders have repeatedly celebrated the country's innovation, cyber capability, intelligence reach, surveillance systems and big-data platforms. But Lebanon exposed the darker side of that technological power. Innovation, when fused with unchecked military ambition, does not merely produce security; it can produce assassina-

tion systems.

Israel's history of targeted killings is well known. From letter bombs and explosive phones to drone strikes, cyber operations and remote-controlled weapons, Israel has used technology to hunt those it calls enemies. The killing of Hamas bombmaker Yahya Ayyash in 1996 through an explosive cellphone is one earlier example. The assassination of Iranian scientist Mohsen Fakhrazadeh through a remote-controlled, AI-assisted weapon is another. The Lebanon device explosions now add a more frightening dimension: mass deployment of weaponized civilian devices.

The danger is no longer limited to one individual target. The danger is mass assassination through ordinary technology. This development raises serious legal questions. International humanitarian law is built on the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution. Combatants must be distinguished from civilians. Civilian objects must not be turned into indiscriminate weapons. Attacks must not cause civilian harm excessive to the military advantage sought. Commanders must take precautions to avoid killing innocent people. The Lebanon explosions appear to have endangered all these principles.

A device carried by one suspected fighter may explode in a market. A radio may detonate near a child. A pager may explode during a funeral. A walkie-talkie may injure doctors, shopkeepers or

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Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Special Measures for Ashura Days

On the orders of Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awas Ahmad Khan Leghari, the Ministry of Energy (Power Division) has issued comprehensive operational directives to all Distribution Companies (DISCOs), the National Power Control Centre (NPCC), and the National Grid Company (NGC) to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply during the sacred month of Muharram-ul-Haram, with special focus on the 9th and 10th of Muharram – Ashura. The instructions reflect the government's commitment to public safety and seamless delivery of essential services during one of the most important occasions in the Islamic calendar.

All DISCOs have been told to immediately hold consultative meetings with District Administration, Majaalis Management Committees, and law enforcement agencies. They must obtain accurate lists of Majaalis venues and procession routes for every Operation Sub-division and District. The Chief Engineer (Operation) of each DISCO is designated overall in-charge for monitoring supply continuity, while focal persons at Circle level will coordinate in real time with civil authorities, security agencies, and community representatives.

Network maintenance at all sites serving Majaalis and Imam Bargahs must be completed by 7th Muharram. Hanging wires along procession routes are to be urgently rectified to eliminate safety hazards, and all routes must be made electrically safe before processions begin. Every Sub-division must keep emergency teams on standby with full Tools and Plant, materials, transformers including trolley-mounted units, and dedicated vehicles throughout Muharram. Regional and Field Stores will operate on emergency basis for continuous material supply.

Round-the-clock control rooms must be established at multiple administrative tiers, with contact details publicized via print media, official websites, and social media so citizens can report faults. Managers, Deputy Managers, and Assistant Managers (Operation) with full staff must remain present in offices, especially on Ashura. No leave will be granted to operational staff, and additional teams will be deployed at Circle and Division levels for emergency response.

NGC must ensure seamless power delivery to DISCOs strictly per NPCC allocations. ISMO's Regional Control Centres in Islamabad and Jamshoro will operate 24/7 to handle any transmission contingencies. DISCOs must strictly follow NPCC load allocations to protect system stability and prevent cascading outages.

DISCOs must prepare detailed contingency plans to manage feeder loads and avoid forced load shedding, especially in areas prone to interruptions during peak demand. Monitoring of feeders, including those cleared of power theft, will be rigorous. Emergency generators within each DISCO must be kept operational and deployed to critical sites as needed. Consumer complaints must be redressed promptly, and a Public Information Campaign must be activated immediately during any fault to keep the public informed.

Strict vigilance is ordered against unauthorized persons working on the distribution network, with immediate action against violators. All field personnel must follow safety protocols throughout Muharram.

The Power Division reaffirmed its commitment to providing reliable, safe electricity during Muharram-ul-Haram and called on DISCOs, transmission entities, and district administrations to coordinate closely for a safe, dignified, and uninterrupted observance of Ashura nationwide.



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

How India is Stealing Kashmiri Identity One Biometric at a Time

The mention of the circular issued by the Indian government on 1st June, 2026, to "comprehensively re-verify every citizen of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK)" should have been taken for what it actually is: the most silent genocide ever "designed." The order demands all citizens to provide new iris scans, fingerprints and facial recognition data by September 1, 2026. The ones who fail will get their ration card frozen, bank accounts will be cancelled, they will not be enrolled in schools, and they will be deleted from the government's database, all of which are bureaucratic euphemisms for administrative punishment.

The choreography is now a familiar one for all Kashmiri people of an occupation that is a policy that was announced, implemented and enforced without a debate, a review and by slowly strangulating the day to day survival of the Kashmiri people. As "national security" becomes the cover story, India is creatively disengaging the Kashmiri people from their identity, one scan at a time.

The people of IIOJK are NOT Criminals. They are weavers, shopkeepers, farmers who have assumed their authority and names by succumbing to the soil of Kashmiri lands. However, in the new system, a Kashmiri's life is not certified through a birth certificate, but a server in New Delhi. In April 2026, a whistleblower in the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) leaked a chat that revealed that the biometric data of Kashmiri residents was passed on to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) without any warrants, which contradicts the provisions of the Aadhaar Act. For Kashmiri, it is not a service, it's a cage.

The figures reveal the reason for this lockdown. The Jammu and Kashmir Civil Liberties Union

(JKCLU) reported that as of now, more than 340 thousand people have been "de-referenced" since 2019, with the majority being from families that have had a history of political dissent. In the absence of Aadhaar, a Kashmiri is not allowed to purchase subsidized food, avail health care services, open bank accounts or enroll in education. The poor little bastards are not the beneficiaries, the ghosts are instead the state which has shut down human rights offices, been responsible for the arrest of activists under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), and blocked social media in the territory. These are the voices of the Kashmiri people that are being turned deaf to by the biometric bureaucracy.

The biometric re-verification is part of the overall attacks on Kashmiri civil society. The same government that sealed the Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) and jailed human rights activist Khurram Parvez for 5 years wants all the Kashmiri's to undergo a digital test that can be cancelled anytime. The Public Safety Act (PSA) has already demonstrated that the state is able to detain without trial. The biometric regime demonstrates that it will starve indefinitely. If a fingerprint does not match, the state does not shoot a bullet when the Kashmiri's ration card is frozen. It waits until it's time for hunger to do the rest.

