



A Leading National Daily



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رسول اللہ ﷺ نے فرمایا میں جنت میں داخل ہوں تو وہاں ایک سونے کا کلمہ لکھے نظر آئے گا میں نے پوچھا یہ کس کلمے کا ہے؟ کہا کہ قریش کے ایک شخص کا۔ اسے ان اظہار! مجھے اس کے اندر جانے سے تہمیدی غیرت نے روک دیا ہے جسے میں خوب جانتا ہوں۔ عرضی اللہ عزوجل نے عرض کیا: یا رسول اللہ! کیا میں آپ پر غیرت کروں گا۔
(صحیح بخاری، صفحہ نمبر 7024)
Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

# Daily The Spokesman



## Sanctions relief to pave way for stronger Pakistan-Iran economic ties: FO

Pakistan on Wednesday expressed optimism over the ongoing high-level technical talks between Iran and the United States, saying that progress in trade and economic cooperation with Iran would be linked to the easing of international sanctions on Tehran.



## AJ&K Officials Reject Supply Block Claims, Say Routes Remain Open Short

AJ&K authorities refuted allegations of blocked supply vehicles. In a press conference, the Chief Secretary and IGP said disruptions were caused by proscribed Action Committee protesters attempting to stop and loot commodity trucks. Law enforcement secured the goods. Officials confirmed roads remain accessible for all traffic.

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## Address

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the National Assembly on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

# Shehbaz hails economic team for delivering relief-oriented budget despite fiscal constraints

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday commended the government's economic team, particularly the Ministry of Finance, for formulating a relief-focused federal budget for the upcoming fiscal year aimed at supporting salaried individuals, the business community, and the general public.

The prime minister lauded the efforts of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani, the Finance Secretary, Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), and the entire economic team for their contributions to the budget-making

process, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the government had fulfilled its commitment to provide meaningful relief to the salaried class, businesses, and ordinary citizens through the budget. He described the efforts of the economic team as commendable and appreciated their dedication in preparing a balanced financial plan under

challenging economic circumstances.

"The benefits of improving economic indicators will be extended to every citizen of the country," the prime minister said, reiterating the government's commitment to ensuring that economic recovery translates into tangible improvements in people's lives. The economic team welcomed

the prime minister's appreciation and noted that, despite limited fiscal space and financial resources, the government had successfully made every possible effort to maximize public relief in the budget.

The economic team further reaffirmed its resolve to continue working under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's leadership to advance Pakistan's economic development and prosperity.

# Pakistan Emerging as Global Voice for Peace, Stability Through Effective Diplomacy: Khawaja Asif

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Wednesday said Pakistan's regional diplomatic initiatives are delivering positive results and reshaping the country's image globally as a promoter of peace, stability and constructive dialogue.

Speaking to media outside Parliament House, he credited prudent government policies and close civil-military coordina-

tion for Pakistan's emergence as a responsible state in international affairs.

Highlighting Balochistan, Asif said sustainable stability there is key for boosting trade, investment and economic activity. He noted that trade corridors, transit routes and transport projects will strengthen the national economy while bringing direct benefits to Balochistan's people through new development opportunities. "Today, the international community

views Pakistan as a country contributing to peace, reconciliation and regional stability," he said, commending PM Shehbaz Sharif and COAS Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for steering the country toward political, economic and constitutional stability.

Asif stressed that cooperation and mutual trust among institutions within constitutional domains are vital for addressing challenges and ensuring effective governance and national progress.

## Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry Lauds Budget Process, Reaffirms AJK Polls on Schedule

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Wednesday praised the National Assembly Secretariat, Secretary, advisers and all departments for efficiently and cohesively preparing the federal budget.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he thanked Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, State Minister Bilal Azhar Kayani, their teams and parliamentary staff for ensuring smooth budget proceedings. "The House witnessed smooth proceedings due to collective efforts of all institutions and officials," he said.

On Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Chaudhry said the government held multiple stakeholder engagements, including meetings in Muzaffarabad, and proposed political forum reviews, parliamentary debate and legal/constitutional references. He alleged some protest groups rejected options, adopted disruptive actions causing law-and-order challenges, loss of life, road blockages and business disruption. He maintained state authority had to be preserved and security institutions acted within mandate, while also alleging external interference in AJK's electoral process.

Rejecting delay calls, he said AJK elections will be held on schedule per the constitution, with earlier commitments on relief, subsidies and administrative adjustments already implemented.

# Field Marshal Asim Munir and Libyan Commander discuss regional security and defence cooperation



### Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General Saddam Khalifa Haftar, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI(M), HJ, COAS & CDF, at General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi.

Upon arrival at GHQ, the visiting dignitary was presented a Guard of Honour by a smartly turned-out tri-services contingent.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security dynamics, defence cooperation and avenues for

enhanced military-to-military collaboration were discussed. Both sides underscored the importance of strengthening bilateral defence ties and expanding cooperation in areas of professional military training and security.

The Field Marshal highlighted Pakistan Army's commitment to promoting peace, stability and constructive engagement with friendly countries. The visiting dignitary appreciated the professionalism of the Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their contributions towards regional peace and security.

# Sheikh Tamim applauds PM Shehbaz's Leadership, pledges Qatar's support for Pakistan's peace efforts

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif received a phone call from Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, who congratulated him on Pakistan's diplomatic success in facilitating the historic Islamabad MoU between the US and Iran.

During their warm conversation, Sheikh Tamim praised PM Shehbaz's leadership and reaffirmed Qatar's full support for Pakistan's peace efforts. PM Shehbaz thanked Qatar for its steadfast backing and credited Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir's efforts, along with roles played by brotherly countries including Qatar.

Both leaders expressed satisfaction over the first round of technical-level talks held in



Burgenstock and agreed to maintain positive momentum while safeguarding negotiations from detractors.

Sheikh Tamim condoled the death of a Pakistani in the Barzan gas facility fire in Ras Laffan. PM Shehbaz appreciated Qatar's hospitality for over 300,000 Pakistanis. Recalling his Doha visit, PM Shehbaz invited Sheikh Tamim to Pakistan. The Amir accepted and expressed willingness to visit later this year to discuss bilateral cooperation and regional issues. Both agreed to maintain close coordination.

# PM receives telephone call from Governor of Tabuk Province, felicitations on Islamabad MoU signing

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday received a telephone call from Governor of Tabuk Province, Saudi Arabia, Prince Fahd Bin Sultan Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

During their most warm and cordial conversation, the governor congratulated the prime minister on Pakistan's remarkable diplomatic efforts that resulted in the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the United States (US) and Iran, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

The prime minister thanked the governor for his kind words and said that Pakistan's peace efforts were aimed at ensuring regional peace and stability, with the support of brotherly countries, including Saudi Arabia. While recalling the historic brotherly ties between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the prime minister expressed his deepest gratitude to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for his affection for Pakistan.

The prime minister extended an invitation to the governor to undertake a visit to Pakistan.

# FM Wang felicitates DPM Dar, leadership for successfully conducting mediation process, signing of Islamabad MOU

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday held interaction with the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, Wang Yi, who congratulated the DPM and the leadership for successfully conducting this mediation process and signing of Islamabad MOU.

During the interaction, the Chinese foreign minister praised Pakistan's untiring efforts for peace and stability, marked by continuous outreach, active mediation and sustained engagement, a DPM's Office news release said.



The DPM/FM congratulated Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the 105th anniversary of CPC. The discussions focused on the Iran-US peace process, especially the first

round of high-level talks in Burgenstock, mediated by Pakistan and Qatar.

The deputy prime minister shared that the talks had led to the establishment of a high-level committee aimed at providing oversight to the mediation process under the Islamabad MoU. The three working groups constituted to focus on the nuclear issue, sanctions, and monitoring and dispute resolution would aim to facilitate a final deal between the parties within 60 days.

The DPM/FM expressed appreciation for China's steadfast support to the peace process, with a particular emphasis on the four-point peace proposal of President Xi Jinping and the five-point Pakistan-China peace initiative.

# Acting President Barred from AJK Elections as Appeal Dismissed

**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: Heavy turmoil in the political and electoral circles of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the way for Acting President Chaudhry Latif Akbar to enter the election field will not be smooth. The concerned forum has upheld the original decision of the Returning Officer and dismissed the appeal filed on their behalf.

Earlier, the Returning Officer had handed over the nomination papers of Chaudhry Latif Akbar from LA-31 Muzaffarabad-5 Khawar as the Assembly candidate. The Returning Officer, after concluding the hearing of detailed arguments of the lawyers of both the parties on the objections, took an unequivocal position in his written judgment that Chaudhry Latif-



State-e-Taif-Akbar-Aibar are in office, they are not eligible to contest elections. It is pertinent that Acting President

Chaudhry Latif Akbar's nomination papers from Khawara constituency. Now, after the appeal is heard, this

decision of the returning officer has become final, whereby the acting president's electoral participation from constituency L. A. 31 has been legally terminated.

