



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے محمد بن کثیر نے بیان کیا کہ ہم کو سنیان
نے خبر دی، ان سے ان کے مندر نے بیان کیا،
انہوں نے چاہا رضی اللہ عنہ سے سنا، انہوں
نے بیان کیا کہ مکی ایسا نہیں ہو کر رسول اللہ
صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم سے کسی نے کوئی چیز مانگی ہو
اور آپ نے اس کے دینے سے انکار کیا ہو۔
(مشکوٰۃ، حدیث نمبر 6034)

Barkat Rice Mills
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Hegseth urges Europe on D-Day to counter present-day 'invasion'

US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on Saturday urged Europe to counter what he termed an "invasion" of its coastline by migration, as he marked the 82nd anniversary of the World War II D-Day landings in France.



Govt alliance to stay united beyond budget, throughout constitutional term: Talal Chaudhry

State Minister for Interior Senator Talal Chaudhry said that the ruling coalition remained fully united and would not only secure smooth passage of the upcoming federal budget but also continue its partnership throughout the constitutional tenure of the NA while all allied parties are being taken on board in every major national decision, legislation and constitutional amendment.

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Called on

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday.



Photo: PID

PM reviews security situation

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Federal Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday here and discussed the country's overall law and order and security situation.

During the meeting, the interior minister briefed the prime minister on his important engagements held on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan.

The two leaders also held consultations regarding the interior minister's upcoming visit to Tehran.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif provided guidance and discussed matters related to

the visit.

The meeting reviewed in detail the prevailing security environment in the country and measures being taken to maintain peace and stability.

Mohsin Naqvi briefed the prime minister on the steps being implemented to ensure law and order and safeguard citizens across the country.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stressed the importance of close coordination among all relevant institutions and called for a unified strategy to further strengthen law and order and enhance national security.

The prime minister reiterated the government's commitment to maintaining peace, protecting citizens and ensuring effective cooperation among all security and law enforcement agencies.

Pakistan calls for UN Reform, Focus on Palestine and Kashmir

Spokesman Report

UNITED NATION: Pakistan's UN envoy, Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, urged the General Assembly to resolve the long-standing Kashmir and Palestine disputes, aligning with Security Council resolutions.

He highlighted that the Security Council's latest annual report indicates the "India-Pakistan Question" has been on its agenda for over seven decades, underscoring the continuing engagement with the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.



Pakistan believes a just settlement of this dispute, based on Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people,

is crucial for durable peace in South Asia.

India's Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish asserted Kashmir's integral status within India, which Pakistan's delegate Gul Qaiser Sarwani staunchly rebutted, accusing India of denying the Kashmiri people their right to self-determination.

Sarwani emphasized that Jammu and Kashmir is an internationally recognized dispute on the Security Council's agenda, and India's actions, including human rights violations and an attempt to hold the Indus

Waters Treaty in abeyance, are contrary to UN Charter obligations.

The Pakistani envoy also addressed the situation in Palestine, calling for the full implementation of Resolution 2803 and reaffirming support for a Palestinian state.

He further stressed the need for a reformed, more democratic, and accountable multilateral system, expressing concern over the use of the veto power and advocating for Security Council reform that benefits the majority of member states.

DPM/FM reaffirms govt's commitment to fostering transparent, business friendly environment



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Saturday, reaffirmed the government's commitment to fostering a transparent, predictable, and business-friendly environment to attract investment and spur economic growth.

The DPM/FM chaired a meeting to review measures aimed at promoting investment and enhancing foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows into Pakistan, the

Office of DPM said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by the Minister for Law and Justice, Advisor on Privatization, SAPM Tariq Bajwa, secretaries Commerce, Law, Privatization and other senior government officials.

In the meeting, the discussions focused on initiatives to strengthen the investment climate, facilitate investors, advance the privatization agenda, and improve inter-agency coordination to unlock economic opportunities.

UK Envoy Warns Pakistanis of



Fake Visa Scams

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott, has warned Pakistani nationals against agents who offer false promises of UK settlement and financial benefits to asylum seekers. She emphasized that genuine applicants must use official online systems for their applications to avoid being misled by illegal facilitators. Marriott noted a concerning rise in asylum applications from Pakistani nationals, many of which are linked to misinformation and exploitation by unauthorized intermediaries rather than genuine eligibility. She cautioned that trusting such agents can lead to financial loss and jeopardize future travel prospects. The High Commissioner also highlighted the UK's fully funded scholarship programs as a legitimate route for Pakistanis seeking higher education, leading to contributions to national development upon their return. Marriott reiterated that the UK has strict laws against those involved in facilitating illegal migration and exploiting vulnerable individuals, and these activities are dealt with firmly. Public awareness campaigns are being strengthened to promote safe and legal migration routes.

Gilgit-Baltistan gears up for polls today amid tight security



Saif ur Rehman

GILGIT: All preparations for the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly general election scheduled for June 7 have been completed, with authorities putting in place stringent security measures to ensure the peaceful conduct of polling across the region.

According to the final classification list issued by the Election Commission, a total of 1,391 polling stations have been established across Gilgit-Baltistan.

Of these, 488 have been categorised as normal, 349 as sensitive, and 551 as highly sensitive.

The district-wise data shows that Gilgit has 253 polling stations, including 51 normal, 48 sensitive and 154 highly sensitive stations.

Ghizer has 207 polling stations, comprising 83 normal, 52 sensitive and 69 highly sensitive stations.

In Nagar, 85 polling stations have been set up, including 28 normal, 39 sensitive and 18 highly sensitive stations, while Hunza has 88 polling stations, of which 33 are normal, 31 sensitive and 24 highly sensitive.

Skardu has 208 polling stations, including

88 normal, 51 sensitive and 69 highly sensitive stations.

Shigar has 71 polling stations, with 31 categorised as normal, 23 as sensitive and 17 as highly sensitive.

According to the list, Kharmang has 43 polling stations, including 12 normal, 10 sensitive and 21 highly sensitive stations, while Ghanche has 154 polling stations, comprising 89 normal, 39 sensitive and 26 highly sensitive stations.

Astore has 108 polling stations, including 40 normal, 34 sensitive and 34 highly sensitive stations. Diamer has 174 polling stations, of which 33 are normal, 22 sensitive and 119 highly sensitive, the highest number of highly sensitive polling stations among all districts.

Election authorities said enhanced security measures had been finalised for all sensitive and highly sensitive polling stations to prevent any untoward incidents during polling.

Additional security personnel will be deployed at vulnerable locations, while law enforcement agencies and the district administration will remain on high alert throughout the election process.

Pakistan, Russia sign landmark accords to curb illegal immigration, narcotics trafficking

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi engaged in extensive bilateral discussions with counterparts from Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan during the SCO Interior Ministers' meeting. A key outcome was the signing of multiple security cooperation agreements with Russia, focusing on illegal immigration, repatriation of undocumented citizens, and combating drug trafficking. Discussions with Tajikistan addressed regional security concerns and the threat posed by terrorist camps and drug production in Afghanistan. With Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, agreements were reached on joint training programs, intelligence sharing, and forming working groups to enhance cooperation. Naqvi also congratulated Kyrgyzstan on its UN Security Council election. Talks with Kazakhstan centered on intensifying efforts against illegal immigration and establishing a dedicated working group for closer ministerial ties.

Gilgit-Baltistan development budget to go up by 27.32%

News Desk

GILGIT: The federal government has decided to increase the annual development budget of Gilgit-Baltistan by 27.32 percent. The decision was taken after reviewing the development budget of Gilgit-Baltistan for the current fiscal year.

Gilgit-Baltistan gets 5.26% increase compared to the original development budget for the current fiscal year.

As per the documents, a proposal was submitted to increase the annual development budget by Rs39 billion.

The revised development budget of Gilgit-Baltistan for the current fiscal year has been allocated Rs 30.67 billion.

A development budget of Rs 37.1 billion was allocated for Gilgit-Baltistan in the current fiscal year.

Rs 23 billion proposed as Block Allocation/ADP for Gilgit-Baltistan in the



next fiscal year. Rs 4 billion proposed for Gilgit-Baltistan under the Prime Minister's special package for the next fiscal year.