The legal system is shockingly efficient. As per Section 7 of the Aadhaar Act, authentication would be required to avail "subsidies, benefits and services" from the government. However, there is no judicial review for a "failed authentication. If the server refuses to accept the fingerprint – even if it's not the right one or the fingerprints are marked as administrative – there's no court that can force the food to be restored. In IIOJK where more than 70% of the people rely on subsidized rations, that

power decides who eats and who does not.

There has been an inadequate international response. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has kept a file on the use of biometric exclusion as a means of counterinsurgency. However, no sanctions have been suggested. The EU does not require any conditions to be met regarding the protection of biometric data in the context of trade negotiations. The United States is silent. Sanctioned statements are made, ration cards are frozen.

What is needed is a paradigm shift. Guns are still present. However, the latest one is the algorithm. India has found that it's easier to remove a person from a database than to shoot its members in a street. Biometric blacklisting should be understood as collective punishment, which is banned by Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and acknowledged by the world as such. Any country that respects digital rights should impose specific sanctions on the Indian officials that have implemented this regime.

This case is not a simple fingerprint case. It's about if the world can withstand digital annihilation instead of physical occupation. It's nearing September 1st. More than seven million Kashmiris are being asked to have their identity confirmed not on the basis of their land, their history, but by a computer server that can be turned off. India's adherence to the rule of law depends on stopping the re-verification campaign, revoking de-referenced telephones and providing its database for international audit. Until then, another failed login, another frozen ration card, another hungry child is another finger on the trigger of a genocide where no one is left. Kashmiri people are bigger than biometrics. The occupation has been able to strip them down to just that, however.

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Analysis

Muhammad Habib

India's So-Called Democracy Ends in Kashmir

Mushtaq Ahmed Butt

India frequently presents itself as the world's largest democracy—a nation built upon constitutional governance, political pluralism, and respect for fundamental rights. Its leaders often highlight democratic values, the rule of law, and individual freedoms as defining features of the Indian state.

Yet the true measure of a democracy is not the number of elections it holds, but how it treats people whose voices challenge those in power and whose rights require protection despite political differences.

By this standard, India's so-called democracy faces its greatest test in Kashmir.

For decades, the people of Jammu and Kashmir have lived under conditions that many argue stand in contrast to the democratic principles India claims to uphold. The region has experienced prolonged political uncertainty, extensive security measures, restrictions on civil liberties, and efforts to suppress voices seeking political rights and self-determination.

The Kashmir issue is not merely about territory or borders; it is fundamentally about people—their identity, dignity, and future. Instead of addressing Kashmiri aspirations through meaningful dialogue and democratic engagement, successive Indian governments have largely relied on security-driven policies that have deepened mistrust and alienation.

No democracy can claim credibility while denying people the opportunity to express their political aspirations freely. Genuine democracy is strengthened not through coercion but through consent, and not by silencing dissent but by listening to it.

Recent years have intensified international concerns regarding democratic freedoms in Kashmir. Restrictions on political leaders, pressure on civil society organizations, and challenges faced by journalists and human rights defenders have raised serious questions about the gap between India's democratic rhetoric and realities on the ground.

History teaches that lasting peace cannot be achieved by suppressing the aspirations of an entire people. Military power may control territory, but it cannot create legitimacy. Laws may restrict expression, but they cannot erase identity or extinguish the desire for freedom, justice, and dignity.

More than twelve million Kashmiris continue to hope that their voices will one day be heard and their rights respected. Their struggle reminds the world that democracy cannot be selective. Democratic values must apply equally to all people, regardless of geography, religion, ethnicity, or political opinion.

The international community must recognize that Kashmir remains not only a political dispute but also a challenge to the universal principles of justice, freedom, and human dignity. Sustainable peace will remain difficult to achieve unless the aspirations of the Kashmiri people are addressed through peaceful, democratic, and inclusive means.

Ultimately, Kashmir remains the point at which India's democratic claims face their most serious scrutiny. A state that claims to uphold freedom and justice must be willing to extend those principles to all people.

Until then, a difficult question will continue to be asked:

Can a nation truly call itself a democracy while denying millions of people the right to determine their own destiny?

ISSI hosts special event to celebrate 'Africa Day 2026'

The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at ISSI hosted "Africa Day 2026," commencing with Pakistan and African Union anthems. Director Dr. Amina Khan moderated a panel featuring Ambassador Khalid Mahmood (Chief Guest), Engineer Khurram Dastagir Khan (Keynote Speaker), Ambassador Brahim Romani, H. E. Mahmoud Ali Yousouf, Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan, and other dignitaries.

African and Pakistani Heads of Mission shared insights, and African Missions displayed cultural stalls. Ambassador Mahmood emphasized Pakistan's commitment to partnership with Africa, highlighting Africa's growing global importance and the deep historical ties.

He advocated for enhanced engagement in trade, education, and people-to-people exchanges, commending



CAMEA's role. Engineer Khurram Dastagir Khan recognized Africa's immense potential and opportunities for growth. He acknowledged challenges like banking and flight limitations but noted the laid foundation for cooperation.

He stressed coordinated UN voting, South-South trade opportunities, and

the potential of Gwadar Port and improved connectivity. Ambassador Romani recalled Pakistan's early support for African liberation and urged translating this goodwill into stronger economic cooperation and trade.

He proposed institutional and business linkages, active embassy engage-



ment, private sector participation, and the appointment of a special envoy for Africa, emphasizing South-South cooperation.

Dr. Amina Khan acknowledged Africa's journey of resilience and its increasing significance. She reaffirmed CAMEA's dedication to promoting dialogue, research, cultural exchange, and collaboration, and appreciated the efforts of diplomatic missions and partners. H. E. Mahmoud Ali Yousouf articulated Africa's vision of unity, integration, dignity, and development, reaffirming commitment to Agenda 2063.

He mentioned Africa's promotion of solidarity, its role in the G20, AU reforms, focus on water, sanitation, and climate resilience, and its call for global governance justice. Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan highlighted the need for deeper Pakistan-Africa engagement via South-South cooperation due

to global shifts. He pointed to Africa's untapped potential in agriculture, natural resources, and its youth demographic, advocating for expanded cooperation in education, healthcare, IT, pharmaceuticals, tourism, and sports, alongside improved connectivity.

The event concluded with an interactive discussion involving African and Pakistani mission representatives, and attendees visited the cultural stalls.