It is clear that another important phase of the election process has begun in connection with the general elections of Azad Jammu and Kashmir 2026, under which the nomination papers of the remaining candidates will be submitted. Earlier, the stage of submitting nomination papers was completed on June 23 at 5 pm. The process of scrutiny of papers by returning officers is underway in various constituencies of Muzaffarabad. Documents submitted by all candidates during this crucial phase and legal requirements are being carefully scrutinized to ensure compliance with electoral laws.

## PM Rathore Chairs Meeting to Finalize People-Friendly Budget for Next Fiscal Year



**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: A meeting was held under the chairmanship of PM Faisal Mumtaz Rathore regarding the budget for the next fiscal year. Principal Secretary Zafar Mehmood Khan and Finance Secretary Hassan Masood attended the meeting.

The meeting reviewed in detail the preparation of the forthcoming budget, financial discipline and development and welfare priorities. PM Faisal Mumtaz Rathore directed the Finance Secretary to finalize the budget in a people-friendly, balanced and in line with the needs of the state, while development projects, infrastructure, education, education Preference The Place.

The Chief Minister said that despite limited resources, the budget presented would provide maximum relief to the people, ensure fiscal discipline and prove helpful in sustainable development of the state. He directed that all stages of budget preparation be completed in time so that it can be tabled in the Legislative Assembly on time.

## Khawaja Muhammad Ahsan Sworn In as Senior Member of AJK Election Commission



**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: Former Secretary Government Khawaja Muhammad Ahsan took oath as senior member of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission. The swearing-in ceremony was held at the New Civil Secretariat on Wednesday. Chief Election Commissioner Azad Jammu Kashmir Justice Gulam Mustafa Mughal took oath to his post from Khawaja Muhammad Ahsan. Election Commission Member Syed Nazir Hassan Gilani, Secretary Election Commission Raja Muhammad Shakeel Khan, Former Election Commission Member Farhat Ali Mir, Secretary Local Government Development Arshad Ahmad Qureshi Chairman District Council Chairman Bar Council Haroon Riaz Mughal, lawyers and other relevant officials participated. Draftsman of the Department of Law, Justice, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights Raja Zahid Mehmood read out the notification of appointment of senior member Election Commission while Secretary Election Commission Shakjam Khan Mohammad assigned the duties of the voting system.

## Full cooperation with the city administration in Muharram Al-Haram: Mian Mushtaq

**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: Chief Coordinator Pakistan and US Ambassador of Peace Mian Mushtaq Kamboh Allama Mushtaq Ahmed Kamboh Mohammadi Molai has said that the citizens of Faisalabad should fully cooperate with the administration in Muharram Al-Haram. On this occasion, he also asked the philanthropists to arrange drinking water, sherbet and milk stalls for the citizens. He paid tribute to the district administration for providing facilities to the citizens. He has requested the scholars belonging to all sects to play their role in maintaining the best law and order. Mian Mushtaq Ahmed Kamboh has said that this month not only gives us the beginning of a new Islamic year but also teaches us the lesson of patience, sacrifice and standing up for the truth.



## Candidates Announce Fresh Sit-In Against Alleged Merit Violations in SPSC 2024 Competitive Examination



**Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi**

HYDERABAD: Candidates affected by the Sindh Public Service Commission (SPSC) Combined Competitive Examination 2024 have announced another sit-in protest against alleged violations of merit and favouritism in the recruitment process.

The Movement for the Restoration of Meritocracy has announced that a protest sit-in will be held on Monday, June 29, outside the headquarters of the Sindh Public Service Commission.

In this regard, leaders of the affected candidates' movement, including Farman Malghani and Wajahat Ali, met with the Secretary of the District Bar Association and other lawyers to discuss their concerns and the future course of action.

Secretary District Bar Association Masood Rasool Babar Memon and other lawyers expressed support for the candidates' protest and stated that Hyderabad Bar Association stands with the affected candidates in their peaceful struggle.

The Bar Secretary said that lawyers would support the candidates on ethical, constitutional, and legal grounds and would raise their voice for the protection of merit.

He further stated that questions raised regarding merit in the Sindh Public Service Commission process should be addressed through a transparent review, ensuring justice for all affected candidates.

## Jaloos

ISLAMABAD: Shiite Muslims take part in 8th Muharram ul Haram procession taken out Jamia Al-Murtaza (G-9/4) which concludes at Imambargah Imam Sadiq (G-9/2) in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# PM Rathore Vows No Compromise on Peace, Orders Enhanced Security Measures in Muzaffarabad Meeting

**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: Chief Secretary Khushshal Khan and Inspector General of Police Liaquat Malik called on PM Faisal Mumtaz Rathore. Principal Secretary Zafar Mahmood Khan, Commissioner Muzaffarabad Badr Munir and PSO Usman Mumtaz Butt were also present on the occasion.

During the meeting, Chief Secretary Khushshal Khan briefed the PM on the overall administrative and current situation in the state, while IG Liaquat Malik briefed on peace and security related measures.

PM Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has said that protection of lives and property of



the people is the first responsibility of the government and no compromise will be made on establishing peace and order. He directed the agencies concerned to ensure timely and effective

all necessary measures for protection of life and property of the people, enforcement of law and durable peace in the state.

The Chief Minister said that all agencies

should fulfill their responsibilities under mutual coordination and integrated strategy to provide a safe environment to the people and ensure peace, stability and efficiency in the state.

# J&K Community International hails on Pakistan's successful foreign policy and Army Chief role

**City Desk.**

ISLAMABAD: Jammu and Kashmir Community International (JKCI) Chairman Ghulam Nabi Butt, Senior Vice Chairman Sardar Kamran, General Secretary Raja Pervez Ahmed, Vice Chairman Raja Muhammad Zareen Khan, Vice Chairman Khalid Gujjar, Vice Chairman Maharashtra Shakir Sekhel Maroof Yousuf Hamdani Secretary Information and Members said in a joint statement that President of Pakistan Hon'ble Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister of Pakistan Hon'ble Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and His Majesty Chief of Army Staff Zayed Asim Munir. He sincerely congratulates the



United States and Iran on reconciliation. The Jammu and Kashmir Community International said that Pakistan has achieved a distinguished position at the global level, which is the envy of

the whole world. The enemy country India, especially the Modi government, is disappointed in this achievement and victim of Malal.

The people of occupied Kashmir are

also expressing their happiness over Pakistan's successful foreign policy. However, some elements under the guise of rights and demands in Azad Kashmir are implementing Modi's agenda and trying unsuccessfully to spread propaganda and weaken Pakistan relations. JKCI In

He appeals to the elements to end their asceticism and activities like lockdown on the occasion of this great achievement and be part of this historic achievement and joy. Let us work together to make Pakistan more stable so that Pakistan can play its effective role in resolving the Kashmir issue. A strong and stable Pakistan can be the guarantor of Tehreek-e-Azadi Kashmir.

Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 3:15 am  
Zohr ..... 12:10 pm  
Asr ..... 5:11 pm  
Maghrib ..... 7:22 pm  
Isha ..... 9:06 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  
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WASA Rawalpindi ..... 5555489  
CAA ..... 9281092

**HOSPITALS**

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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**

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

**COMPLAINTS**

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

# CM Maryam Nawaz Bids Farewell to First Batch of Parwaaz Card Trainees Heading Abroad

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif held a farewell meeting with 135 young men from across Punjab who completed training under the "Parwaaz Card" programme and are proceeding abroad for employment.

Addressing the participants, the

Chief Minister said she was bidding them farewell "with prayers, just as a mother would." Participants paid a standing tribute to her for launching youth-focused initiatives.

Officials briefed the CM that candidate selection was conducted on 100% merit. Candidates selected in phase one will be employed abroad in hospitality and construction sectors. The



Punjab government aims to export a certified skilled workforce, with the Parwaaz Card programme expected to transform the lives of 500,000 young people across the province.

Successful trainees presented souvenirs and portraits of CM Maryam

Nawaz and Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. One candidate from Gilgit-Baltistan thanked the CM for enabling youth to access international jobs, while another said unprecedented opportunities for youth have been created since she took office.

The CM distributed Parwaaz Cards among the graduates and prayed for their success before posing for a group photograph. She reaffirmed the government's commitment to skill development and overseas employment for Punjab's youth.

## Security Inspection

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi inspecting the security arrangements during 8th Muharram ul Haram procession taken out Jamia Al-Murtaza (G-9/4) which concludes at Imambargah Imam Sadiq (G-9/2) in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Sujawal Police Arrests Second Suspect in High-Profile Murder Case of PPP Culture Wing Leader

**Kamran Khamiso Khawaja**

SUJAWAL: SUJAWAL: Sujawal police arrested another named accused, Ramzan son of Ari Jat, in the high-profile murder of PPP Culture Wing leader Rab Dino Jat of Hyderabad Division. The case is registered under PPC 1860 and ATA 1997. Police said Ramzan fled after the murder. On SSP Alina Rajpar's instructions, a team used digital tracking, human intelligence and targeted raids to locate him. "After escaping the scene, the accused remained at large. Our team pursued him through technical surveillance and ground operations, which led to his arrest," a spokesperson said. This is another breakthrough as investigations continue. Raids are ongoing to arrest other fugitives. Key accused Ghulam Qadir Jat was arrested days earlier. SSP Rajpar praised the team and ordered swift legal proceedings. Police with-held further details but said the hunt for remaining suspects continues. The case was also raised in Sindh Assembly sessions.