Rs 2.2 billion proposed for the construction of the 16 MW Naltar Hydropower project. Rs 1.71 billion proposed for solar plants project at various sites in GB. Rs1 billion rupees proposed for the project to establish a regional grid in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Funds allocated for drainage, roads, and water supply projects in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Funds proposed for hospital construction projects in Gilgit-Baltistan.

AJK police arrest 72 individuals during operations to maintain law and order. AJK Police spokesman

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Police, during operations conducted over the past eighteen hours, have arrested approximately 72 individuals associated with a proscribed faction of the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) as part of efforts to maintain law and order and ensure the safety of citizens. According to police authorities, initial searches led to the recovery of weapons, communication equipment, suspicious documents, and mate-



rial allegedly linked to plans aimed

at disrupting public order. Investigations into the recovered items and related activities are underway in accordance with the law said spokesman.

Inspector General of Police, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, reaffirmed that the State fully respects peaceful expression, constitutional demands, and lawful protest.

However, he emphasized that violence, incitement, road blockades, destruction of property, and any activity threatening public safety or disrupting daily life will not be

tolerated. He stated that the law will be applied impartially and that all arrested individuals will be dealt with through due legal process.

AJK Police remain committed to protecting lives and property, maintaining peace and stability, and ensuring the rule of law throughout the State.

Authorities have confirmed that all major roads and markets remain open and that normal life continues across the region. Spokesperson Inspector General of Police Azad Jammu and Kashmir added.

Hindu temple

FAISALABAD: A dispirited view of historic, pre-partition Hindu temple located just off Jhang Bazaar Chowk "Sita-Ram Temple". Dating back to 1906, the building features intricate traditional brickwork, though it is currently a non-operational heritage site surrounded by the local market.



Photo: Online

Former AJK PM slams plan to exclude 4 million refugees, calls it detrimental to Kashmir Cause

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan, strongly criticized the move to abolish the representation rights of Jammu and Kashmir refugees, deeming it detrimental to Pakistan's narrative on Kashmir.

He argued that excluding 4 million refugees from the state structure while India is altering occupied Kashmir's demography is contradictory. Haider Khan emphasized that refugee representation has been a historical right since the state's formation, with significant refugee quotas in past elec-

tions.

He dismissed indirect or proportional representation for refugees as unworkable due to their lack of voting rights. Citing UN Security Council resolutions, he asserted that the Azad Kashmir Legislative Assembly lacks the authority to determine the representation of any part of the state.

He warned that reducing Kashmir's population by excluding refugees would deviate from Pakistan's stance. Haider Khan also questioned the Pakistan People's Party's opposition to the Thirteenth Constitutional Amendment, referencing historical instances of limited executive power in Azad Kashmir.



He recalled the struggle for the naming of the "Azad Government of the State of Jammu and Kashmir." He paid tribute to the sacrifices of

refugees, particularly in Jammu, and highlighted the importance of protecting the rights of those displaced by the Mangla Dam construction.

He urged the current leadership to uphold the ideology of Pakistan's accession and the Kashmir independence movement, cautioning against the divisive politics introduced by PTT. Haider Khan expressed regret over his vote for the "hybrid system" in the past and praised the unwavering commitment of occupied Kashmir's people to freedom and Pakistan.

He reiterated that refugees remain state residents until the issue is resolved according to UN resolutions.

Candidates and parents raise serious concerns over SPSC Screening Test arrangements

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Candidates and parents have expressed serious concerns over the arrangements made during the 2025/26 screening test conducted by the Sindh Public Service Commission, questioning the administrative standards and facilities provided at various examination centres.

According to details, candidates appearing at multiple test centres reported a lack of basic facilities, extreme weather conditions, and poor management arrangements. They stated that due to inadequate cooling systems, insufficient fans, and limited



access to drinking water, many candi-

dates faced severe discomfort, mental

stress, and physical exhaustion during the examination.

Several candidates further alleged that seating arrangements inside examination halls were disorganized, affecting the overall examination environment and causing unnecessary difficulties for participants.

Parents accompanying candidates also expressed concern over long queues outside centres, poor guidance at entry and exit points, and lack of proper crowd management.

So far, no official statement has been issued by the Sindh Public Service Commission regarding these concerns.

Muslim Conference Leader Condemns Attack on Candidate

Spokesman Report



RAWALPINDI: President of the Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan has strongly condemned the attack on Dr. Irfan Ashraf, the Muslim Conference candidate for the assembly in Khailgula, by some mischievous elements of the banned Public Action Committee.

The President of the Muslim Conference said that on the one hand, the people of the Action Committee talk about public problems and demands, while on the other hand, they do not seem ready to reform their violent behavior. Attacks on the lives and properties of local political workers are a dangerous trend and indicate a systematic plan.

Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan said that members of the Pakistani government's negotiation team, prominent political leaders Rana Sanaullah and Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry and other responsible figures have also expressed on the national media that the role of external elements in these protest activities cannot be ignored. Recent violent incidents further strengthen these concerns.

He termed the attack on Dr. Irfan Ashraf and his colleagues as highly condemnable and said that despite political differences, violence is in no way acceptable. The attempts to cause harm by the attackers are not only regrettable but also a moment of reflection for the Public Action Committee.

Impostor caught red-handed attempting physical test for cousin in FIA recruitment drive

News Desk

QUETTA: The Federal Investigation Agency Anti-Corruption Circle, Quetta, has apprehended an individual attempting to take a physical fitness exam on behalf of another candidate during the ongoing FIA recruitment tests.

The physical evaluation process—comprising height and chest measurements, along with running trials—was underway at the Ayub Stadium Sports Complex in Quetta for the positions of Sub-Inspector, Assistant Sub-Inspector, and Constable. During the session, the individual attempted to clear the test by misrepresenting himself as the actual applicant.

FIA officials stationed at the verification counter detected a clear discrepancy during the mandatory face-matching (facial recognition) procedure and document verification.

Upon professional interrogation and verification of the original Computerized National Identity Card, the individual confessed that he was illegally appearing in the test on behalf of his cousin to fraudulently secure him a job in the FIA.

The impostor was taken into custody on the spot, and his fabricated documents were seized as evidence. A First Information Report (FIR) has been registered at the Anti-Corruption Circle, Quetta, for further legal proceedings.

The FIA maintains a zero-tolerance policy against corruption, forgery, and illegal tactics.

SSGC's Negligence: 48-Hour Promise Made, a Week Gone, Gas Still Not Restored

News Desk

KARACHI: Residents of FB Area Naseerabad Block 14 in Karachi have been suffering through severe hardship for the past one week due to complete disruption of gas supply. Stoves in homes have gone cold. Housewives sit in front of their burners for hours waiting for gas that never comes. Lunch and dinner are out of the question — children cannot even manage a simple breakfast.

Gas-affected residents of FB Area Naseerabad Block 14 have been forced to buy meals from restaurants and food stalls outside. They say that in the face of skyrocketing inflation, bearing the daily cost of eating out is simply beyond the means of an ordinary person with a limited income. "Our salaries are not enough to buy food from hotels every day. The children keep asking when the food will be cooked — what answer do we give them?"

MD WASA Kamran Kahlon visits Monsoon Emergency Relief Camps

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: In line with Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision, WASA Toba Tek Singh has established Monsoon Emergency Relief Camps for the first time. Managing Director Chaudhry Kamran Kahlon inspected these camps to ensure facilities, machinery, and manpower are ready for monsoon emergencies. He mandated that all preparedness measures be finalized by June 15. Key actions include improving the drainage system, cleaning drains and sewer lines, and ensuring dewatering sets and generators are operational. WASA staff will be on high alert, with around-the-clock control rooms and emergency camps to handle complaints and rainwater drainage promptly. Kahlon stressed that citizen safety and quality civic services during the monsoon are top priorities, urging continuous field monitoring and effective implementation of the Monsoon Action Plan. The establishment of these camps has been welcomed by citizens and community representatives, who anticipate reduced drainage problems and timely public relief.



He reiterated that refugees remain state residents until the issue is resolved according to UN resolutions.

Counter Terrorism Department killed Tehreek-e-Taliban two commanders

Asim Tanveer

DERA GHAZI KHAN: Spokesman Of Counter Terrorism Department. CTD Clash between CTD and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan terrorists in Koh Suleman, two terrorists including a key commander killed

Acting on a tip-off, the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in the tribal and mountainous area of Koh Suleman in Dera Ghazi Khan Punjab tracked down a group of terrorists affiliated with the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). In the ensuing clash, two terrorists including a key commander were killed while their other associates retreated with their two injured comrades.