LAHORE, JUNE 18, 2026: Atomic Energy Cancer Hospital (AECH), Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Oncology Lahore (INMOL) has launched its first-ever volunteer program, bringing together young students for the noble cause of supporting cancer patients while nurturing a culture of compassion, community service, and civic responsibility among the youth.

The inauguration ceremony of the volunteer program was held at AECH INMOL and was attended by Member Science, Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), Dr. Shakeel Abbas Rofi; Director INMOL, Dr. Arzoo Fatima Saleem; faculty members; medical professionals and representatives from educational institutions.

A carefully selected group of 22 students from various schools and colleges was inducted into the inaugural batch of volunteers. During a structured month-long engagement, the students will assist patients and their attendants, facilitate navigation within the hospital, and support various patient-centered services aimed at enhancing the overall healthcare

Transforming young hearts into helping hands AECH INMOL empowers students through first-ever volunteer program

experience. Addressing the ceremony, Dr. Shakeel Abbas Rofi highlighted the importance of involving young people in meaningful community service initiatives. He announced that the program is envisioned as a pilot project that will eventually be replicated across 21 AECHs being run by PAEC nationwide to further improve patient facilitation and strengthen community participation in healthcare services.

"The volunteer program reflects our commitment to making healthcare more patient-friendly while providing young people with valuable opportunities to contribute to society," he said and added, "We aim to expand this initiative across our cancer hospital network so that patients and their families receive timely guidance and support

throughout their treatment journey." Director AECH INMOL, Dr. Arzoo Fatima Saleem underscored the educational and professional value of the initiative for participating students. She noted that direct exposure to a healthcare environment would help develop empathy, communication skills, teamwork, and a deeper understanding of community service.

"The experience gained through this program will not only benefit patients but will also leave a lasting impact on the personal and professional development of these young volunteers," she said and added that certificates of appreciation would be awarded to all participants upon successful completion of their service.

The ceremony concluded with Dr. Shakeel Abbas Rofi distributing

specialized volunteer kits among the selected students, officially marking the beginning of their volunteer service at the hospital.

AECH INMOL is one of PAEC's leading cancer care institutions in the country, providing comprehensive diagnostic, treatment, and research services. The hospital remains committed to enhancing patient care through innovation, community engagement, and initiatives that promote social responsibility among future generations.

It is to mention here that according to the Economic Survey of Pakistan 2025-26, PAEC leads cancer care services in the country by treating 80% of the cancer patients with its nationwide life-saving network of 21 Atomic Energy Cancer Hospitals.

IIUI Career Expo 2026 Brings Together Students, Industry And Researchers

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) on Thursday organized Career Expo 2026 at its Central Library, with separate arrangements for male and female students, bringing together academia, industry and researchers on a common platform for career development, innovation and recruitment.

The expo was inaugurated by Acting Rector and President IIUI, Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed, accompanied by Vice President Research and Enterprise Prof. Dr. Ahmed Shuja Syed. During the visit, they reviewed around 550 Final Year Projects (FYPs) displayed by students of the Faculty of Engineering



and Technology (FET).

The projects featured innovative solutions in smart farming, traffic management, artificial intelli-

gence-based assistance systems, soil testing, psychological assessment prototypes, solar energy applications and other areas addressing contem-

porary societal needs. The IIUI President appreciated the relevance of the projects and their potential contribution to solving real-world challenges.

The event featured 523 Final Year Projects from various disciplines, 11 university research products and participation from more than 30 industries and organizations. Faculty stalls from across the university also took part in the expo, providing career counselling and academic guidance to students.

Addressing the participants, Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed said universities must equip students with knowledge, skills and professional exposure required to succeed in a rapidly changing world. He noted that the expo reflected IIUI's commitment

to strengthening academia-industry linkages and creating opportunities for students to connect with employers and researchers.

Vice President FPCCI Tariq Jadoon, who also addressed the gathering, emphasized the importance of collaboration between academia and industry, skill development, innovation and entrepreneurship. He encouraged students to continuously learn, adapt and explore emerging career opportunities.

Earlier, Convener Career Expo 2026 Dr. Bashir Ahmed briefed participants about the event and said the initiative aimed to strengthen engagement between students, researchers, academia and industry. He informed the audience that 330 students

submitted resumes for employment opportunities, while around 190 candidates appeared in final interviews conducted by participating organizations.

Industry representatives showed keen interest in the students' projects and interacted with participants during the expo. Recruitment activities, networking sessions and career consultations were also held on the occasion.

The IIUI President appreciated the efforts of Convener Dr. Bashir Ahmed, Co-Convener Dr. Shahid Ikram, Dr. Salma Imtiaz, Dean Faculty of Engineering and Technology Dr. Muhammad Aamir, and members of the organizing and sub-committees for successfully arranging the event.

Between Rhetoric and Reality: The Fragile Trump-Modi Equation

The recent meeting between US President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has attracted considerable attention, with speculation that it might mark a turning point in US-India relations. Yet beneath the warm rhetoric and symbolic gestures, the structural irritants that define this relationship remain firmly entrenched.

At best, the meeting offers a limited reversal of the recent downturn in ties. Dialogue carries symbolic weight, but it cannot erase deep divergences on trade, defence procurement, and India's insistence on strategic autonomy. Washington often expects alignment, while New Delhi prioritizes sovereignty and independent decisionmaking. This gap ensures that even warm personal chemistry between leaders cannot substitute for substantive convergence. Until both sides reconcile competing priorities—America's push for market access and strategic alignment versus India's protection of domestic industries and independent foreign policy—the relationship will remain cordial in appearance but cautious in practice.

The anger in India over the killing of its sailors illustrates how fragile the partnership is. The deaths struck at India's national sentiment, touching both sovereignty and sacrifice. For ordinary

Indians, this was not merely a maritime tragedy but an affront to national dignity. The situation was aggravated first by Modi's belated protest and later by Washington's delayed and muted response, widely perceived as dismissive. That hesitation reinforced the impression that Indian lives were undervalued in the calculus of a strategic partner. This episode widened the trust deficit, demonstrating how quickly public opinion can sour when allies appear insensitive to human loss. For India, respect and recognition are as important as military cooperation or trade deals. Unless Washington learns to respond with empathy and urgency, the relationship will remain vulnerable to sudden shocks.