## WHO rushes medical supplies to Pakistan amid monsoon season threat

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: WHO has prepositioned medical supplies in Pakistan to support 380,000 people ahead of the monsoon season from July to September 2026. Nine trucks carrying essential medicines, water purification tablets, infection prevention kits, and lab supplies for detecting vector- and waterborne diseases like malaria and dengue have been dispatched. Part of the stock is held at WHO premises for rapid distribution. The supplies aim to ensure rapid access to medicines, support disease diagnosis, strengthen infection control, and reduce outbreak risks. WHO Representative Dr Luo Peng highlighted the importance of preparedness amid increasing climate-driven



hazards, stating WHO works with national authorities to enable rapid response. Pakistan is among the top 10

most climate-vulnerable countries per the 2024 World Risk Report, facing floods, heatwaves, and air pollution, and

is ranked among the 15 most affected by extreme weather from 1995-2024 by the Global Climate Index 2026.

## Balanced Wheat Policy Key to Food Security and Economic Stability: Zulfiqar Ali Anjum

**Zain Khan Malghani**

MULTAN: Prominent industrialist, Chairman of SM Group of Industries, member of the National Export Development Board, and Board of Investment member Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum has stressed the need for a prudent and balanced wheat policy, saying that wheat remains the cornerstone of Pakistan's food security and should be managed through rational planning rather than political rhetoric or administrative pressure.

Speaking on the ongoing wheat situation, Anjum

said farmers are the backbone of the country's agricultural economy and deserve fair compensation for their produce. However, he cautioned that excessive stockpiling of wheat in anticipation of higher prices could create difficulties for farmers themselves. Due to the lack of modern storage facilities and proper warehouses in many rural areas, prolonged storage increases the risk of moisture damage, fungal growth, and pest infestation, ultimately reducing both the quality and market value of the crop.

Anjum noted that in the



event of wheat shortages, alternative staples such as rice, maize, and other grains

can play an important role in meeting food requirements, as practiced in many coun-

tries around the world. He urged policymakers and stakeholders to avoid creating artificial shortages or unnecessary panic and instead adopt a broader national food security strategy.

He concluded by saying that wheat should be viewed through the broader lens of national economic stability, food security, and farmers' prosperity rather than being reduced to a political slogan. Such an approach, he added, would help Pakistan move towards a more sustainable and resilient agricultural system.

## Rana Sikandar Hayat Reviews Muharram Security and Facilities in Multan

**Bureau Report**

MULTAN: Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat and Special Assistant Salma Butt visited Multan to review Muharram arrangements. At Imambargah Shah Shams Darbar, they met mourners and inspected facilities, security, and welfare provisions. Later, at the Central Control Room in the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Commissioner Aamir Karim Khan, RPO Usman Gondal, and Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Noman Siddique briefed them on the security plan and monitoring system. Rana Sikandar Hayat stated that under CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif's instructions, all procession routes are being screened, and modern amenities like mobile washrooms, clinics, and facilitation camps are provided. A comprehensive emergency response plan is in place. Salma Butt noted that the CM personally monitors arrangements daily, with all ministers in the field. She appreciated administration and police efforts, highlighting new facilities for women mourners, including mist spray machines. Commissioner Khan reported 3,173 majalis and 907 processions across the division, with 22 sensitive locations and 2 flash points monitored. Seventy-nine provocative speakers are banned, and speeches of 59 have been limited. All A-category routes are linked to Safe City cameras, with 85 Sibil points, facilitation camps, and medical aid centers active. RPO Multan confirmed over 12,000 police personnel and 3,000 volunteers are deployed, with a crackdown on social media hate content. Deputy Commissioner Siddique emphasized full mobilization of all institutions for peaceful, secure, and comfortable mourning.

## Railway Workers' Issues Raised With Lawmaker Qasim Gillani in Parliament Meeting

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: People's Labor Bureau Multan Division President Nadir Sultan Ganpal met Member National Assembly Syed Qasim Gillani in His office at Parliament House Islamabad. During the meeting, the problems, difficulties and legitimate demands faced by Railway Employees, laborers and the working class were discussed in detail. Nadir Sultan informed about the problems faced by the laborers and railway employees and stressed the need for effective measures to solve them. On this occasion, Qasim Gilani listened carefully to the problems of the workers and assured that he would raise his voice in the National Assembly for the protection of the rights and welfare of the working class. He said that the workers are the backbone of the development of any society and the solution of their problems should be among the priorities of the Government. Nadir Sultan thanked Qasim Gillani for listening seriously to the problems of the workers and assuring cooperation in solving them, and expressed the hope that the railway employees and other working classes Effective and practical steps will be taken to protect the rights of workers.



## APPSCA President Honored at Skardu Dinner; Calls Private Education a 'National Service'

**City Desk**

SKARDU: A dignified dinner reception was held in honor of Dr. Abrar Hussain Malik, Central President of APPSCA, during his visit to Skardu. Organized by Friends of Education, it brought together educationists, principals and institution heads from Skardu and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Dr. Malik praised private schools/colleges for delivering quality education in remote areas, calling it "great national service." He said teachers and administrators are the backbone of academic excellence and character building, deserving recognition.

He presented shields/awards to 10 distinguished educationists, including Sanawar Ali, Arif Shehbaz, Javed Iqbal, Abid Jan, Mustafa Dilawar, Syed Athar Kazmi, Shahid Mehdi, Muhammad Mir, Syed Muhammad Ali Shah, and Iftikhar Hussain of Uswa Public School.

Participants lauded Dr. Malik's work for private education and discussed strengthening institutional cooperation. Dr. Malik thanked Arif Shehbaz and Sanawar Ali for hosting, expressing hope such gatherings would continue to promote development and professional exchange.



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# The Great Decoupling of the United States and Israel

For more than half a century, the United States and Israel have been viewed as inseparable strategic partners in the Middle East. Successive American administrations, regardless of party affiliation, generally aligned their regional policies with Israel's security concerns, often treating the two nations' interests as largely identical.

Yet the diplomatic developments that followed the recent Iran war suggest that this assumption may no longer hold true. Rather, it is the beginning of something far more consequential: the gradual decoupling of American strategic interests from Israel's broader regional agenda.

The clearest evidence of this shift is not coming from Tehran or Islamabad. It is coming from within the United States itself. The political shockwave generated by Tucker Carlson's public break with the Republican Party illustrates a growing debate within conservative America.

Carlson, one of the most influential voices on the American right, declared that he could no longer support a political movement that, in his view, places the interests of a foreign country ahead of those of the United States. Whether one agrees with his conclusion or not, the significance lies in the fact that such criticism is no longer confined to the political fringes. Questions that were once whispered are now being discussed openly among conservatives, libertarians, progressives, and independent

voters alike. The debate intensified following the U. S.-Iran diplomatic initiative that emerged after the war. The architecture of this process is noteworthy. Rather than attempting to solve every dispute at once, the framework creates a pathway for addressing complex issues over time. The objective is not to produce instant solutions but to establish a structure capable of managing disagreements before they escalate into war.

Pakistan's role in this process has been particularly significant. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's visit to Islamabad on 23rd June underscored the importance Tehran attaches to Pakistan's mediation efforts. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to facilitating dialogue and helping both sides move toward a durable peace. The symbolism was powerful: a regional Muslim power acting as a bridge between Washington and Tehran at a moment when military confrontation seemed inevitable only months earlier.

Yet the most important development may be the evolution of American objectives themselves. For years, Israeli strategic thinking has viewed Iran's nuclear program, ballistic missile capability, drone industry, cyber warfare assets,

Revolutionary Guard networks, and relationships with Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Houthis as components of a single threat architecture. From this perspective, lasting security requires not merely preventing nuclear weaponization but substantially weakening Iran's broader ability to project power throughout the region.

The emerging American position appears different. President Donald Trump has drawn a clear distinction between Iran's nuclear ambitions and its conventional military capabilities. In remarks that surprised many observers, Trump argued that if neighboring states possess missiles, drones, cyber

capabilities, and conventional deterrent forces, it would be difficult to justify denying Iran every means of self-defense.

Interestingly, the MOU is formally bilateral between Washington and Tehran, mediated by Pakistan and Qatar. But its effects reach Israel, Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis, Gaza, Lebanon, the Strait of Hormuz, and the GCC. None of these actors fully sits at the table. The assumption is simple: America will manage Israel and its Arab allies; Iran will manage Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Houthis. If that assumption holds, the deal can reshape the region. If it fails, the

Middle East may again slide into fire.