According to a CTD spokesperson, credible intelligence inputs were received that 12 to 15 armed TTP men from southern Punjab had entered the tribal area of Tamaun Qaisrani via the border area of Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bordering Area. According to reports, these elements were planning terrorist acts in the populated areas of Koh Suleman, Wahwa and Taunsa tehsils.



Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:15 am
Zohr 12:07 pm
Asr 5:06 pm
Maghrib 7:16 pm
Isha 8:59 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

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

Volunteers Play Key Role in Maintaining Peace During Muharram-ul-Haram: Special Branch Experts

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Special Branch experts have emphasized that volunteers play an essential role in maintaining peace and security during Muharram-ul-Haram, describing them as valuable partners of police and security agencies in implementing effective security arrangements during the sensitive period.

The remarks were made during a security training session held at Imam Bargah Panjtani, Attock. The session was attended by Inspector Special Branch Attock Aftab Ahmed Khattak, Mehboob Ali from Rawalpindi, Muhammad Usman of Special Branch Attock, and other officers and personnel.

Among those present were President Imam Bargah Panjtani Syed Raza Naqvi, Secretary General Syed Athar Zaidi, procession organizers Imad Kazmi, Syed Zafar Zaidi, Syed Karrar Hussain Rizvi, Syed Arif Raza Naqvi, Syed Zaki Zaidi, Syed Zulfikar Rizvi, Syed Qasim Zaidi, Mubashir Jafri, senior journalists Qamar Jafri and Najam Naqvi, Mohsin Nawaz Khan of Akhori, Syed Bahadur Hussain Shah, Syed Riaz Hussain Shah, Sheen Bagh, Muhammad Atiq, Syed Akash Hussain, Muhammad Ali, Muhammad Tufail, and Imam Bargah Panjtani security guards Raes Baloch and Waseem Shahzad.

Speaking on the occasion, Mehboob Ali of Special Branch Rawalpindi highlighted the importance of patience, responsibility, and composure among volunteers throughout Muharram-ul-Haram. He noted that treating mourners with respect while ensuring security protocols are effectively implemented is a vital responsibility.

Punjab Enters Era of 'One-Stop Agriculture Input Market'

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif Introduces Model Agriculture Malls to Provide All Facilities to Farmers Under One Roof Near Their Villages



LAHORE: Following Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif's farmer-friendly vision, Punjab has entered an era of "One-Stop Agriculture Input Market" for farmers, as Model Agriculture Malls have been established for the first time in 04 districts of Punjab; including Multan, Bahawalpur, Sahiwal, and Sargodha; to provide

all facilities to farmers under one roof near their villages.

She also directed the relevant authorities to take immediate steps to set up Model Agriculture Malls in 10 more districts; including Faisalabad, Jhang, Okara, Khanewal, Rajanpur, Vehari, Rahim Yar Khan, Attock, and Mianwali; in order to provide

agricultural inputs, consultation with agricultural experts, model malls, and other facilities.

She highlighted that farmers will also be able to rent the latest agricultural machinery at these Model Agriculture Malls. She was briefed by the authorities concerned that management and operation of Model Agriculture Malls are being carried

out by GCCI in partnership with the private sector.

Chief Minister Punjab said that they will take every step for the convenience of Punjab's farmers; as their destiny has changed, and good days have come. She added that they will build Model Agriculture Malls in all districts of Punjab in a phased manner.

Enjoyment

ISLAMABAD: Youngsters enjoying on mechanical swing at Dino Valley in Margalla Hills in the Federal Capital. The Dino Valley is located near Pir Sohawa and features life-sized dinosaur models and rides, making it a popular location for families.

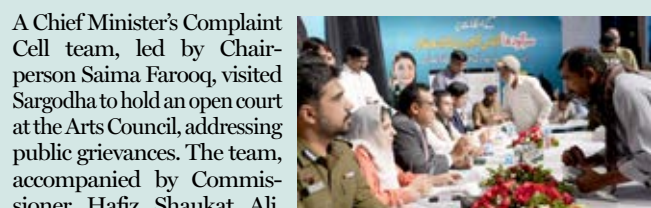


Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir



Sialkot Group photo of Lions Junaid Mahmood Baig with friends at the 37th Multiple District 305 Convention of Lions Clubs International

CM's Complaint Cell Tackles Sargodha Grievances



A Chief Minister's Complaint Cell team, led by Chairperson Saima Farooq, visited Sargodha to hold an open court at the Arts Council, addressing public grievances. The team, accompanied by Commissioner Hafiz Shaukat Ali, Deputy Commissioner Hussain Ahmad Raza Chaudhry, and DPO Sohaib Ashraf, received over 246 complaints concerning revenue, police, sanitation, health, education, and sewerage. Immediate actions were taken for some issues, while complex cases were forwarded to relevant departments. Farooq stated the Complaint Cell aims for public relief per Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision, emphasizing the convenience of having department representatives present. She assured continuous follow-up on all applications until resolution. Ali committed to transparent complaint resolution, and Chaudhry mentioned timelines assigned to officials for addressing complaints, underscoring efforts to uphold the rule of law and provide timely citizen relief.

Global Experts Gather for First International Recycling Conference in Faisalabad

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The First International Conference on Recycling will convene on June 10, 2026, at Serena Hotel, Faisalabad. This event will gather over 300 policymakers, researchers, entrepreneurs, industrialists, international experts, and leading companies to explore practical recycling, circular economy, and sustainable industrial transformation strategies. Jointly organized by the University of Kamalia, Government College University Faisalabad, and Government College Women University Faisalabad, the conference will feature participation from 80-100 CEOs, making it a pivotal industry-academia nexus. The day-long program (9:30 AM-6:00 PM) includes panel discussions, keynote sessions, and technical presentations on diverse themes such as textile circularity, industrial recycling, plastic waste valorization, biodegradable materials, smart waste systems, agro-food waste utilization, bioenergy, and wastewater reuse.

Multan Division Gears Up for Urban Infrastructure Overhaul with PDP

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Commissioner Multan Division, Aamir Karim Khan, chaired a meeting to review the progress of the Punjab Urban Development Program (PDP) focusing on sewerage, drainage, and wastewater management projects in Multan, Khanewal, Vehari, and Lodhran.

The multi-billion rupee PDP aims to permanently resolve long-standing urban infrastructure issues, including rainwater and sewage management.

The meeting detailed ongoing work on new disposal stations, trunk



sewers, underground storage tanks, wastewater treatment plants, and sewer lines.

Designs are nearing completion (60-75%), with technical objections being resolved. Commissioner Khan stressed the immediate resolution of design, land acquisition, and inter-agency coordination issues to maintain project momentum,

emphasizing that public relief is the government's priority and delays are unacceptable.

Concerns were raised about slow contractor performance in certain districts. Khan warned of strict action, including blacklisting, against those obstructing development projects.

He reiterated that construction quality is

non-negotiable, demanding third-party testing of all materials. Furthermore, he directed the restoration of public spaces impacted by underground infrastructure work and prioritized the completion of projects along Muharram procession routes to avoid public inconvenience.

Khan concluded by stating that the PDP will establish a modern sewage and drainage system for South Punjab, benefiting citizens for decades. He urged all concerned institutions to ensure collaboration, effective monitoring, and timely project completion.

AKU Screens Documentary Highlighting Climate Crisis Impact on Mountain Communities

Aga Khan University (AKU) marked World Environment Day with a public screening of "The Sky is Far, The Earth is Tough," a documentary by Haya Fatima Iqbal.

This film, part of the Voices from the Roof of the World (VRW) series, sheds light on the health and mental well-being impacts of natural disasters and climate change on Northern Pakistan's mountain communities.

The event brought together filmmakers, climate advocates, and students to discuss the urgent environmental crises affecting vulnerable populations.

Discussions emphasized the accelerated warming in mountain regions, leading to glacial melt, floods, and landslides. These events disrupt infrastructure, cause displacement, and create humanitarian and mental health crises for communities that have contributed minimally to global emissions.

Dr. Rozina Karmaliani highlighted that regional climate crises demand immediate attention, integrating mental health into disaster response and using visual storytelling to convey the human cost and resilience of those on the frontlines.