The controversy also invites comparison with the rift over India's purchase of Russian oil. At first glance, the two issues appear unrelated, yet they share a parallel in perception. Both highlight India's insistence on autonomy and Washington's tendency to apply pressure. Oil imports were about economic sovereignty—India's right to secure affordable energy despite Western sanctions. The sailors' deaths, however, were about human tragedy and national honour, striking at the emotional core of Indian society. The common thread is the way Indian opinion interprets Washington's actions: as disregard for

India's core interests. Whether in trade, energy, or human loss, the perception of insensitivity deepens mistrust. Symbolic gestures alone cannot repair ties; the United States needs to demonstrate respect for India's sovereignty and empathy for its sacrifices if the partnership is to endure.

Trump's claim of progress on a US-India trade deal should also be viewed with scepticism. History shows that negotiations between Washington and New Delhi have been protracted and contentious, often stretching over years without resolution. The sticking points remain familiar: tariffs on agricultural and industrial goods, questions of market access for American companies, and India's regulatory standards that protect domestic industries. None of these have been meaningfully resolved. Against this backdrop, Trump's statement is best understood as political signalling—a projection of success rather than evidence of breakthroughs. While dialogue is important, a comprehensive trade deal is unlikely in the short term. Entrenched economic interests on both sides cannot be reconciled overnight.

The Pentagon's decision to drop 'Indo' from the US Pacific Command and revert to its original name carries the weight of a symbolic downgrade. It dilutes the emphasis once placed on

India's role in Washington's strategic calculus. For years, the Indo-Pacific framing elevated New Delhi as a central partner in balancing China's rise. India's poor performance in the limited war against Pakistan last year also contributed to doubts about its reliability as a strategic partner. The change reflects a strategic recalibration: Washington appears to be narrowing its focus back to the Pacific, signalling shifting priorities that may place less emphasis on India's role in the broader regional architecture. For New Delhi, the move inevitably stirs concern. At a time of strained relations, the renaming reinforces fears of being sidelined in America's strategic hierarchy. A balanced reading, however, suggests this is not a rupture but a cooling of enthusiasm. The Indo-Pacific framework once symbolized India's elevated importance; its dilution now underscores the limits of alignment.

It is also instructive to perceive this



IndoUS tiff in the backdrop of Pakistan's rising esteem as a mediator between Washington and Tehran. Islamabad's ability to facilitate dialogue in the fraught US-Iran standoff has earned it recognition as a trusted interlocutor. This contrast is telling: while India struggles to manage its own bilateral frictions with Washington, Pakistan has positioned itself as a constructive bridge in one of the most volatile arenas of global diplomacy. The juxtaposition highlights the shifting dynamics of South Asia, where credibility and reliability in mediation may carry more weight than rhetorical partnerships.

In sum, the Trump-Modi meeting

underscores the tension between optics and substance. Dialogue and personal rapport are important, but they cannot mask enduring mistrust, unresolved disputes, and shifting strategic priorities. As the Roman historian Tacitus once warned, "It is a disturbing thing to rely on friends who prove untrustworthy." For the partnership to move beyond symbolism, Washington should respect India's sovereignty, respond empathetically to its tragedies, and engage realistically on trade and defence. Until then, US-India ties will remain a relationship of cautious cooperation—vulnerable to shocks and shaped more by pragmatism than by rhetoric.



Analysis

S. M. Hali

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
181,398.21	180,511.02	
Day's High	Day's Low	
181,869.33	181,045.34	
Index Value	Change	
43,213,805,899	+ 887.19	
Percentage	Time	
+0.49%	18 Jun, 2026 4:30 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
10,399.70	- 108.91	
Percentage	Time	
-1.04%	18 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
51,682.13	+ 189.58	
Percentage	Time	
+0.37%	18 Jun, 1:45 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
71,053.49	+ 1,151.24	
Percentage	Time	
+1.65%	18 Jun, 3:45 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	194.09	198.75
Bahrain Dinar	737.64	747.95
Canadian Dollar	196.37	201.25
China Yuan	38.10	38.85
Danish Krone	43.35	43.75
Euro	321.18	326.17
Hong Kong Dollar	35.08	36.02
Indian Rupee	2.75	3.05
Japanese Yen	1.7205	1.8194
Kuwaiti Dinar	885.17	895.85
Malaysian Ringgit	67.15	68.05
New Zealand \$	159.57	163.65
Norwegians Krone	27.97	28.27
Omani Riyal	722.47	732.95
Qatari Riyal	75.09	76.03
Saudi Riyal	74.30	74.95
Singapore Dollar	214.92	218.64
Swedish Korona	30.25	30.55
Swiss Franc	347.55	352.20
Thai Bhat	8.55	8.80
U.A.E Dirham	75.95	76.75
UK Pound Sterling	371.49	375.25
US Dollar	279.00	279.40

PC Hospitality Recognized by Trip.com Group as Top Brand Producer

Spokesman Report

BELJING, CHINA: PC Hospitality has been recognized by Trip.com Group as a Top Brand Producer, a distinction that reflects exceptional year-over-year production growth and the company's continued success in generating demand across its hotel portfolio.

The award underscores PC Hospitality's strategic focus on building high-impact partnerships that deliver measurable business results for hotel owners and stakeholders. Through a combination of revenue management expertise, distribution optimization, digital marketing initiatives, and strong relationships with leading travel platforms, the company continues to drive occupancy and revenue growth across its brands.

"This recognition is about much more than an award—it is validation of our commercial strategy and the value we create for our hotel partners," said Bastien Blanc, Chief Executive Officer of PC Hospitality. "Our mission is to create demand that translates into bookings. We focus on partnerships that put heads in beds, increase market share, and generate sustainable revenue growth for the hotels we manage and support."



The partnership with Trip.com Group has enabled PC Hospitality to expand its reach to travelers across key international markets while enhancing visibility and booking performance for its properties. By leveraging data-driven insights and collaborative promotional campaigns, the company has consistently delivered strong production growth and improved commercial outcomes.

As global travel demand continues to evolve, PC Hospitality remains focused on identifying and strengthening partnerships that drive high-value bookings and long-term performance. The recognition from Trip.com Group serves as further evidence of the company's ability to connect hotels with travelers and convert market opportunities into tangible results.

The award reinforces PC Hospitality's position as a leading hospitality brand dedicated to helping hotels achieve sustainable growth through strategic distribution, revenue optimization, and guest acquisition initiatives.

Congratulation on Peace deal

ISLAMABAD: A digital screen displaying the Images of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir along roadside in the Federal Capital on the eve of historic Iran-US Peace Deal.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Emirates launches world's most comprehensive travel insurance

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Emirates has launched Comprehensive Travel Cover, a pioneering travel insurance product offering extensive protection. This includes medical coverage for conflict-related incidents, airline-managed hotel accommodation, and extended-stay support during various disruptions.