Israel is the elephant in the room. Netanyahu has already signaled that Israel reserves "full freedom of action" in Lebanon, even while Washington tries to stabilize the ceasefire. That statement exposes the central problem: America may want de-escalation, but Israel still wants operational freedom. If Israel refuses to follow Washington's larger strategy, then the U. S. will have to decide whether it is a superpower or merely Israel's security subcontractor.

These goals of the USA and Israel are not identical but divergent. This divergence became more visible when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reaffirmed Israel's determination to maintain operational freedom in Lebanon, even as diplomatic efforts sought to stabilize ceasefire arrangements. While Washington is investing political capital in de-escalation and negotiation, Israel continues to conduct military operations against threats it considers immediate and existential.

The growing gap between these approaches represents the core of the emerging decoupling. The debate surrounding Senator Lindsey Graham, a close associate of Donald Trump and staunch supporter of Israel. Graham openly warned that if the talks failed, which he hoped will, President Trump would seize control of the Strait of Hormuz by force, place the strategic waterway under American control, and

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Pakistan and Iran Agree to Accelerate Agricultural Trade and Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation

Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, chaired a high-level meeting with the Minister of Agriculture Jihad of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Gholamreza Nouri Ghezlejeh, to review progress on bilateral agricultural cooperation and explore new avenues for enhancing trade between the two neighboring countries.

The meeting focused on strengthening collaboration in agriculture, livestock, food security, agricultural research, and trade facilitation. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to deepening economic ties and translating existing agreements into tangible outcomes for the benefit of farmers, traders, and consumers in both countries.

During the discussions, Rana Tanveer Hussain recalled his official visit to Iran in 2025, during which both countries agreed to expand bilateral trade in key agricultural commodities. He noted that Iran had expressed interest in importing Pakistani rice, mangoes, and meat to meet its growing domestic demand. He emphasized that Pakistan possesses significant potential in agricultural production and is fully capable of supplying high-quality products to the Iranian market.

The Iranian Minister highlighted Iran's intention to import meat from Pakistan and stated that Pakistan has the capacity to fulfill up to 60 percent of Iran's total meat import requirements. He expressed confidence in the quality and standards of Pakistani livestock products and underscored the importance of establishing efficient trade mechanisms to ensure uninterrupted supplies.

Both ministers reviewed the progress made under the joint understandings reached during previous engagements and agreed that the commitments reflected in the joint communiqué would be implemented within the next two months. They directed relevant authorities to expedite procedural requirements and remove bottlenecks hindering trade growth.

The Iranian Minister appreciated Pakistan's constructive role in promoting regional peace and stability and thanked the Government of Pakistan for facilitating efforts aimed at strengthening regional understanding and cooperation.

The meeting also reviewed the status of the Pakistan-Iran Joint Working Committee on Agriculture. The Iranian Minister noted that the committee had already been constituted and stressed that the time had come to make it fully functional and active so that agreed targets could be achieved within stipulated timelines. Both sides agreed to hold regular meetings of the committee and establish effective coordination mechanisms between technical experts and relevant institutions.

Rana Tanveer Hussain emphasized that enhanced agricul-



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

## US-China Rivalry and Diplomacy in a Multipolar World: Avoiding Thucydides' Trap

Mahnoor Hasan Shigri

The strategic competition between the United States and China is reshaping international relations. China's rapid economic growth, technological advancement, and military modernization have made it a global power capable of challenging US hegemony. This shift has transformed global politics, creating both opportunities and challenges. Today, US-China rivalry extends beyond military matters to include economic competition, technological leadership, diplomatic influence, and security issues. Scholars often use "Thucydides' Trap" to explain this tension. The concept, drawn from ancient Greek historian Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens, suggests that when a rising power challenges an established dominant power, the risk of conflict increases due to fear and miscalculation. The theory warns of danger but does not make conflict inevitable. Diplomacy, cooperation, and strategic restraint can help both nations manage rivalry and avoid direct confrontation. Unlike ancient Sparta and Athens, the US and China are deeply interconnected through trade, investment, international institutions, and diplomacy. Both depend heavily on global economic stability, giving them strong incentives to avoid war. In this context, diplomacy remains critical to preventing strategic competition from escalating into conflict. Economic and Technological Competition

facturing capacity, markets, and economic influence. Their relationship is simultaneously cooperative and competitive, making it one of the world's most complex economic ties. The 2018 US-China trade war illustrates this rivalry. Mutual tariffs disrupted global supply chains and raised costs for businesses, showing how economic disputes can become strategic problems. After COVID-19 exposed vulnerabilities in global manufacturing, both countries sought greater control over key industries and resources, further shaping global trade and economic policy. Technology is another major battleground. Both view leadership in AI, semiconductors, cybersecurity, quantum computing, and advanced telecommunications as essential to national security and economic growth. The US restrictions on Huawei over 5G security concerns, and China's push for self-reliant innovation, highlight this competition. Semiconductor dominance has also become crucial, as advanced chips power smartphones, military systems, and AI. Military and Security Issues

Military tensions remain sensitive. Taiwan is the most contentious issue: China claims Taiwan as part of its territory, while the US maintains close ties with Taipei and supports its defense. In the South China Sea, China's expanded presence and territorial claims clash with US freedom of navigation operations, increasing Indo-Pacific competition. In response to China's rise, the US has strengthened alliances with Japan, Australia, and India to maintain regional stability and balance power. These partnerships are key tools of American strategy in Asia. Diplomacy in a Multipolar Order

Diplomatic influence is now a core element

of competition. China uses the Belt and Road Initiative to build infrastructure and economic ties across Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America. The US relies on long-standing alliances like NATO and Indo-Pacific partnerships to sustain influence. The international order is becoming multipolar, with multiple powers shaping global issues. While the US remains dominant militarily and economically, China's growth has made it a major player. The EU retains influence in economy, diplomacy, and climate leadership. India is rising due to its economy, population, and strategic location. Russia and Brazil also contribute to a more complex, multipolar system that creates both cooperation opportunities and diplomatic challenges. Risks and Opportunities

US-China competition carries risks: military escalation over Taiwan and the South China Sea, trade conflicts, sanctions, and supply chain disruptions that could destabilize the global economy. Yet cooperation opportunities are significant. Climate change, global health, counterterrorism, and economic stability require major-power collaboration. The Paris Climate Agreement shows nations can cooperate despite political differences. International organizations like the UN provide platforms for dialogue and dispute resolution. Economic interdependence also encourages cooperation by creating mutual benefits and reducing incentives for conflict. Diplomacy offers a path to avoid Thucydides' Trap. A recent example is President Donald Trump's May 2026 state visit to China, where he met President Xi Jinping. Talks covered trade, technology, Taiwan, and regional security. Despite disagreements, both

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## Iran's Uranium Enrichment Program: A Crisis to Global Arms Control and Middle East's Security

Sahar

For more than twenty years, Iran's enrichment program has remained a very significant and dangerous political and security crisis for the International community. The program, which was started with the help of the United States under the President Dwight's Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" has now become so advanced that it is said that by early 2025, Iran could theoretically produce enough uranium to make nine nuclear bombs within just a few weeks. However, Iran's stance on this has been so clear that uranium enrichment is being done for peaceful purposes and it is its right under international law.

This all started in the 1950s as a peaceful civilian program along with the help of United States to fulfill its energy needs. Iran signed the NPT in 1968, in which Iran promised not to make nuclear weapon. But after 1979, nuclear program was restarted. In 2002, an Iranian opposition group revealed that Iran had been building enrichment facilities at Natanz and Arak without informing the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency). Under the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran agreed to limit its uranium enrichment to 3.67% in exchange for extensive economic sanctions relief. But after the withdrawal of the United States, the agreement weakened and Iran started to remove the restrictions.

According to the Institute for Science and International Security in May 2025, it was stated that Iran has stockpile of 60% enriched

uranium which can be converted into weapons-grade material which is enough for making nine nuclear weapons. In late 2024, Iran announced it's going to expand the uranium enrichment at its Fordow facility using advanced IR-6 centrifuges. According to report by International Atomic Energy Agency, May 2025, Iran's monthly production of 60% enriched uranium could rise from 5 kg to 37 kg.

In June 2025, tensions reached a new dangerous level. Israel, with the support of United States, launched airstrikes on Iran, targeting its nuclear sites. After the strikes, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), withdrew its inspectors from Iran. By February 2026, the agency reported that it no longer had access to any of Iran's enrichment facilities. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said that much of the uranium had been buried under rubble during the strikes. However, before the strikes the International Atomic Energy Agency estimated that Iran possessed 440.9 uranium enriched to 60 percent. The question whether this material was destroyed, hidden or moved to a secret place remains unanswered in the international security discussions today.