Dr. Fozia Parveen stressed the importance of integrating climate change awareness and environmental sustainability education into the curriculum to equip future generations for adaptation and advocacy.

Haya Fatima Iqbal pointed out the trauma inflicted by land loss and disaster threats, advocating for environmental advocacy to address the profound psychological scars.

Tariq Essa discussed the roles of businesses and individuals in reducing carbon footprints, underscoring the growing importance of media-expert collaborations in shaping public



discourse on climate change. The screening was sponsored by Primero. VRW, an award-winning documentary series amplifying voices from climate-vulnerable communi-

ties in Central and South Asia, is a joint initiative of AKU, the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat, the Aga Khan Foundation, and the University of Central Asia, supported by various

foundations and families. The project aims to raise global awareness about ecological crises through impactful environmental journalism and documentary storytelling.

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World Food Safety Day

On World Food Safety Day, I join the international community in highlighting the importance of safe food for public health, food security and sustainable development. Proclaimed by the United Nations in 2018, this observance is led jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) to promote awareness and action on food safety worldwide.

The theme for World Food Safety Day 2026, "From burden to solutions – safe food everywhere", draws attention to the role of science, data and evidence-based interventions in reducing the burden of foodborne diseases and improving food safety outcomes. It reminds us that informed decisions and practical solutions are essential to protecting people from preventable health risks.

Food safety affects the daily lives of millions of people. Every family expects that the food purchased from markets, served in restaurants, prepared in schools or consumed at home is safe and fit to eat. When food safety standards are not maintained, the consequences can include illness, lost income, additional healthcare costs and disruption to education and work. Protecting consumers from these risks is therefore both a public health responsibility and a matter of public trust.

Ensuring safe food requires the collective efforts of governments, regulatory authorities, producers, processors, transporters, retailers, food handlers and consumers. Safe food protects health, strengthens consumer confidence, supports livelihoods and contributes to economic growth. It also helps reduce the burden of foodborne diseases, particularly among vulnerable groups including children, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.

In an increasingly interconnected food system, effective food safety measures must be based on science, transparency and internationally recognised standards. Strengthening inspection systems, laboratory capacity, traceability, surveillance mechanisms and hygiene practices remains essential for reducing risks and safeguarding public health. Continued cooperation among all relevant institutions is necessary to ensure that food safety standards are effectively implemented and maintained.

World Food Safety Day also highlights the contribution of food safety to sustainable development, public health and trade. Investment in food safety infrastructure, awareness programmes and modern regulatory systems can help build stronger and more resilient food systems while enhancing consumer protection.

On this occasion, I encourage all stakeholders to promote safe food practices and strengthen compliance with food safety standards across the entire food chain. Through shared responsibility, informed action and sustained commitment, we can help ensure that safe, nutritious and wholesome food is available to all.

Quantum Computing and Pakistan's Future

Throughout history, humanity has experienced a series of transformative eras that fundamentally altered the trajectory of civilization. The Renaissance unleashed intellectual curiosity and scientific inquiry. The Industrial Revolution mechanized production and transformed economies. The Communication Revolution connected people across continents. The Information Age digitized knowledge and placed unprecedented computing power in the hands of ordinary citizens. Today, humanity stands at the threshold of yet another transformative epoch: the Quantum Age.

While the exact timeline remains uncertain, leading technology companies, research institutions, and governments are investing billions of dollars in the development of practical quantum computers. Some experts predict commercially useful quantum systems within a few years, while others believe widespread adoption may take a decade or more. Regardless of the timeline, one reality is becoming increasingly clear: quantum computing has the potential to become one of the most consequential technologies in human history.

Much of the global discussion surrounding quantum computing focuses on advanced scientific applications such as molecular simulations, pharmaceutical discoveries, climate modeling, and cryptography. However, for developing nations such as Pakistan, the most transformative application may be entirely different. Quantum computing could become a national decision-support system capable of helping policymakers identify the most effective pathways toward economic growth,

social stability, and institutional reform. Pakistan today faces a complex web of interconnected challenges. Educational attainment remains below desired levels. Agricultural productivity lags behind international benchmarks. Industrial output remains limited relative to the country's population and resource base. Infrastructure development struggles to keep pace with demand. Political instability periodically disrupts long-term planning. Informal economic activity remains substantial, reducing the government's ability to generate revenue and provide public services.

These challenges do not exist independently. Education affects productivity. Productivity influences income. Income shapes investment. Investment drives industrialization. Industrialization creates employment. Employment reduces poverty. Poverty affects social stability. Social stability influences governance. Governance impacts investment. The entire national system functions as a vast interconnected network of variables that continuously influence one another.

The difficulty facing policymakers is not necessarily a lack of intelligence or commitment. Rather, it is the overwhelming complexity of modern governance. Every policy decision produces intended consequences, unintended consequences, secondary effects, and long-term implications that are often difficult to predict. Traditional decision-making methods frequently rely on incomplete information, limited simulations, and assumptions that may not

accurately reflect reality.

This is where quantum computing could become revolutionary. Imagine providing a quantum computer with comprehensive data regarding Pakistan's economy, demographics, education system, agricultural sector, transportation infrastructure, energy production, governance structures, taxation mechanisms, trade relationships, labor markets, and social indicators. Instead of evaluating a handful of policy options, the system could potentially analyze millions of possible combinations simultaneously.

For example, Pakistan's agricultural sector could benefit immensely from such capabilities. A quantum system could evaluate soil conditions, weather patterns, irrigation availability, fertilizer utilization, seed varieties, transportation costs, market demand, and export opportunities to identify the optimal agricultural strategy for each region of the country. The result could be higher yields, lower costs, improved food security, and increased farmer incomes.

Similarly, the energy sector could use quantum-powered optimization to reduce transmission losses, improve power distribution, integrate renewable energy sources, and identify the most cost-effective infrastructure investments. Such improvements would reduce energy shortages and increase industrial competitiveness.

Transportation represents another area where quantum computing could have significant impact. Pakistan Railways, road networks, urban transpor-

tation systems, airports, and logistics corridors could be analyzed as a unified system. Quantum simulations could identify the most efficient allocation of resources, optimize routes, reduce congestion, and improve connectivity between economic centers.

The industrial sector could also benefit substantially. By analyzing global supply chains, labor availability, infrastructure constraints, market demand, and investment opportunities, quantum systems could help identify industries where Pakistan possesses the greatest comparative advantages. Such insights could guide industrial policy and attract targeted investment.

One particularly intriguing application involves institutional reform and governance. Constitutional arrangements, electoral systems, administrative structures, and fiscal frameworks often generate passionate political debates. Yet these discussions are frequently driven by ideology rather than empirical analysis. A sufficiently advanced quantum-enabled simulation platform could potentially model the likely outcomes of different governance arrangements under varying conditions. While no machine can determine the values a society should embrace, it may help policymakers understand the probable consequences of different institutional choices.

The private sector would also benefit enormously. Businesses could optimize production schedules, supply chains, inventory management, pricing strategies, and investment decisions. Banks could improve risk assessment. Airlines could optimize routes and fuel consumption. Telecommunications companies could enhance network efficiency. The

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Qamar Bashir



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

Political Tolerance: Pakistan's Democratic Imperative

Although political tolerance is frequently praised as a democratic virtue, it is nevertheless one of the most contentious and seldom applied ideas in modern politics. Fundamentally, political tolerance is the readiness of people, organizations and groups to accept the political liberties and rights of others whose opinions they disagree with. It calls for acceptance of the right to differ rather than agreement. Indeed, political tolerance is now both a democratic requirement and a strategic imperative at a time of political polarization, identity politics and intellectual fragmentation. The liberal tradition provides the theoretical underpinnings of political tolerance. Individual liberty, freedom of conscience and freedom of speech are essential for a sound political system, according to thinkers like John Locke and John Stuart Mill. Liberal theory holds that a democratic society thrives when its members are free to voice divergent viewpoints without worrying about being shunned or persecuted. In this regard, this viewpoint is still very pertinent in Pakistan, as discussions over minority rights, political engagement and freedom of expression continue to influence the country's democratic environment.