The airline will also rebook customers to their destinations at no extra cost if their itinerary involves other carriers or if Emirates flights are unavailable due to conflict.

This initiative, developed with Travel Guard, aims to provide travelers with enhanced peace of mind from booking to arrival. Building on Emirates' 'fly better' promise and duty of care, the cover includes airline-managed accommodation for disruptions like airspace closures, on



top of existing benefits such as free date changes and fare holding. The Comprehensive Travel Cover is available at an affordable premium and can be purchased during booking or added via Manage Booking on emirates.com. Sir Tim Clark, President of Emirates Airline, stated the product addresses a market gap identified through customer feedback, offering reassurance for a wider range of situations. Russel Antonio, Head of Global Business & Partnerships at Travel Guard, highlighted the collaboration's focus on elevating customer experience and setting a new industry benchmark for traveler protection.

Al-Ghazi Tractors Joins Pakistan Agricultural Coalition as Patron

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited (AGTL), one of Pakistan's leading manufacturers of agricultural machinery, has joined the Pakistan Agricultural Coalition (PAC) as a patron. The partnership was formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding, bringing Al-Ghazi into a coalition of the country's foremost business and financial groups that is working to make Pakistan's agriculture sector private sector-led, technology-driven, entrepreneurial and globally competitive.

The partnership reflects Al-Ghazi's intent to play an active part in the national agenda for agricultural growth, working alongside government, industry and the wider development community. By joining hands with PAC, Al-Ghazi lends its decades of on-ground experience and its standing within the farming community to a shared effort to build a stronger, more competitive and self-reliant agriculture sector for Pakistan.

"For more than four decades, Al-Ghazi Tractors has stood alongside Pakistan's farmers. Joining the Pakistan Agricultural Coalition allows us to bring that experience to a wider national effort. We



believe the future of our agriculture lies in modernization, technology and stronger collaboration between the private sector and government, and we are proud to support an institution working toward

exactly that," said Mr. Yasin Seker, Chief Executive Officer, Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited. aid Mr. Kazim Saeed, Chief Executive Officer, Pakistan Agricultural Coalition.

SECP Chairman Directs PMEX to Accelerate Development of Physically Deliverable Agricultural Futures Contracts

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, has directed the management of Pakistan Mercantile Exchange (PMEX) to develop a practical roadmap for launching physically deliverable agricultural futures contracts.

He emphasized that the contracts should be supported by an inte-

grated Electronic Warehouse Receipt (EWR) system with real-time connectivity between warehouses and PMEX. The initiative is critical to modernizing Pakistan's commodity markets, improving price discovery, and expanding access to transparent and efficient markets for farmers, traders, and processors.

Dr. Sidhu issued these directions while chairing a meeting of the PMEX Board of Directors and

senior management during his visit at PMEX. The meeting was attended by SECP Commissioner (Securities Market Division) Mr. Ali Farid Khwaja, Executive Director Mr. Imran Inayat Butt, Director Mr. Muhammad Shamoun, and PMEX Managing Director & CEO Mr. Khurram Zafar. The meeting focused on strengthening Pakistan's regulated commodity futures market through technology, innovation, and market-based solutions.

The SECP Chairman also visited the headquarters of National Clearing Company of Pakistan Limited (NCCPL), where he met members of the Board of Directors. During the visit, NCCPL management briefed him on the company's key functions, including clearing and settlement operations, risk management systems, and capital gains tax services. The Chairman was also apprised of ongoing projects and future initiatives aimed at further

strengthening Pakistan's capital market infrastructure.

Dr. Sidhu emphasized the importance of robust post-trade institutions in ensuring market integrity, investor confidence, and operational resilience. He reaffirmed SECP's commitment to strengthening capital and commodity market institutions through technology-driven reforms, greater efficiency, and enhanced transparency to support sustainable economic growth.

Adoption of a Skill-Based National Policy is Imperative, Says Malik Muhammad Bostan



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Chairman of the Exchange Companies Association of Pakistan (ECAP), Malik Muhammad Bostan, has said that Pakistan's young population is its greatest asset. However, transforming this potential into economic strength requires the urgent adoption of a national policy focused on skills development. He stated that if young people are provided with technical and vocational training in line with the demands of the global job market, Pakistan can not only significantly reduce unemployment but also earn billions of dollars in additional remittances.

Malik Muhammad Bostan noted that over the past few years, millions of Pakistanis have moved abroad in search of better employment opportunities and a brighter future. Among them were not only unskilled workers but also doctors, engineers, IT professionals, and individuals associated with the nursing profession.

The ECAP Chairman also emphasized that Pakistani industries must adopt environmentally sustainable and eco-friendly business practices in response to evolving global trade trends. He said that aligning with modern international standards is essential for maintaining competitiveness in global markets and expanding the country's exports.

Rana Sanaullah, Russian Ambassador for bilateral cooperation in sports

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC), Rana Sanaullah held a meeting with Russian Ambassador Albert P. Khor-ev to discuss bilateral cooperation in sports and other areas of mutual interest.

During the meeting, both sides agreed to accelerate the implementation of existing Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) on sports cooperation between Pakistan and Russia, said a statement issued here.

Sanaullah emphasized that collaboration in football would be advanced on a priority basis to strengthen sporting ties between the two countries.

The ambassador expressed Russia's keen interest in benefiting from Pakistan's experience and expertise in promoting cricket, particularly to support the development of the sport



in Russia.

The two sides also discussed expanding cooperation in the promotion of traditional and popular Russian sports.

Sanaullah noted that Russia possesses extensive experience and strong capabilities in the field of sports, making it an important partner for future collaboration.

The ambassador commended Pakistan's efforts to promote peace and stability between the United States and Iran, describing the country's role as constructive and commendable.

Highlighting the broader scope of bilateral relations, Sanaullah said that education, culture, economy, and sports can play a vital role in bringing the people of Pakistan and Russia closer together. He added that joint efforts would continue to further expand the scope of cooperation between the two countries across multiple sectors.

Yahya, Hajra clinch U-18 boys, girls tennis titles

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The BoP National Junior Tennis Championship concluded at Sports Board Punjab Tennis Academy Courts Nishtar Park Sports Complex under the auspices of Sports Board Punjab here on Thursday.