The diplomatic history of Iran on the topic of nuclear weapons is filled with the failed negotiations. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action offered Iran relief on economic sanctions in exchange for limits on its nuclear program. Negotiations between Iran and the United States started again in 2025 but the strikes completely put an end to the negotiations. Iran insists that its nuclear program is

*Continued on Page 7*

# 'Say No To Drugs' is not just a slogan but a commitment to securing the future: Syed Zulfiqar Hussain



**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: The Office of Safety, Security and Vigilance at the University of Management and Technology (UMT) organized a special seminar in connection with the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. The purpose of the seminar was to raise awareness among young people about the devastating effects of drug abuse and to promote public understanding of anti-narcotics efforts within society. A large number of students, faculty members, and administrative staff

attended the event.

The seminar was attended by Syed Zulfiqar Hussain, Advisor on Drug Prevention and Narcotics, as the chief guest. Other distinguished participants included Dr. Ejaz Cheema, Vice Rector UMT; Colonel (R) Syed Sakhawat, Head of the Office of Safety, Security and Vigilance; Adeel Rashid, Secretary General of Drug Abuse Treatment and Humanity; and Syed Mohsin.

In his address, Dr. Ejaz Cheema, Vice Rector of UMT, stated that UMT holds the distinction of being Pakistan's first drug-free campus, where a strict

zero-tolerance policy against drug use is enforced. He emphasized that providing students with a drug-free, safe, and healthy educational environment is the institution's foremost priority.

Colonel (R) Syed Sakhawat, Head of the Office of Safety, Security and Vigilance, stated that drug abuse poses a serious threat to individuals, families, and society as a whole. He said that "Say No To Drugs" is not merely a slogan but a commitment to safeguarding the bright and secure future of the younger generation.

Chief Guest Syed Zulfiqar Hussain



highlighted the importance of engaging young people in positive activities, character building, and adopting healthy lifestyles. He remarked that educational institutions like UMT are playing a vital role in eliminating drug abuse and promoting positive social values.

He stressed that effective awareness campaigns and collective consciousness are essential in the fight against drugs, as this menace is destroying the talents, education, and future of young people.

At the conclusion of the seminar, vaping devices were symbolically

destroyed as a demonstration against substance abuse. Participants also took part in an awareness walk promoting anti-drug initiatives. Later, Vice Rector Dr. Ejaz Cheema presented commemorative souvenirs to the distinguished guests.

## Iranian President's Visit to Pakistan to Open New Chapter of Collaboration: Iftikhar Malik

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik on Wednesday said that the state visit of the Iranian President to Pakistan, at the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, will further cement bilateral relations and strengthen long-awaited economic ties between the two brotherly Muslim countries.

In a statement here today he said visit would open a new chapter of collaboration and pave the way for enhanced trade, investment and regional connectivity. He said despite immense potential, bilateral trade between the two neighboring countries has remained far below its actual



capacity. The visit, he said, offers a valuable opportunity for both coun-

tries to address existing challenges, remove trade barriers and facilitate greater interaction between the private sectors.

He underlined the importance of strengthening cooperation in energy, agriculture, information technology, infrastructure development, tourism and border trade.

He added that closer economic integration would not only benefit the people of both countries but also contribute significantly to regional stability and prosperity.

Iftikhar Ali Malik said that both countries share deep-rooted historical, cultural and religious bonds, which provide a strong foundation for expanding cooperation in diverse sectors of mutual interest.

## Punjab Minister Azma Bukhari Reviews Muharram Security Arrangements in Kamalia



**Zafar Chishti**

TOBA TEK SINGH: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari, CM Adviser Malik Zeeshan, RPO Faisalabad Sohail Akhtar Sukhera, Commissioner Faisalabad Musarrat Jabeen and senior officials visited Kamalia to review arrangements for the A-category central Shabeeh Zuljanah procession on 8th Muharram. Deputy Commissioner, DPO, Assistant Commissioner Erum Shahzadi and municipal officers were also present. Officials inspected the procession route and reviewed security, cleanliness, lighting, traffic management, medical facilities, rescue services and the control room. Azma Bukhari said ensuring a peaceful environment and best facilities for mourners is Punjab Govt's top priority per CM Maryam Nawaz's directions. She ordered strict vigilance until the procession ends and full emergency preparedness. Malik Zeeshan said district administration, police, Rescue 1122, health and municipal departments were coordinating to avoid inconvenience. RPO Sukhera noted heavy police deployment with CCTV, walkthrough gates and metal detectors. Commissioner Jabeen directed cleanliness, safe drinking water and medical camps. Officials expressed satisfaction and stressed continued coordination for peaceful, respectful Muharram gatherings.

## University of Kamalia Successfully Hosts Building Future Together Community and Media Forum 2026

**Zafar Chishti**

TOBA TEK SINGH: The University of Kamalia held the "Building Future Together Community and Media Forum 2026," gathering community leaders, media representatives, social figures and university administration to strengthen ties and promote collaboration on educational and social initiatives.

Speakers included Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Yasir Nawab, Prof. Dr. Atiq-ur-Rehman, Prof. Dr. Zaid-ur-Rehman, Community Board Chairman Dr. Arshad Hanif, Chaudhry Khushi Muhammad Jutt and Chaudhry Muhammad Tahir Iqbal.

Speakers emphasized that the university is emerging as a leading

institution providing quality education while driving social development and national service. They called media and the local community "true partners" whose support is essential for success.

VC Dr. Yasir Nawab reaffirmed commitment to free, high-quality education for talented and underprivileged students, stressing that financial

constraints should not block capable learners. He said creating outstanding opportunities for youth is core to the university's vision.

Participants pledged support for the university's goal of becoming a regional model, noting that strong university-community-media collaboration is indispensable for regional development.

## Pakistan Launches National GBV Mentorship Forum to Strengthen Survivor-Centered Care

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The two-day National Conference "Connected for Care," held in Islamabad from June 22-23, 2026, was organized by the Ministry of Human Rights with support from SPO and UNFPA Pakistan, funded by FCDO and the Embassy of the Netherlands. The conference focused on strengthening Gender-Based Violence (GBV) case management in Pakistan. Day one highlighted that nearly one in three ever-married women in Pakistan experiences violence, with critical gaps in investigation and case processing. Provincial trainers identified common barriers: weak referral coordination, social stigma, and inadequate supervision. Day two focused on institutional commitments. Mehreen Jaswal (UNFPA) addressed the service gap for married adolescent girls, who are excluded from both GBV and child protection systems. She called for proactive outreach and survivor-centered principles, emphasizing that economic dependency and child marriage must be addressed. A panel discussion, moderated by Mahjabeen Qazi (UNFPA), explored integrating



GBV case management into university curricula. Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were cited as leaders; KP's Social Welfare Department reported improved frontline practice after revising SOPs. Persistent gaps include mentoring, disability inclusion, and interpretation services. Zehra Kamal highlighted mentorship and supervision as structural tools, distinguishing between management supervision and technical case supervision. Supervision

protects against secondary traumatization and ensures ethical accountability, but barriers include administrative overload, burnout, and lack of formal systems. The conference's key outcome was the establishment of a National GBV Case Management Mentorship Forum, linking certified trainers from all provinces and ICT for peer supervision and advocacy. In closing, Saira Atta (Balochistan Women Development Secretary) and Arif Leghari

(Ministry of Human Rights) stressed collective responsibility, equipping case workers with survivor-centered skills, legal knowledge, and referral mechanisms. They called for institutionalizing GBV case management in government systems, SOPs, and academic curricula. The conference marked a shift from training metrics to building institutional, mentorship, and relational infrastructure for durable survivor-centered care.

## Kaspersky Unmasks 336 Scam Sites Targeting World Cup Fans

**Commerce Desk**

Kaspersky has identified 336 fake websites targeting football fans during the 2026 World Cup, which started June 11. Scammers are exploiting interest in live streaming and sports betting to steal money and personal data. Fraudulent streaming sites ask users to register and pay a cryptocurrency fee for "lifetime access," risking loss of credentials and funds. Fake betting platforms, like a Spanish-language site, request extensive personal details (name, email, phone) leading to credential theft and financial loss. Olga Altukhova from Kaspersky notes that as fans increasingly watch matches online, criminal activity grows, urging users to stick to official broadcasts. Additionally, phishing emails with urgent wording ask for money, such as a \$200 fee for football analytics, potentially causing irreversible loss. Kaspersky advises verifying website authenticity, checking URL formats, using official streaming platforms, and employing reliable security software like Kaspersky Premium, which earned AV-Comparatives' Anti-phishing certification in 2025.



## Pak Food Delegation Set for Iran Visit to Boost Bilateral Investment and Joint Ventures

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: A high-level Pak food delegation from South Punjab, led by Coordinator to the Federal Tax Ombudsman Saif Ur Rehman, will visit Iran next month to explore new avenues of investment, joint ventures, and bilateral collaboration in the food sector.