Furthermore, Democratic-Pluralist Theory, which sees society as a collection of many factions peacefully vying for representation and influence, is another significant viewpoint. According to this perspective, political tolerance makes it possible for rival ethnic, religious, linguistic and political groups to coexist. Pluralism is not just an academic idea but a social reality in a nation as varied as Paki-

stan, which is home to Punjabis, Sindhis, Pash-tuns, Baloch, Saraikis and many more religious communities. However, changing variety from a cause of conflict to a source of democratic strength is the difficult part.

An alternative interpretation is provided by socialization theory. It makes the case that civic involvement, media, educational institutions and families all teach political tolerance. Tolerance is acquired by exposure to inclusive ideas and democratic standards; it is not innate in citizens. From this perspective, Pakistan's political growth is seriously lacking. Civic education and democratic socialization have not kept up with the growth of democratic institutions throughout the years. Moreover, political discourse frequently promotes allegiance to individuals and organizations rather than dedication to democratic ideals, remaining combative rather than thoughtful.

In a similar vein, Contact Theory contends that interactions between various populations foster tolerance and lessen prejudice. Stereotypes and distrust frequently thrive in cultures when groups continue to be isolated from one another. Although there are more chances for inter group connection in Pakistan's metropolitan areas, genuine participation is nevertheless hampered by ethnic, sectarian and class divides. Therefore, creating forums for communication and collaboration is still crucial to promoting a more accepting political culture.

When considering Pakistan's current political environment, the significance of political tolerance becomes very clear. Political rivalry has grown more divisive during the last ten years. Opposing political groups are often depicted as

existential dangers rather than as respectable rivals. Consequently, by promoting exclusion rather than participation, these tales threaten democratic norms. When political disagreement is seen as political treachery, democracy cannot endure.

The issue of minority rights continues to be a crucial litmus test for political tolerance, even outside of partisan politics. Democratic regimes are evaluated based on how they safeguard minority rather than how they treat majorities. Ethnic communities, underprivileged groups and religious minorities sometimes encounter obstacles to fair participation in social and political life. Accordingly, building a more tolerant society requires bolstering constitutional safeguards, guaranteeing equal citizenship and encouraging inclusive government.

However, political tolerance should not be confused with unrestricted acceptance of all viewpoints. Democracies need to find a careful balance between defending freedom and stopping extremism, violence and hate speech. Actions that jeopardize fundamental human rights or constitutional order cannot be justified by tolerance. Therefore, preserving democratic openness while protecting democratic institutions is the difficult part.

The development of a tolerant political culture is just as important to Pakistan's democracy's future as electoral procedures and constitutional provisions. Democratic principles may be fostered through open public debate, better civic institutions, ethical media practices and educational changes. In this endeavour, promoting polite interaction across ideological divisions is a shared obligation of people, academic institutions, civil society groups, and political leaders.

Political tolerance is a real necessity for the survival of democracy, not just a moral ideal.

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"The 18th Amendment, Provincial Autonomy, NFC Award, and the Challenge of Public Welfare"

The 18th Constitutional Amendment, passed in April 2010, is regarded as a historic milestone in Pakistan's constitutional history. The amendment fundamentally transformed the distribution of powers between the federation and the provinces by transferring extensive administrative, legislative, and financial authority to the provincial governments. Its primary objective was to strengthen democracy, promote trust among the federating units, and ensure greater provincial autonomy.

Before the 18th Amendment, several important sectors were included in the Concurrent Legislative List, under which both the federal and provincial governments shared legislative responsibilities. This arrangement often led to disagreements over authority, policy-making, and resource utilization. Through the amendment, the Concurrent Legislative List was abolished, and responsibilities for education, health, environment, culture, social welfare, labour, and local government, among others, were devolved to the provinces.

The primary aim of this devolution was to bring governance closer to the people, enabling provincial governments to formulate policies according to local needs and priorities. The amendment not only strengthened Pakistan's federal structure but also addressed longstanding concerns of smaller provinces regarding the unequal distribution of powers and resources.

Another significant feature of the 18th Amendment was the strengthening of the Council of Common Interests (CCI). This constitutional body plays a crucial role in promoting coordination between the federation and the provinces and in resolving disputes related to water, energy, and other national resources. Its enhanced role has created new opportunities for inter-provincial cooperation.

The impact of the 18th Amendment is also closely linked with the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award. The Seventh NFC Award, unanimously agreed upon in 2009, introduced a historic change in the mechanism for distributing federal revenues among the provinces. Previously, population was the sole criterion for resource allocation. However, the new formula incorporated additional factors such as poverty, revenue generation, backwardness, and population density.

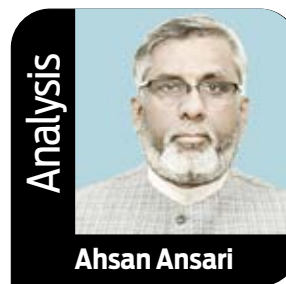
Under this formula, Punjab received the largest share due to its population size. Sindh was given additional weight because of its significant contribution to national revenue. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa received special consideration due to the effects of the war against terrorism, while Balochistan was allocated a larger share in recognition of its vast territory and developmental needs.

The NFC Award was widely regarded as a major achievement in Pakistan's federal history because it significantly increased provincial financial resources. Provincial governments

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Dr. Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti



Ahsan Ansari

Five Years Dedicated to Younger Generation

Spokesman Report

Islamabad: What was the most noticeable in the DPRK in the period from 2021 to 2025, coinciding with the term of the Eighth Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, was probably the results of the work for the younger generation.

At a plenary meeting of its Central Committee in June 2021 the WPK unveiled a new childcare policy on supplying at state expense dairy products and other nutritious foodstuffs to all the children across the country.

This policy was reportedly initiated by Kim Jong Un, General Secretary of the WPK. If the children are well fed and raised healthily in a good environment, society will be overflowing with greater vitality and vim after 20 or 30 years and the country's national power will grow further—this was the WPK's intention in adopting the policy.

In February 2022, the Law of the DPRK on Childcare was newly adopted and a well-knit system was put in place around the country to produce and supply nutritious foodstuffs to the children. According to data available, well over a hundred



milch cow and nanny goat farms and branch farms were newly built or expanded as of October last year, with the output of raw milk increased over 1.4 times.

Another example is school uniforms, bags, shoes and school things of new forms.

Sonamu, Mindulle, Haebaragi and Turumi are brands of school bags and things used by Korean schoolchildren. These are associated with the loving

care of General Secretary Kim Jong Un.

At the Fourth Plenary Meeting of the Eighth Central Committee of the WPK, he said that supplying uniforms and school things to the students across the country at state expense is a consistent policy of the WPK, set forth the task for supplying all the students with quality uniforms and bags of new forms, and took an important measure for implementing it.



Therefore, factories specializing in the production of school uniforms and shoes were built in all regions

of the country, and every year new uniforms, Sonamu-brand school bags, Mindulle-brand notebooks

and Haebaragi-brand school things are supplied to the students across the country.

Renowned Writer, Water Expert and Social Reformer Engineer Muhammad Obhayo Khushik Passes Away at 76

Kamran Khamiso Khowaja

THATTA: Engineer Muhammad Obhayo Khushik, a renowned writer, social reformer, water expert, and former student leader, passed away on Friday night at a private hospital in Karachi after a brief illness. He was 76.

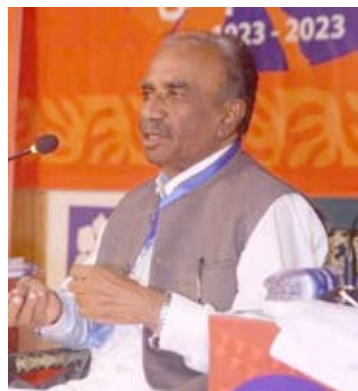
His demise has left a deep sense of sorrow across Sindh's literary, intellectual, and social circles, where he was widely respected for his lifelong dedication to education, social reform, and advocacy on water-related issues.

Born on September 2, 1949, in Darvesh village of Taluka Ghorabari, District Thatta, Engineer Khushik was the son of Muhammad Urs Khushik.

He received his early education in his native village and later completed his matriculation from Government High School Thatta. He pursued intermediate studies at Government Degree College Hyderabad, now Government College University Hyderabad, before moving into higher education.

He earned his Civil Engineering degree in 1971 from Sindh University Engineering College Jamshoro, now Mehran University of Engineering and Technology. This academic achievement marked the beginning of a distinguished professional career dedicated to public service and development.