M Yahya beat Hamza Ali Rizwan by 6-3, 6-1 in the Boys U-18 final while Hajra Sohail beat Bismal Zia by 6-3, 6-0 in the Girls U-18 final. More than 180 young tennis players from across the country participated in 11 age group categories in the championship.

DG Sports Punjab M Tariq Qureshi was the chief guest at the prize distribution ceremony. He distributed prizes among the winners and had group photographs with the players.

While talking to media, Tariq Qureshi said that Punjab Sports Department will continue to organize such events to nurture young talent and strengthen the country's sporting culture. "It our mission to bring youth to the playing grounds so that maximum number of talented athletes could be identified in multiple games".

He said that Punjab Sports Department is preparing to organise several major sporting events including Olympic and traditional games in the coming months. "Punjab Sports Department is going to launch 19 free sports academies for the first time in the province's history".

Following are the results:
Boys U-18 final:
M Yahya beat Hamza Ali Rizwan 6-3, 6-1
Girls U-18 final:
Hajra Sohail beat Bismal zia 6-3, 6-0
Boys U-14 final:
Shayan Afridi beat M. Muaz 4-2, 4-0
Girls U-14 final:
Hajra Sohail beat Khadija Khalil 4-2, 4-1
Boys U-14 Doubles final:
M Muaz/M Aayan beat Daniyal Abdullah/Ahmad Fareed Yawar 4-2, 4-1
Boys U-12 final:
M Aayan beat M Faizan 4-2, 4-2
Girls U-12 final:
Shahnoor Umer beat Eman Shahbaz 4-2, 1-4, 4-1
Boys U-12 Doubles final:
Salaar Khan/M Faizan beat Riyan Omer Khalil/M Daniyal 4-0, 4-1
Boys/Girls U-10 final:
Mustafa Zia beat Wali Abdullah 6-0.



Regional Inter District U-19 One Day Cricket League Tournament

Zone-VI won their first match and Zone-VII and Zone-I winning their 2nd Match in a row

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Three more matches decided in the Regional Inter District Under-19 One Day Cricket League Tournament here at various Grounds of the City.

The highlights of the days play was brilliant Centuries by Huzafa Ahsan 123, Muhammad Humza Malik 102 and deadly bowling by Niqab Shafiq 4/28, Majid Ali 4/31.

The Tournament is being organized by Pakistan Cricket Board.

Scores in Brief:

Zone-VI beat Zone-III by 166 runs at KCCA Stadium. Zone-VI 282/7 in 50 overs. Huzafa Ahsan 123 18x4 1x6, Hammad Alam 53 4x4 1x6, Muhammad Azaan 34, Abdul Wahab 19. Anas Balouch 3/90, Asadullah Khan 2/39, Asad Akhtar 2/39.

In reply Zone-III 116 allout in 40.4 overs. Haider Ali 33, Anas Balouch 32.



Niqab Shafiq (rlb) 4/28, Saad Sakhawat 3/23, Asad Omar 2/39.

In the 2nd Match Zone-VII beat Zone-II by 91 runs in their 2nd Match in a row at UBL Sports Complex. Zone-VII

253/6 in 50 overs. Adil Khan 71 5x4 2x6, Syed Shayan Faheem 68 7x4 1x6, Sahil 38, Ali Sher 22, Muhammad Niyad 20. Abdul Rauf 2/37, Muhammad Huzafa 2/59.

In reply Zone-II 162/7 in 50 overs. Zain Ali Jaffri 66 7x4, Muhammad Furqan 24, Hanzala Fazal 21, Muhammad Bilal uddin 18. Abdul Rahim 3/55, Shahroz Khan 2/28.

In the 3rd Natch Zone-I beat Zone-V in a thrilling and exciting match by 15 runs at Eid Gah Ground Korangi. Zone-I 218 allout in 41.4 overs. Muhammad Humza Malik 102 17x4 2x6, Monis Nadeem 25. Majid Ali 4/31, Syed Muhammad Ali Mehdi Zaidi 3/28, Rehan Bashir 2/32.

In reply Zone-V 203 allout in 45.3 overs. Muhammad Akbar 52 8x4, Ahmed Shahzad 47 6x4, Rayan Chougan 30. Muhammad Farman 3/33, Muhammad Affan Abbasi 3/41, Muhammad Muhammad Faish 3/53.

Fixture For Tuesday 23rd June: Zone-V vs Zone-IV (UBL Sports Complex), Zone-II vs Zone-VI (KCCA Stadium), Zone-III vs Zone-VII (Eid Gah Ground Korangi).

FIFA deletes thousands of hate comments from social media

Sports Desk

ATLANTA.: Football governing body FIFA has removed thousands of hate comments made on social media since the start of the World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada on 11th June.



According to the federation, 3.8 million posts have been reviewed, and 388,000 have been removed. Throughout the 2022 World Cup, 287,000 posts and comments were deleted.

"Over 250 million comments and posts were reviewed, with more than 30 million of them identified as harmful," FIFA said.

The announcement came as FIFA, TikTok and the City of Atlanta brought together an elite group of players, policymakers, technology experts, and community leaders at the National Centre for Civil and Human Rights to discuss practical solutions to tackle hate speech and mark the International Day for Countering Hate Speech.

Held on the eve of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ match between Czechia and South Africa at the Atlanta Stadium, the panel discussion focused on practical measures to end hate speech, safeguard the game and preserve football as a global force for unity, for sport and society.

The event concluded with a formal commitment ceremony, during which panellists pledged specific local actions, underlining the message that eradicating hate speech requires sustained and collective responsibility across all levels of the game.

PHF expands International exposure opportunities for youth

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has announced a series of international development initiatives aimed at providing valuable exposure and competitive opportunities to Pakistan's emerging hockey talent.

Following its decision to support the participation of the Pakistan Under-18 Boys Team in the upcoming Five-a-Side Hockey Tournament in Oman, the PHF has now also approved support for the participation of the Pakistan Under-18 Girls Team in an international five-a-side event following the conclusion of the National Hockey Championship, said a press release.

In addition, the PHF will send the Pakistan Under-21 Junior Hockey Team to Oman in July for international competition and exposure matches, further strengthening the development pathway for young players preparing to represent Pakistan at the highest levels.

These initiatives reflect the Federation's commitment to investing in the future of Pakistan hockey by providing regular international exposure to players across senior, junior, and youth categories, including both men's and women's teams.

Rumours of 18th Amend's abolition laid to rest by consensus, says Bilawal

Continued from Page 1

"The strength of nations lies in their unity," he said.