Talking here today to a delegation of food exporters led by Abd Ul Rehman he said the visit aims to strengthen economic ties between the two neighboring Muslim countries and promote mutually beneficial partnerships in food processing especially snacks. He said enhanced collaboration can play a vital role in addressing regional food security challenges and ensuring sustainable food supplies for growing populations. The delegation will hold meetings with Iranian government officials, leading business groups, chambers of commerce, investors, and representatives of the food industry to identify opportunities for trade expansion and technology transfer. Discussions will focus on investment in value-added food products, cold-chain infrastructure, storage facilities, and modern farming techniques.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
179,571.26	177,692.92
Day's High	Day's Low
179,919.27	177,931.32
Index Value	Change
30,503,267,152	+1878.34
Percentage	Time
+1.06%	24 Jun, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,461.63	+32.78
Percentage	Time
+0.31%	24 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
51,848.76	+181.92
Percentage	Time
+0.35%	24 Jun, 2:11 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
69,174.97	-613.41
Percentage	Time
-0.88%	24 Jun, 3:45 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	193.37	196.95
Bahrain Dinar	737.16	747.75
Canadian Dollar	197.52	201.17
China Yuan	38.10	38.85
Danish Krone	43.35	43.75
Euro	318.55	322.17
Hong Kong Dollar	35.06	36.04
Indian Rupee	2.75	3.05
Japanese Yen	1,712.1	1,810.4
Kuwaiti Dinar	885.17	895.90
Malaysian Ringgit	67	67.85
New Zealand \$	157.64	161.65
Norwegians Krone	27.97	28.27
Omani Riyal	722.25	732.50
Qatari Riyal	75.04	75.95
Saudi Riyal	74.30	74.95
Singapore Dollar	213.90	217.64
Swedish Korona	30.25	30.55
Swiss Franc	342.45	346.20
Thai Bhat	8.50	8.75
U.A.E Dirham	75.90	76.75
UK Pound Sterling	368.52	372.25
US Dollar	279.05	279.30

# Karandaaz Pakistan Mobilises Stakeholders to Drive Systemic Change for Women's Economic and Digital Inclusion

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Karandaaz Pakistan is advancing from isolated interventions to system-level integration to embed gender equity into the national digital and financial ecosystem. In June 2026, its Women Economic and Digital Inclusion (WEDI) initiative convened a strategic forum, "Driving Systemic Change for Women's Economic Inclusion," gathering leading financial institutions, regulators, and development partners to reinforce commitments and showcase targeted interventions against gender-related economic gaps.

The forum highlighted persistent disparities: female labour force participation is below 25%, and only 14% of women own formal financial accounts (Karandaaz Financial Inclusion Survey 2024). Key developments included the presentation of Karandaaz's institutional Gender Strategy and a signing ceremony for the Financial Inclusion for Women Challenge Round 5. Mobilink Microfinance Bank will onboard 50,000 women in agriculture via digital banking, while Manzil Organization will



empower 9,000 rural women in Balochistan with farmland and markets. A Women Ventures Showcase also addressed financing gaps for low-cost private schools to boost girls' retention. A panel featuring leaders from Jazz, Inter-

loop, UN Women, and the Asian Development Bank discussed regulatory frameworks. British High Commission's Dr Elena Mylona emphasized international synergy for institutional change. Chairperson Syed Salim Raza under-

scored moving beyond isolated projects to embed women's inclusion across Karandaaz's portfolio, aiming to close digital and financial access gaps for sustainable economic development.

## Brunt Stalls at Weekly Bazaar H-9

ISLAMABAD: Stall holder at their brunt stalls at Weekly Bazaar H-9 in the Federal Capital. A massive fire broke out at H-9 Weekly Bazaar on Tuesday night, engulfing a large number of stalls. This is the fifth incident of fire at the weekly bazaar since 2017.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## OPPO Pakistan, Ufone/PTCL Group Sign Landmark 5G Partnership Deal

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: OPPO Pakistan and Ufone/PTCL Group signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement to accelerate 5G adoption and enhance customer experience across Pakistan.

The deal positions both firms to drive 5G-ready smartphone rollouts and services as Pakistan enters the 5G era. Under the agreement, they will collaborate on 5G device distribution, co-branded bundles pairing OPPO's 5G handsets with Ufone's high-speed plans, dedicated Media & Communications platforms, Shop-in-Shop setups, 5G Experience Zones, and joint promotional campaigns.

Senior officials from both sides attended the ceremony, calling it a defining step toward a fully connected, 5G-powered Pakistan. By combining OPPO's 5G smartphone portfolio with Ufone/PTCL's nationwide network and retail reach, the partnership aims to deliver wider access, deeper



consumer engagement, and stronger value. The collaboration reflects a shared vision for innovation and cross-industry

5G growth, laying groundwork for technology-first initiatives to make next-gen connectivity accessible nationwide.

## PPL commences execution of BLZ project with signing of PMC contract with DMT Germany

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) commences the execution phase for Barite, Lead & Zinc (BLZ) Project, a joint venture between PPL as operator and Government of Balochistan, with the signing of Project Management Consultancy contract with globally renowned engineering services DMT Germany, marking a significant milestone for development of Pakistan's mineral resources.

MD & CEO PPL Mohammad Khalid Rehman signed the agreement with Head, DMT Germany Florian Beier on June 23 at PPL head office in the presence of offi-

cial from both organizations, including Head PPL Minerals Zeeshan Asghar.

Partnering with DMT Germany reflects PPL's commitment to international best practices, technical excellence and effective execution.

BLZ Project is one of Pakistan's most significant



large-scale open-pit mining ventures which is expected to become a key driver of economic growth in the region, contributing significantly towards mineral exports and development of country's mineral resources.

## Chinese Investors Express Confidence in SECP Reforms and Pakistan's Capital Markets

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Chinese strategic investors in Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) have expressed strong confidence in Pakistan's capital markets and welcomed recent reforms undertaken by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) under the leadership of Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu.

In a letter addressed to the SECP Chairman following a recent meeting with the Chinese Investor Consortium, Mr. You Hang (Harry), Executive Vice President of China Financial Futures Exchange (CFFEX), thanked the SECP leadership for its constructive engagement

and support in resolving key strategic matters concerning Pakistan's capital market infrastructure.

The Chinese investors acknowledged SECP's role in addressing long-pending issues, including approvals related to the restructuring of PSX assets and enhancement of PSX's strategic shareholding in the National Clearing Company of Pakistan Limited (NCCPL) and the Central Depository Company of Pakistan (CDC). The consortium noted that these measures bring Pakistan's market infrastructure closer to international standards and strengthen the long-term development prospects of the capital market.

## PIBF Submits Six-Point Agenda for Strengthening Pakistan-Iran Trade Relations

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: The Pak International Business Forum (PIBF) has submitted a letter to the Ambassador of Iran in Pakistan, proposing a comprehensive six-point agenda aimed at significantly enhancing bilateral trade, investment, energy cooperation and economic integration between the two neighboring countries.

In the letter, PIBF President Dr.

Mushtaq Mangat and Secretary General Muhammad Ejaz Tanveer emphasized that Pakistan and Iran enjoy longstanding historical, cultural, religious and geographical ties, yet bilateral trade remains far below its true potential. They urged both governments to take practical and strategic steps to unlock new opportunities for economic cooperation and regional connectivity.

The PIBF leadership proposed

that the commencement and completion of the Pakistan-Iran Gas Pipeline Project should be treated as a priority initiative, as it would help address Pakistan's energy requirements while promoting long-term economic collaboration between the two countries.

The letter also called for the restoration and expansion of the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) Cargo Train Service, noting that enhanced

rail connectivity would facilitate trade, reduce transportation costs and strengthen links between South Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

Dr. Mushtaq Mangat and Muhammad Ejaz Tanveer further urged the conclusion of a formal agreement for the purchase and import of Iranian petroleum products, stating that such cooperation could provide Pakistan with a reliable and cost-effective source of energy

while contributing to greater regional economic integration.

The PIBF leaders also proposed the establishment of structured business cooperation mechanisms and formal agreements between the Pakistani and Iranian business communities. They suggested regular business forums, trade delegations, B2B meetings and institutional linkages to promote investment and commercial partnerships.

In their letter, Dr. Mushtaq Mangat and Muhammad Ejaz Tanveer expressed the hope that these proposals would receive serious consideration and serve as the foundation for a new phase of economic cooperation between Pakistan and Iran. They emphasized that stronger commercial ties would benefit both countries and contribute to regional prosperity, connectivity and sustainable growth.

# Future-Ready, Technologically Proficient Workforce is Critical for Future Warfare-Naval Chief



LAHORE: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf visited Pakistan Navy War College, Lahore, and addressed the participants of the 55th PN Staff Course. In his address, the Naval Chief stressed that winning future wars demands not only a re-evaluation of legacy warfighting strategies but also the development and sustainment of a future-ready workforce that is intellectually astute and technologically

proficient. He also elaborated on the evolving nature of modern warfare and emerging maritime security threats, emphasizing that traditional military strategies must adapt to effectively address the complexities of contemporary security challenges, both traditional and non-traditional. He reaffirmed Pakistan Navy's commitment to modernization, indigenization, and jointness, and called upon the partici-

pants to further refine their strategic outlook and operational foresight to effectively respond to future challenges. Chief of the Naval Staff, while elaborating on the maritime challenges facing Pakistan, remarked that the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) remains fluid and contested. He highlighted that new geopolitical realignments and ongoing power rivalries in the region continue to affect the

security environment in the IOR. He further added that the astute execution of multidomain operations remains central to modern warfighting concepts. Focusing on the prevailing threat milieu, the Admiral dwelled upon various initiatives and development plans of Pakistan Navy in line with his vision of projecting PN as a formidable regional maritime power. In conclusion, the Chief of the Naval Staff congratulated the



participants on the successful completion of PN Staff Course and advised them to remain meticulous, analytical, innovative, and professionally competent in their future assignments.