Engineer Khushik joined the Irrigation Department in 1972 as a Sub-Engineer and served for nearly



four decades. Through hard work and professional excellence, he rose steadily through the ranks and retired

in 2009 as Project Director. His expertise in water management and deep understanding of Sindh's water-related challenges earned him recognition as a respected intellectual, researcher, and policy commentator.

Apart from his engineering career, he remained actively engaged in political, social, literary, and intellectual activities throughout his life. During his student years, he emerged as an influential student leader and served first as Senior Vice Chairman and later as Chairman of the Sindh Student Cultural Organization, where he played a significant role in student politics and cultural movements.

Known for his prolific writing, Engineer Khushik extensively addressed

issues related to Sindh's water rights, environmental concerns, history, and social justice. His writings established him as a strong voice in public discourse. Among his notable works are 'Chetare Chayaam Sindh Punjab Pani Mamro', 'Goondar Gus Paryan Ja', and 'Sindhu Jo Rasto Na Rokiyo Jeki Parhayam Bhasha Dam - Sindh Lai Taryaq ya Zahr'.

Hundreds of people from different walks of life gathered outside his residence in Thatta to attend his funeral and pay homage to him for his lifelong contributions to the cause of Sindh.

Prominent figures expressed deep grief over his demise. Noted columnist Zahid Ishaque Soomro, while talking to this correspondent, said that Sindh had

lost an advocate of its riparian rights and a leading intellectual. Eminent journalist Iqbal Khowaja said that the late Obhayo Khan Khushik made resolute efforts to present Sindh's water case at different forums effectively. Historian Zubair Aziz Jaffrani, Aslam Azad, Senator Sassui Palijo, Dr Muhammad Ali Manjhi, and others also condoled his passing.

Engineer Muhammad Obhayo Khushik will be remembered as a dedicated engineer, visionary thinker, prolific writer, and passionate advocate for Sindh's rights and development. His contributions to literature, public service, and social awareness are expected to continue inspiring future generations.

Medical Institutions Achieve Global Recognition Through Quality Education And Research: Principal AMC

LAHORE: Amiruddin Medical College Principal Prof. Dr. Farooq Afzal said that medical institutions can earn a distinguished position on the global stage through quality medical education, promotion of clinical research and patient-friendly policies. Speaking on the occasion of presenting a bouquet to MS LGH Prof. Dr. Faryad Hussain in recognition of his outstanding one-year performance, Prof. Dr. Farooq Afzal said that PGMI, AMC, College of Nursing, School of Allied Health Sciences and LGH have made this goal their top

priority. He stressed the importance of continuously enhancing the professional skills of young doctors and faculty members, strengthening the culture of clinical research and providing state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapeutic facilities to bring these institutions up to international standards. He added that doctors, nurses, paramedical staff and the administrative team are collectively working with full professional commitment to deliver the best healthcare services to the public.

MS LGH Prof. Dr. Faryad Hussain while appreciating Prof. Dr. Farooq Afzal's revolutionary performance over the past year, presented him with a bouquet and extended best wishes. He said that under Prof. Dr. Farooq Afzal's visionary leadership, transparency and tireless efforts, remarkable and sustainable improvements have been made in PGMI, AMC and LGH.

Prof. Dr. Faryad Hussain stated that patient-friendly policies, strict discipline and the adoption of modern technology have significantly elevated



the standard of LGH. He added that these initiatives have not only benefited patients from remote areas but

have also greatly enhanced the professional skills of young doctors and faculty members. He expressed confi-

dence that this progressive vision will lead the institutions to new heights of success in the future.

Pakistan's Sanitation Workers: Silent Guardians, Neglected Lives

Muqaddas Samra

The progress of a nation is not measured solely by its towering buildings, wide highways, or modern infrastructure. Rather, it is reflected in the extent to which it provides dignity, protection, and fundamental rights to all its citizens and workers. Pakistan is a diverse society composed of different religions, cultures, and communities. Yet, within this society exists a community that sacrifices its health, dignity, and, at times, even its life to keep cities clean, while receiving little of the respect and recognition that every worker deserves.

Pakistan generates approximately 94.6 million tons of waste annually, including dry waste such as paper, glass, and plastic, as well as wet waste consisting of household and organic refuse. The responsibility for collecting, managing, and disposing of this waste, maintaining drainage systems, and ensuring the smooth functioning of sewerage networks largely falls upon sanitation workers. However, while performing these essential duties, dozens—if not nearly a hundred—sanitation workers lose their lives every year.

This raises an important question: who is responsible for these deaths? Is it a society that

produces waste every day but fails to respect those who clean it? Is it the contractors and institutions that send workers into sewers and manholes without adequate protective equipment? Or is it a governance system that has yet to ensure the safety, welfare, and dignity of these workers through effective policies and enforcement?

In Pakistan, sanitation workers generally fall into three categories: permanent employees, contractual workers, and daily-wage laborers. While permanent and contractual employees often receive certain benefits such as medical leave, fixed salaries, and, in some cases, pensions, daily-wage workers remain among the most vulnerable members of the workforce. They typically work eight to nine hours a day but are often denied paid sick leave and adequate holiday benefits.

The responsibilities of sanitation workers extend far beyond simply collecting waste. They gather dry and wet refuse from homes and markets, sweep streets, clear blocked drains, clean public toilets, and maintain sewerage systems by cleaning gutters and manholes. Their contribution is indispensable to urban life and public health. Without their services, maintaining sanitation, environmental sustainability, and public hygiene in cities would be nearly impos-



sible. Despite the critical nature of their work, sanitation workers face challenges that extend beyond economic hardship and occupational risks. They are often subjected to social discrimination and stigma. In Pakistan, sanitation work has frequently been associated with specific religious and socially marginalized communities, resulting in prejudice against those engaged in the profession. In the past, job advertisements for sanitation positions have often shown a preference for non-Muslim applicants, reinforcing the perception that this occupation is reserved for particular communities.

Although Pakistan maintains a quota for religious minorities in public-sector employment, many sanitation workers continue to experience social and economic exclusion. Workers frequently report being judged on the basis of their occupation, caste, or social background. In some cases, people avoid sharing utensils with them or fail to treat them with equal respect. Female sanitation workers face additional challenges, including harassment and insecurity, while their children may encounter discrimination, bullying, and social isolation in educational institutions. The unfortunate reality is that the very people who play a vital

role in protecting public health and maintaining clean cities are often denied the social respect and human dignity they deserve. Nevertheless, sanitation workers continue to perform their duties despite immense hardships, serving as silent yet essential contributors to society. Among the many challenges they face, the most serious is the threat to their lives. Every year, sanitation workers lose their lives while cleaning sewers, drainage lines, and manholes. The primary causes of these deaths include exposure to toxic gases, the absence of adequate protective equipment, and the lack of modern cleaning technology.

Sewer lines and manholes often contain hazardous gases such as methane and hydrogen sulfide, which can render a person unconscious within moments. Despite these dangers, workers are frequently sent into confined spaces without protective suits, gloves, masks, oxygen supplies, or gas-detection equipment. In many cases, when one worker collapses, others descend in an attempt to rescue them, resulting in multiple fatalities from a single incident.

This situation is further aggravated by Pakistan's aging and deteriorating sewerage infrastructure. While many countries employ advanced suction machines, jetting systems, and robotic technologies to clean sewer networks, several Pakistani cities continue to rely heavily on manual labor. As a result, sanitation workers often perform their duties on a thin line between livelihood and death.

The question therefore remains: if safer and more efficient alternatives are available, why are sanitation workers still being forced to risk their lives? In any civilized society, the death of a worker should never be considered an occupational norm. Yet in Pakistan, the deaths of sanitation workers are often forgotten shortly after they make headlines.

The challenges faced by sanitation workers are not merely labor

issues; they are matters of public health, human rights, and social justice. Until sanitation systems are modernized and workers are provided with adequate protection, their lives will remain at risk, and society will continue to owe a debt to those who keep it clean.

It is time for the government, local authorities, and society as a whole to fulfill their responsibilities. Sanitation workers must be provided with modern machinery, quality protective equipment, professional training, healthcare facilities, and legal protection. Equally important is the need to challenge social attitudes and policies that associate sanitation work with particular communities or religions. Judging individuals on the basis of their occupation, religion, or social background is incompatible with the principles of human dignity and a just society.