Expressing gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his team, Bilawal said it had been agreed that provinces would contribute funds for national defence, while their shares under

the National Finance Commission would be protected.

He said a petroleum levy imposed during the floods to arrange relief funds for affectedes had never been shared with the provinces, amounting to a violation of both the 18th Amendment and the NFC award, and was still being collected.

Economy in growth phase as GDP rises to 3.7%: Aurangzeb reiterates

Continued from Page 8

He said the government was investing in digital connectivity, skills development and advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence and block-chain, to equip youth with future-ready skills and boost export earnings.

Aurangzeb said agriculture had been given special emphasis, with Rs300 billion allocated for concessional lending to small farmers without collateral. He added that duties and taxes on modern agricultural machinery, including harvesters and tractors, had been reduced or eliminated to enhance productivity.

Referring to youth empowerment, he said Rs110 billion had been earmarked under the Prime Minister's Youth Programme to promote entrepreneurship, skills development and job creation.

The minister said major reforms were under way in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to reduce human interaction, curb corruption and eliminate harassment of taxpayers through digitization and automation.

He said broadening the tax base remained critical for achieving economic self-reliance and reducing dependence on external financing, adding that improved fiscal management had strengthened the government's capacity to respond to emergencies using domestic resources.

Concluding the debate, Aurangzeb thanked senators for their input and assured the House that constructive proposals would be considered in the short and medium term to further strengthen the country's economic trajectory.

Countering Israel's Weaponization of Civilian Technology

Continued from Page 4

passersby. Such attacks cannot guarantee that only a lawful military target will be harmed. They spread fear across society. They make every electronic object suspicious. They turn normal civilian life into psychological warfare.

The same logic is visible in Gaza, where investigative reporting has raised grave concerns about AI-assisted targeting systems. The systems used to generate targets, identify suspected militants, monitor locations and accelerate bombing decisions.

When algorithms are fed with phone data, location signals, social networks, drone footage, facial recognition, banking records, traffic cameras and human intelligence, they can create a deadly profile of a person. But data is not the truth. Correlation is not guilt. A relative, driver, clerk, repairman, neighbor or political supporter can be wrongly treated as a combatant because his movements resemble someone else's pattern. When such systems are used in war, a false match can become a death sentence.

The world cannot allow this to become normal. If Israel is

permitted to weaponize civilian devices, infiltrate supply chains, manipulate batteries, exploit cloud systems, harvest civilian data and use AI to select targets, then every country is vulnerable. Today it is Lebanon. Tomorrow it can be Pakistan, Türkiye, Iran, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Kuwait or any other state that falls into the strategic path of a technologically superior adversary.

For Pakistan, the lesson is especially urgent. National security is no longer limited to tanks, aircraft, missiles and borders. It now includes phones, routers, servers, apps, satellites, cloud

systems, databases, SIM cards and imported electronics. A country that does not control its digital infrastructure cannot fully protect its sovereignty. Pakistan must develop its own secure communication systems, independent cloud infrastructure, encryption capacity, chip research, cyber-defense institutions and national technology audit mechanisms.

Muslim countries must also act collectively. They should demand transparent supply-chain declarations for sensitive communication and electronic equipment. They should require companies to disclose whether

products, software, designs, components or data services have links to Israeli military or intelligence institutions. They should build joint research and development platforms, invest in indigenous technology and reduce dependence on foreign systems that may contain hidden vulnerabilities.

At the United Nations, Muslim countries and other concerned states should jointly move a resolution against the weaponization of civilian technology. The resolution should prohibit the conversion of civilian communication devices into explosive weapons, restrict the use of mass surveil-

lance for extrajudicial assassination, demand human accountability in AI-assisted targeting and call for international inspection standards for critical communication equipment.

This is not merely a Muslim issue. It is a global issue. If ordinary electronics can be transformed into secret weapons, then no society is safe. If civilian data can be converted into kill lists, then no privacy is safe. If AI can accelerate assassination without transparent accountability, then international law itself is in danger.

The world must draw a clear line: civilian technology must

remain civilian. Communication devices must not become bombs. Data systems must not become assassination factories. Artificial intelligence must not become a license to kill.

Israel's alleged use of civilian technology in Lebanon has exposed a terrifying future. The question now is whether the world will stop that future before it becomes the new normal.

The writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former Press Attaché to Malaysia and Former MD, SRBC. He is living at Michigan, USA

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, holding a meeting with a delegation of BYD Group and Mega Motor Company (MMC) led by Mr. Liu Xueliang, Vice President of BYD Group and General Manager, BYD Asia Pacific Auto Sales Division, and Mr. Aly Khan, Chief Executive Officer, Mega Motor Company (Private) Limited, at the Finance Division on Thursday.



Photo: Online

Economy in growth phase as GDP rises to 3.7%: Aurangzeb reiterates

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday reiterated that Pakistan's economy had entered a sustainable growth phase after achieving macro-economic stability, with GDP growth rising to 3.7 percent in the outgoing fiscal year from 3.1 percent last year.

Winding up the debate on the Federal Budget 2026-27 in the Senate, he appreciated the recommendations of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance, parliamentarians, business associations, chambers of commerce and other stakeholders for their constructive engagement during extensive consultations. The minister said the government had successfully

transitioned from economic stabilisation to growth, recalling that the economy was contracting nearly three years ago.

Despite regional and global challenges, he added, key economic indicators had improved and growth momentum had strengthened.

Aurangzeb said efforts had been made to ease the tax burden on the documented

corporate sector and the salaried class, informing the House that super tax on exporters had been abolished, while the first six slabs of super tax had been removed and rates for higher income brackets reduced.

He said targeted relief had been provided to salaried individuals through lower tax rates and expanded income slabs, with the highest tax rate now applicable at a higher income

threshold.

Highlighting support for the IT sector, the minister said the existing 0.25 percent fixed tax regime for IT exports had been maintained. Pakistan's IT exports, he noted, were expected to reach around \$4.5 billion during the current fiscal year, while freelance exports had touched approximately \$1.6 billion.

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Pakistan Seeks German Partnership in Agricultural Modernization and Livestock Development

ISLAMABAD: Rana Tanveer Hussain, Pakistan's Minister for National Food Security & Research, met with German Ambassador Ina Lepel to enhance bilateral cooperation in agriculture, livestock, food security, research, and technology.

Hussain highlighted Pakistan's agricultural GDP contribution and the challenge of low crop yields, emphasizing government focus on research, certified seeds, mechanization, and climate-resilient crops.