## First Lady Asifa Bhutto Zardari Reaffirms Pakistan's Partnership with UN on Health, Climate and Development

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Bibi Asifa Bhutto Zardari, MNA, met UN Resident Coordinator Mr. Mohamed Yahya and representatives of UN agencies at Aiwan-e-Sadr to discuss Pakistan's cooperation with the UN on development, climate resilience, education, health and social protection. Welcoming the delegation, the First Lady said Pakistan values its longstanding cooperation with the UN and wants to strengthen collaboration, especially in public health, children, SDGs and climate change. She reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to working closely with the UN Country Team to advance national priorities. UN officials briefed her on ongoing work in development, humanitarian and social sectors. The First Lady reiterated Pakistan's commitment to a polio-free future and appreciated UN support, stressing that the next 12 months are crucial. She called for using emerging technologies, including AI, to ensure



polio vaccines reach every household. She also highlighted the Benazir Nashonuma Programme for maternal and child nutrition, noting that 41% of Pakistani children suffer stunting. She stressed that child and maternal health are central to PPP's manifesto and called for collective action to improve outcomes for women and children. On climate, the First Lady called it

a defining challenge and thanked the UN for disaster response after the 2022 and 2025 floods and for co-hosting the 2023 Climate Resilient Pakistan Conference. She praised initiatives like Living Indus and Recharge Pakistan, and urged continued UN support as humanitarian coordination scales down. She concluded: "My voice is your

voice in advancing child health, nutrition, education, polio eradication, women's empowerment and social development. No child or woman will be left behind." Senator Saleem Mandviwala, MNA Shazia Marri, and representatives of WFP, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNHCR, IOM, UNESCO and UN Women attended.

## Ghana's Archbishop Charles Agyinasare Visits Pakistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Archbishop Dr. Charles Agyinasare, one of Africa's most prominent Christian leaders, visited the Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Ghana in Islamabad on 17 June during his tour of Pakistan. Upon arrival, Vice Consul Hon. Omar Shahid Butt welcomed the Archbishop and his nine-member delegation. The two discussed ways to strengthen Ghana-Pakistan ties amid evolving global security and economic challenges.



Both sides agreed on the need for closer cooperation, particularly in education and business. They emphasized enhancing linkages between educational institutions and business communities of the two countries. Interfaith harmony, mutual respect, and better understanding among people of different faiths also featured prominently in the discussion. The establishment of Perez Academy in Pakistan was also explored during the meeting. Founded by Archbishop Agyinasare, the institution focuses on quality education, character development, and leadership training for youth. The Archbishop's Pakistan visit included several large religious gatherings. He led the "Pakistan Festival of Miracles" in Hyderabad on 12 June, followed by events in Karachi and the "Ignite Ministers' Conference" in Gujranwala on 13 June. On 14 June, he conducted the "Karachi on Fire for Jesus" Festival of Miracles, which drew large crowds.

## Geneva Seminar Highlights Climate Migration and Militarisation Impact in Indian-Occupied Kashmir

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND: The Kashmir Institute of International Relations, in collaboration with International Action for Sustainable Development, held a seminar titled "Climate Migration Rights" on the sidelines of the 62nd UN Human Rights Council session. Civil society representatives, climate experts, and migration rights activists discussed how climate change intersects with forced migration and human rights. The session focused on militarisation-induced climate disruption in Indian-occupied Kashmir, including deforestation, water stress, and ecosystem damage caused by prolonged military presence that displaces local communities. A key discussion examined the environmental and social impact of militarised pilgrimage, citing pressure on local resources, waste generation, and restrictions on traditional livelihoods. Speakers said these factors worsen vulnerabilities and accelerate climate-driven migration from the region.

## D-8 Secretary-General Hails Women's Role in Diplomacy on Int'l Day of Women in Diplomacy

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: On the International Day of Women in Diplomacy, the Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation, Ambassador Sohail Mehmood, recognized the "indispensable role women play in shaping a more peaceful, inclusive, and cooperative world." In a message posted on X, the Secretary-General said nations facing complex global challenges need "the best minds at the table." He noted that across D-8 Member States, women are contrib-



uting with distinction through leadership in diplomacy and public service, from heading critical missions to driving multilateral negotiations. "Women in D-8 countries have increasingly assumed prominent roles in foreign policy, multilateral fora, and international engagement — bringing diverse perspectives and fostering more inclusive approaches to global problem-solving," he stated. Their achievements, he added, reflect national progress and a broader shift toward more representative and effective diplomacy.

The Secretary-General called for further support and empowerment of women in diplomacy by ensuring equal opportunities, strengthening institutional frameworks, and promoting environments where their voices are fully heard and valued. Reaffirming the D-8's commitment, he said the Organization honors women's exceptional contributions in building bridges of dialogue, cooperation, and understanding among nations, and will continue advancing their pivotal roles in peace, sustainable development, and lasting progress.

## US-China Rivalry and Diplomacy in a Multipolar World: Avoiding Thucydides' Trap

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leaders stressed the need for communication and a constructive strategic relationship. The summit showed diplomacy remains vital for managing great-power tensions and preventing miscalculation. Conclusion US-China strategic competition is defining 21st-century international affairs. Economic rivalry, technological

contest, military tension, and diplomatic competition make the relationship central to global stability. Thucydides' Trap highlights the dangers of power transitions but does not dictate conflict. In an increasingly multipolar world, diplomacy is essential. Recent engagement shows dialogue is possible even amid intense competition. By improving communication, expanding

cooperation on shared challenges, and exercising strategic restraint, the US and China can manage differences responsibly and avoid direct war. Balanced competition paired with effective diplomacy offers the best route to a stable, peaceful international order. The writer is an undergraduate student of International Relations at NDU, Islamabad.

## Iran's Uranium Enrichment Program: A Crisis to Global Arms Control and..

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peaceful and cites religious rulings is against nuclear weapons. But critics argue that there is no need for such a high level of uranium enrichment and the historical secrecy of Iran has added to the global mistrust on this issue. The consequences of this crisis extended far beyond Iran. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is the foundation of Global Nuclear Security, is now facing serious pressure. After the airstrikes of 2025, Iran's

Parliament started discussing the possible withdrawal from the treaty. Experts at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has warned that withdrawal can seriously damage the Global system that was made to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. An analyst at Stimson center argued that strikes by nuclear-armed countries to non-nuclear-armed countries can raise questions like whether staying outside the Nuclear Arms Race is truly safe. Saudi Arabia's statement that if Iran builds nuclear weapon it may

follow the same path, has clearly raised fears of a wider nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Iran's nuclear issue is also about power, sovereignty, deterrence, mistrust, sanctions and broken promises. Restoring stability requires long-term diplomacy based on trust. This issue is affecting the Middle East's security as well as damaging the Global Arms control which can be solved only with negotiations and diplomacy, instead of military strikes, and sanctions which can even worsen the situation.

## The Great Decoupling of the United States and Israel

Continued from Page 4

charge transit fees on commercial shipping to recover the costs of military operations. He further declared that if Iran resisted such a move, the United States would "obliterate" Iran. More significantly, Graham linked the success or failure of the negotiations to a broader

regional realignment involving the expansion of the Abraham Accords and the normalization of relations between Israel and key Arab states. His comments reflected the traditional strategic school that has dominated Middle East policy debates for decades: maintain maximum pressure, preserve overwhelming military leverage, and keep the

option of force constantly on the table. The implications of Israel's manipulative ability extend beyond the USA. Across Western democracies and especially in the UK parliament, public debate is intensifying over the role of Israeli influence, its lobbying networks, campaign financing, and the relationship between national inter-

ests and alliance commitments. Discussions that once centered exclusively on security concerns now increasingly include questions about accountability, transparency, and whether governments are acting primarily in the interests of their own citizens. Nevertheless, the direction of travel appears increasingly clear. America is beginning to define

its Middle East strategy through the lens of American interests rather than through automatic alignment with the preferences of Israel. The real story of the current negotiations is therefore larger than Iran, larger than Israel, and larger than any single agreement. It is the story of a superpower rediscovering the

distinction between partnership and dependency, between alliance and alignment, between supporting an ally and adopting all of that ally's objectives as its own. If that trend continues, historians may one day view post-Iran-war diplomacy not merely as a ceasefire initiative, but as the moment when Washington

began charting a more independent course in the Middle East. And that may prove to be the most significant geopolitical shift of all. The writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former Press Attaché to Malaysia and Former MD, SRBC. He is living in Michigan, USA.