Ultimately, the true measure of Pakistan's progress lies not in its buildings, roads, or development projects, but in the dignity, protection, and justice afforded to its most vulnerable and overlooked citizens. Until sanitation workers are guaranteed safe working conditions, social respect, and fundamental rights, claims of progress will remain incomplete. After all, those who keep our cities clean deserve a safe, dignified, and better life themselves.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
171,175.50	170,190.64
Day's High	Day's Low
171,455.76	170,563.40
Index Value	Change
18,798,498,714	+984.86
Percentage	Time
+0.58%	4 Jun, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,360.32	+28.02
Percentage	Time
+0.27%	4 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
51,524.98	+837.91
Percentage	Time
+1.65%	4 Jun, 2:21 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
67,470.69	-931.45
Percentage	Time
-1.36%	4 Jun, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	196.62	202.55
Bahrain Dinar	733.85	743.95
Canadian Dollar	199.46	206.22
China Yuan	38.00	38.75
Danish Krone	43.37	43.77
Euro	322.05	327.55
Hong Kong Dollar	34.89	35.89
Indian Rupee	2.73	2.98
Japanese Yen	1.7218	1.8209
Kuwaiti Dinar	883.35	893.75
Malaysian Ringgit	67.15	67.85
New Zealand \$	161.58	166.81
Norwegians Krone	27.85	28.15
Omani Riyal	719.15	730.25
Qatari Riyal	74.80	75.75
Saudi Riyal	73.85	74.65
Singapore Dollar	214.96	220.81
Swedish Korona	30.25	30.55
Swiss Franc	350.32	356.80
Thai Bhat	8.52	8.67
U.A.E Dirham	75.37	76.37
UK Pound Sterling	372.55	378.25
US Dollar	278.20	279.45

SECP Concludes Enforcement Proceedings Against Non-Compliant SOEs, Imposes Penalties

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has concluded enforcement proceedings against 36 State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), imposing monetary penalties totaling PKR 3.175 million through 46 adjudication orders, while issuing warning orders in 12 cases.

In March 2026, the SECP issued 66 Show Cause Notices (SCNs) to 41 State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) for non-compliance with statutory reporting and corporate governance requirements.

The violations included failure to submit annual audited financial statements and annual returns within the prescribed timelines, non-compliance with disclosure requirements, and breaches of the Corporate Governance Regulations.

To date, proceedings have been concluded in 58 cases.

The minimum penalty imposed was PKR 25,000 for failure to file annual returns, while a penalty of PKR 50,000 was imposed



for failure to file both annual returns and financial statements. The highest penalty, amounting to PKR 225,000, was imposed for repeated non-compliance with statutory

filing requirements. Collectively, penalties totaling PKR 3.175 million were imposed.

The proceedings were concluded after due process, including providing the concerned SOEs with sufficient opportunity to respond to the SCNs and present their case during hearings.

Several companies regularized their compliance by filing outstanding annual returns following the issuance of SCNs. To facilitate compliance, the SECP also established a dedicated help desk to assist SOEs in the submission of annual returns and other statutory filings.

Copies of the adjudication orders have been shared with the relevant Principal Accounting Officers (PAOs) of the concerned SOEs and the Director General of the Central Monitoring Unit (CMU) for information and necessary follow-up.

The SECP has advised all SOEs to strengthen their internal compliance systems, ensure timely fulfillment of statutory obligations, and improve governance practices to avoid future enforcement action.

Protest

LAHORE: Railway employees stage a protest in favor of their demands at Railway Station in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Fixed tax scheme for shopkeepers is a positive step, says SM Tanveer



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Patron-in-Chief of the United Business Group SM Tanveer has described the government's newly introduced fixed tax scheme for shopkeepers as a positive and timely initiative aimed at strengthening the country's tax framework.

He extended congratulations to Federal Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb and Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Bilal Azhar Kiyani, acknowledging their role in advancing what he termed a "game-changing" reform developed through close consultation with trade and business organisations.

Tanveer noted that the initiative represents a significant step towards expanding Pakistan's national tax base. He said the policy reflects sustained engagement with trader associations and stakeholders, ensuring that concerns of the business community were incorporated into its design.

FBR plans mandatory retail price labels on food items in budget 2026-27

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is considering making it mandatory to print retail prices on essential consumer goods in the upcoming federal budget for fiscal year 2026-27 to improve sales tax collection, according to sources.

Under the proposed plan, items such as tea, powdered milk, vegetable ghee, infant formula, ketchup, and cooking oil would be required to display their retail prices.

Officials said that dozens of commonly used items are expected to be included in the third schedule as part of the new tax measures.

The estimated revenue from the climate support levy is projected to exceed Rs90 billion in the next fiscal year.

Sources further indicated that tax exemptions for the former tribal areas may also be withdrawn in the upcoming fiscal budget for 2026-27.

PC Hospitality and Airblue Announce Strategic Alliance to Drive Sustainable Destination Growth Across Pakistan

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: PC Hospitality, the country largest hospitality conglomerate, has entered into a landmark strategic partnership with Airblue, one of the nation's leading airlines. This collaborative alliance is built on a shared commitment to sustainable tourism development, designed to enhance the travel ecosystem, support local destinations, and unlock greater value for travelers through integrated experiential marketing and co-branding initiatives.

As the hospitality sector increasingly pivots toward destination-led growth, this partnership bridges the gap between aviation and hospitality. It brings together two organizations that share a core value system such as a dedicated focus on building inclusive, sustainable tourism models that celebrate and preserve Pakistan's rich cultural and natural heritage while engaging local communities.

A central pillar of this alliance is a dedicated specifically on targeting the soaring tourism potential of Gilgit-Baltistan. Through exclusive, route-based promotional branding on Airblue's Skardu flights, the two entities will collaborate on sophisticated destination-led storytelling.

To elevate the traveler journey, Airblue



passengers will unlock exclusive benefits across the diverse PC Hospitality portfolio, across all their brands. These privileges extend beyond standard accommodation to include curated dining and leisure experiences, ensuring a seamless travel loop from takeoff to check-in.

Commenting on the strategic alliance, Bastien Blanc, Chief Executive Officer, stated: "True hospitality extends far beyond the walls of our properties as it lies in our responsibility to lift the destinations we operate in. By partnering with Airblue, a stakeholder that entirely shares our values of operational excellence and community-centric progress, we are creating a powerful

synergy. Together, we are not just marketing flights and hotel rooms; we are committing to the sustainable, long-term growth of the country's tourism frontiers, ensuring our communities thrive alongside our businesses."

Commenting on the partnership, Muhammad Shafiq, Director Commercial at Airblue, stated: "This strategic collaboration with PC Hospitality represents a shared vision to promote sustainable tourism across Pakistan. By integrating aviation and hospitality experiences, we are not only making travel more accessible and rewarding for our passengers, but also supporting local communities and destinations.

Government mulls 10-15pc salary increase in Budget 2026-27

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has proposed a 10 to 15 per cent increase in salaries for government employees in the Budget 2026-27, with final decisions expected after further consultations.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held discussions on the upcoming federal budget during an informal meeting at the Prime Minister House. The session was not officially covered and focused on key budgetary matters.

During the meeting, consultations were held on the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), taxation measures, and proposals related to salary and pension increases for the next fiscal year.

According to sources, the Federal Finance Minister briefed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the major aspects of the budget. In view of the

prevailing inflation rate, a proposal to increase the salaries of government employees by 10 to 15 per cent was presented.

Sources said the prime minister directed officials to prepare detailed calculations in light of the government's expected financial resources to

determine the level of relief that could be provided to employees.

According to the sources, the final decision regarding the proposed salary increase for government employees will be taken by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif after consultations with coalition partners.

Fixed Tax Scheme to encourage voluntary compliance, broader tax base: ICCI President



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Sardar Tahir Mehmood, has welcomed the government's Fixed Tax Facilitation Scheme unveiled on Friday, describing it as a pragmatic and business-friendly initiative that will help bring more businesses into the documented economy and significantly broaden the country's tax net.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, he said that the business community has long been advocating for a simplified, transparent, and facilitative taxation framework that encourages voluntary compliance rather than creating hurdles for taxpayers. The newly announced scheme reflects the government's commitment to promoting ease of doing business and fostering a more inclusive tax culture.