He proposed collaboration in livestock genetics, breed improvement, reproductive technologies, feed development, and FMD vaccine production, inviting German investment in dairy, mechanization, food processing, and slaughterhouses.

Pakistan's new Biotechnology Policy aims to attract research, innovation, and foreign investment, with a focus on traceability, food safety, and SPS compliance for market access.



Ambassador Lepel acknowledged Pakistan's agricultural modernization efforts, reaffirmed Germany's commitment, and welcomed the Biotechnology Policy, noting German companies' interest in investment. Key Pares Chairman, Dr. Syed Murtaza Hassan Andrabi, underscored the value of joint research, capacity building, and livestock breeding technologies, suggesting

Pakistan could benefit from German expertise in importing high-quality embryos and semen.

Both nations agreed to explore cooperation in agricultural research, mechanization, climate-smart agriculture, livestock genetics, water efficiency, food safety, and value-added products, committing to strengthening ties for sustainable agricultural growth and food security.

US-Iran agreement major diplomatic breakthrough: Aleem Khan



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan hailed the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and Iran as a diplomatic breakthrough, demonstrating Pakistan's pivotal role in global stability. He praised Prime

Minister Shehbaz Sharif's leadership, Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir's crucial efforts, and the contributions of Deputy PM Ishaq Dar and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi. Khan also thanked Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Egypt for their support, and acknowledged the vision of leaders from both nations. The agreement's immediate impact includes reopening the Strait of Hormuz, bolstering global trade security and regional stability, fostering shared prosperity, and reinforcing Pakistan's commitment to global peace.

Muqam terms Islamabad MoU a historic diplomatic success

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Amir Muqam praised the Islamabad MoU, signed by US President Trump and Iranian President Pezeshkian, as a historic diplomatic success for Pakistan.

He lauded Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's mediation, Deputy PM Ishaq Dar's diplomacy, and Field Marshal Asim Munir's guidance, highlighting Pakistan's growing role as a trusted global mediator. Muqam emphasized that the agreement, reflecting international confidence in Pakistan, is a testament to the nation's commitment to regional and global peace, stability, and diplomatic

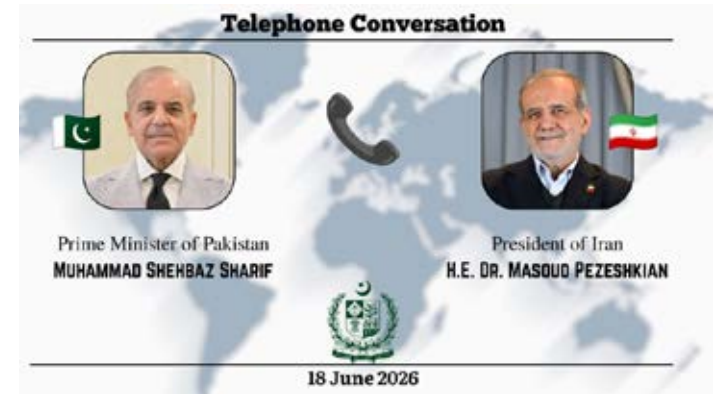


engagement.

He also commended the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and senior diplomats for their efforts in safeguarding national interests and

advancing Pakistan's position internationally. This achievement, he stated, is a source of national pride and signifies Pakistan's continued pivotal role in international affairs

PM Shehbaz Sharif, Iranian President discuss peace deal, agree to expand bilateral ties



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Iranian President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian held their first call since the signing of the Islamabad Peace Deal. The 30-minute discussion focused on regional peace, bilateral relations, and future cooperation.

Prime Minister Sharif congratulated President Pezeshkian, the Iranian leadership, and the Iranian people on the historic peace deal, emphasizing its potential to restore regional peace, aid in Iran's rebuilding, and strengthen Pakistan-Iran ties. He also conveyed

regards to Iran's Supreme Leader. Sharif praised Iran's decision to sign the deal, wished them success in negotiations, and pledged Pakistan's continued support.

President Pezeshkian thanked Prime Minister Sharif and Pakistan's Army Chief, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, for their crucial roles in the successful mediation, stating Iran would remember Pakistan's support.

He expressed Iran's eagerness to enhance bilateral ties with Pakistan and conveyed best wishes to the Pakistani people. Both leaders agreed to visit each other's capitals soon to further bilateral and regional cooperation and pledged to stay in contact.

Canadian FM lauds Pak constructive role leading to US-Iran MoU



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar spoke with Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand on Wednesday night.

During the conversation, the Canadian foreign minister commended Pakistan's constructive role in supporting diplomatic engagement and mediation efforts between the

United States and Iran, which helped facilitate the understanding reached between the two parties.

They also discussed the forthcoming engagement between the parties in Bürgenstock, Switzerland on Friday.

Appreciating the positive momentum in Pakistan-Canada relations, they reaffirmed their commitment to expanding cooperation across areas of mutual interest.

Talal sees Iran's global economic reintegration as major boost for Pakistan's energy, trade

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry expressed optimism that the lifting of sanctions on Iran and its reintegration into the global economy would create new opportunities for Pakistan in various sectors, ultimately benefiting common people. He highlighted the strong, decades-long cordial relations between Pakistan and Iran, emphasizing that recent diplomatic developments regarding Iran would promote regional peace and stability and positively impact the global economy by reducing conflict risks and improving the international economic environment. Chaudhry

urged political parties to collaborate in translating Pakistan's diplomatic achievements into tangible public welfare, ensuring benefits reach ordinary citizens. Regarding Azad Jammu and Kashmir, he stated that the federal government had implemented 37 of 38 agreed points from a prior agreement. He expressed regret over the unrest created concerning the remaining point, alleging that certain elements were pursuing vested interests by exploiting Kashmiri rights, and stated that these elements' roles were under investigation. Chaudhry stressed that all Kashmir-related matters should be resolved through democratic and constitutional means.

SC raises utility allowance for its staff by 100pc across all grades

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has approved a 100 percent increase in the utility allowance of its employees, with the Chief Justice of Pakistan giving formal approval to the revised package, according to an official notification.

The notification stated that the increase in utility allowance will be

implemented from July 1, 2026.

Under the revised structure, the utility allowance for employees in Grade 1 to 6 has been increased from 6,000 rupees to 12,000 rupees. For Grade 7 to 10, the allowance has been raised from 8,000 rupees to 16,000 rupees, while employees in Grade 11 to 15 will now receive 20,000 rupees instead of 10,000 rupees.