## ECC Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chairing a meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) at the Finance Division on Wednesday.



Photo: Online

## Finance Minister Chairs ECC, approves key TSGs and sectoral support measures

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee of the Cabinet met today at the Finance Division under Federal Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and approved multiple Technical Supplementary Grants totaling over Rs. 161 billion for development, security, and energy sectors.

Key approvals included Rs.

1.289 billion for Independence Day and Marka-e-Haq Celebrations 2025, and Rs. 2 billion for the Marka-e-Haq Monument Project in Islamabad to be executed by FWO, both submitted by the Ministry of Defence.

The Ministry of IT and Telecommunication secured Rs. 4.5 billion for Phase-II of Pakistan Asan Khidmat Centre, Islamabad, and re-appropriation of Rs. 911.2

million for the Smart Islamabad Initiative.

The Power Division received the largest allocation: Rs. 52 billion for CPPA-G as government equity in DISCOs, plus re-appropriation of Rs. 97.649 billion from K-Electric to Inter-DISCO Tariff Differential Subsidy and adjustment of Rs. 44.198 billion TESCO TDS arrears.

Other approvals included

Rs. 312.3 million incentive package for PAS and PSP officers in Balochistan; discontinuation of the Telegraphic Transfer Charges Incentive Scheme from 1 July 2026; Rs. 793.7 million for PSDP schemes in District Shangla; Rs. 600 million for Vessel Monitoring System on fishing boats; Rs. 250 million for Frontier Corps KP (North) operations; Rs. 7 billion grant-in-aid for Pakistan

Railways; Rs. 193.2 million for FIA employee expenses; and Rs. 4.2 billion for dues to families of Shuhada of Civil Armed Forces.

The ECC also authorized salary payments for Pakistan Steel Mills from FY 2025-26 budget and extended sovereign guarantees for SNGPL's Rs. 50 billion facility till 30 June 2027. Federal ministers, SAPM, secretaries and senior officials attended the meeting.

## Khawaja Asif Urges Political Parties to Strengthen Democracy Through Dialogue, Tolerance

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Wednesday called on all political forces to strengthen institutions and build a democratic culture rooted in tolerance, dialogue, and mutual respect.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he urged parties to acknowledge past mistakes and work collectively to reinforce democratic traditions and parliamentary institutions. He said political forces should learn from history instead of revisiting old disputes, and if reforms were needed, parties must discuss and implement them.

Recalling the Charter of Democracy signed by major



parties, he said it helped end political confrontation and led to key constitutional

reforms that strengthened the parliamentary system, though further improvements

were still required. He noted recent contacts between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and

opposition leaders as a sign of healthier democratic engagement.

Criticizing the political culture during PTI's tenure, Khawaja Asif said parliamentary civility had suffered. He claimed constitutional values were weakened and alleged no individual caused greater damage to parliamentary norms than the PTI founder. He recalled an era when lawmakers from different parties maintained cordial ties despite differences.

He also expressed respect for Opposition Leader Mahmood Khan Achakzai and his family, and stressed that parties like PPP and PML-N require internal consultation and democratic processes to function effectively.

## Sanaullah Rejects Claim of 'No Dialogue' on AJK, Says Most Demands Already Addressed

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah on Wednesday rejected the impression that no serious effort was made to resolve the Azad Jammu and Kashmir situation through dialogue and democratic means.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said PM Shehbaz Sharif had directed the government committee to engage stakeholders and approve development-related demands. Proposals on public welfare and regional development were regularly reviewed and approved.



the banned Joint Action Committee's demands from last year's unrest

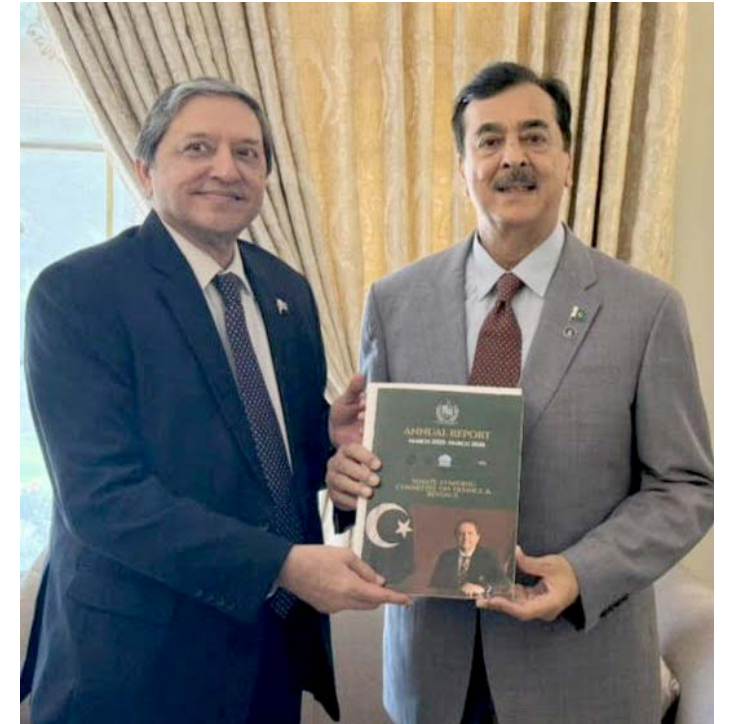
including Mangla Dam-linked electricity tariff adjustments, wheat sub-

dies and 38 development requests for roads, bridges, hospitals — were discussed by a PM-led committee with PPP representatives in Muzaffarabad. He said progress was made on most demands, including electricity pricing and subsidies, and several projects are underway.

On reserved seats for refugees, he called it a constitutional matter not solvable through protests. Options like an APC and Supreme Court reference were offered but rejected.

He added elections in AJK will not be delayed and talks with MQM-P on local government under Article 140-A are ongoing.

## Chairman Senate Gillani Pledges Transparency in Finance Committee's Annual Report Presentation



## Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani reiterates commitment to transparency and accountability.

Chairman Senate Pakistan Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani was presented with the annual report (March 2025 to March 2026) of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue by the Chairman of the Committee, Senator Saleem Mandivwala.

The report presents a detailed review of the legislative, oversight and policy initiatives taken by the committee to promote financial transparency, fiscal accountability, effective governance and oversight of matters related to the national economy and revenue.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani emphasized the important role of parliamentary oversight in ensuring the stability of democratic institutions and transparency and accountability in public affairs. He appreciated the active role of the committee in reviewing important matters related to finance and revenue and termed its services valuable in promoting good governance and public confidence in the democratic process.

The Chairman Senate while paying tribute to the hard work, Dedication and Professional Services of Senator Saleem Mandivwala and the members of the committee said that effective parliamentary committees are indispensable for protecting public interests and improving institutional performance.

## Ministry of Foreign Affairs Welcomes UN Report on Targeting of Palestinian Children

## WAFA

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates welcomed the report issued by the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the deliberate targeting of Palestinian children in the Occupied Palestinian Territory since October 7, 2023, describing it as an important international document that highlights the scale of suffering endured by Palestinian children and provides serious legal evidence of violations committed against them.

The Ministry stated that Palestinian children continue to face daily threats, including killings, forced displacement, arbitrary detention, deprivation of healthcare and education, and other forms of violence that have left devastating humanitarian and psychological consequences. It noted that thousands

of children have also lost family members, leaving many orphaned and deeply affected by the ongoing conflict.

The Ministry stressed that the significance of the report extends beyond documenting violations, as it also highlights the international community's failure to stop ongoing abuses and ensure accountability for those responsible.

It called on the United Nations and the international community to take immediate legal and practical measures to protect Palestinian children, end ongoing violations, and ensure accountability in line with international law. The Ministry further emphasized that continued failure to implement international resolutions and relevant rulings undermines the credibility of the international legal system and perpetuates a climate of impunity.

## Govt Committed to Transforming Islamabad into Modern Capital with World-Class Infrastructure: Talal Chaudhry

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry on Wednesday said the government is taking unprecedented measures to transform Islamabad into a modern, sustainable and globally competitive capital city.

Addressing a session at ICCI, he said major infrastructure interventions are underway to resolve long-standing issues in water supply, waste management, traffic flow, security, hospitality and urban services. The plan lays foundation for the city's needs over the next 40-50 years.

Noting rapid population growth has strained existing infrastructure,

Chaudhry said around 15 major projects have been initiated and 25+ development bottlenecks are being removed. Billions are being invested in the Safe City project, which will evolve into one of Pakistan's first smart city systems integrating security and public services. New dams are planned for future water needs, along with modern waste management and improved municipal services.

He also announced a state-of-the-art Convention and Expo Centre to give businesses world-class facilities. ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmod welcomed the initiatives and urged review of FAR charges and valuation mechanisms to boost investment and job creation.