Sardar Tahir Mehmood expressed confidence that the scheme would encourage undocumented businesses and small traders to become part of the formal economy, thereby increasing revenue generation without placing additional burdens on already compliant taxpayers. He noted that a wider tax base is essential for achieving fiscal stability and reducing reliance on indirect taxation.

The ICCI President emphasized that sustainable economic growth can only be achieved through policies that facilitate entrepreneurship, investment, and business expansion. He appreciated the government's efforts to engage stakeholders and introduce reforms aimed at creating a more conducive environment for economic activity.

Launch of the 12th Summer Hockey Coaching Camp at Olympian Islahuddin and Dr. Shah Hockey Academy

District Sports Officer Hajra Nawab inaugurated the camp; More than 50 boys and girls will receive training during the two-month summer coaching camp



KARACHI: The 12th Summer Hockey Coaching Camp has commenced at the hockey academy founded by Islahuddin Siddiqui and Dr. Muhammad Ali Shah. The camp was inaugurated by District Central Sports Officer Hajra Nawab.

Among those present at the opening ceremony were Head Coach of the academy and Executive Board Member Olympian Syed Sameer Hussain, National Selector Olympian Kashif Jawwad, Senior Vice President of the Karachi Hockey Association Latafat Hussain Shah, Olympian Kamran Ashraf, Muhammad Aslam Khan, and coaches Moin Alam, Syed Aly

Hasan, Wasif Raza, Rashid Yaqoob, Talha Ghori, Saeeda Khanam, along with others. Players in the Under-10, Under-16, and Under-21 age categories will undergo training under the supervision of qualified coaches for the next two months. More than 50 boys and girls have already registered for

the camp, and the number is expected to increase further. Addressing the participants, Chief Guest Hajra Nawab said that the large number of children attending the summer camp reflects that the future of hockey in Pakistan is secure. She expressed confidence that the camp would produce future

hockey stars. She further announced that, to promote the national sport at the grassroots level, girls' and boys' school hockey tournaments will soon be organized. Efforts are also underway to revive hockey teams in schools, and scholarships will be awarded to children who

play hockey. Hajra Nawab added that she was delighted to learn that two players from the Islahuddin and Dr. Shah Academy had been selected for the national Under-18 hockey team and are currently representing Pakistan in the Men's Hockey Asia Cup in Japan. Upon their return,

the Sports Department will organize a special reception in their honor. Camp Commandant Sameer Hussain thanked the chief guest for her participation. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the academy presented a commemorative shield to Hajra Nawab.

Kashmir's shrinking religious spaces: Attempts to normalize the abnormal

The continued restrictions on Kashmiri Muslims' religious gatherings expose a glaring contradiction in the Indian occupation authorities' callous approach towards religious freedoms in a region long plagued by conflict, instability, and political uncertainty. There is a consistent pattern of repression targeting political and religious rights of the majority community who happen to be Muslims. Pertinently, the Indian authorities frequently invoke "law and order concerns" as a pretext to impose sweeping restrictions on mosques and religious sites. Since 2019, following the abrogation of Article 370, the authorities have consistently barred large congregational Eid prayers at Srinagar's historic Jamia Masjid and Eidgah. While prominent religious leaders have also frequently been placed under house detention to prevent them from addressing or participating in such gatherings. Similarly, religious congregations traditionally held at the grand mosque on significant occasions such as Eid Milad-un-Nabi and Shab-e-Qadr have effectively remained prohibited under an undeclared ban for several years. As a result, worshipers, who for centuries have collectively commemorated these sacred occasions and spent the blessed night in worship at the mosque, continue to be deprived of the opportunity to observe some of the most important events in the Islamic calendar.

India, is conducted with great pomp and show under elaborate security arrangements. The authorities spare no effort in facilitating the event, deploying tens of thousands of security personnel and ensuring that every logistical requirement is efficiently met. This glaring disparity presents a clear case of discriminatory treatment toward the Muslim-majority population of Kashmir. Far from being an ordinary security concern, it points to a wider pattern of discriminatory restrictions on fundamental rights and freedoms. So the question arises: if a Yatra involving hundreds of thousands of pilgrims can be conducted under extensive security arrangements and constant surveillance, why are congregational Eid prayers viewed through an entirely different lens? Why Kashmiri Muslims are repeatedly deprived of a religious practice that lasts only a few hours and has been part of the Valley's social and religious fabric for generations? The cumulative effect of these measures has been to create a sense that the religious identity and collective expression of Kashmir's Muslim majority are being subjected to extraordinary scrutiny and control. The case of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who has repeatedly been placed under house arrest and prevented from leading Eid-ul-Adha prayers since the past several years, clearly exemplifies this new reality. What was initially presented as a temporary security arrangement has evolved into a permanent feature of Kashmir's religious landscape. The continued

closure of religious spaces for congregational Eid prayers and the repeated confinement of the Valley's chief cleric have become symbolic of a broader policy of restricting the religious rights of Kashmiri Muslims. The issue is no longer confined to a single event or a particular year; it reflects a systematic approach in which the community's collective religious expression is subjected to extraordinary limitations. The fact that these restrictions have persisted year after year and have raised serious concerns about the shrinking space available for the exercise of fundamental religious freedoms in Kashmir. The justification of "law and order" often invoked by the authorities has increasingly lost credibility. There is no evidence to suggest that Kashmiri Muslims participating in religious gatherings constitute a security concern. Yet, year after year, the same rationale is used to deny them a basic democratic and religious right. Although these congregations usually take only a couple of hours to conclude, but despite their peaceful and limited nature, undue restrictions continue to be imposed. As a matter of fact, these restrictions appear less about security and more about controlling a dominant narrative that the authorities seem to fear the most. They do not want a collective voice emanating from the pulpits of these historic religious sites of Kashmir that have traditionally served not only as centers of faith, but also as important symbols of the Kashmiri people's political identity and collective sentiment.



Analysis

Nisar Ahmed Thakur

Pakistan's Ayesha Baloch defeats Indian rival to win Asian Games gold



Sports Desk

Pride of Pakistan Ayesha Baloch has made history by winning a gold medal in wrestling at the 2026 Asian Games, by outclassing her Indian rival, reported 24NewsHD TV channel on Saturday. Daughter of Balochistan Ayesha Baloch's remarkable achievement reflected years of hard work, discipline, and dedication to her sport. Competing against Asia's strongest athletes, she displayed exceptional strength, technique, and confidence throughout the tournament. Proud daughter of Balochistan Ayesha Baloch has defeated her Indian rival in the Asian Games Wrestling Final held in Sri Lanka. Ayesha Baloch delivered a strong performance and secured the gold medal. The athlete celebrated her victory by hoisting the Pakistani flag in the ring and on the podium. Ayesha Baloch showcased exceptional talent and determination, defeating her Indian opponent in the wrestling final to claim gold. Her victory is a testament to the strength, resilience, and potential of Baloch youth, bringing pride to the entire Pakistan nation. Her victory is being celebrated across Pakistan as a landmark moment for women in sports, especially for athletes from Balochistan.

Quantum Computing and Pakistan's Future

Continued from Page 4

cumulative effect would be higher productivity across the entire economy. Consider Pakistan International Airlines. Rather than relying solely on traditional planning tools, a quantum-powered system could analyze global passenger demand, fuel costs, aircraft utilization rates, airport congestion patterns, maintenance schedules, and competitive dynamics simultaneously. Such analysis could help transform operational efficiency and improve profitability. Yet perhaps the greatest contribution

of quantum computing would not be technical but strategic. Nations often fail not because they lack resources but because they lack clarity. They pursue multiple objectives simultaneously without understanding tradeoffs. They change direction frequently. They implement policies without fully appreciating long-term consequences. Quantum computing could provide policymakers with an unprecedented ability to evaluate competing strategies before committing national resources. Pakistan also faces important capacity constraints that must be acknowledged. The country currently has a limited

pool of quantum physicists, quantum engineers, and specialized researchers. Research funding remains constrained relative to leading technological nations. Advanced laboratory infrastructure is still developing, and broader challenges in education, digital connectivity, data quality, and institutional coordination could slow adoption. Even if powerful quantum systems become available globally, Pakistan's ability to benefit from them will depend heavily on investments made today in human capital, scientific research, and technological ecosystems. The Quantum Age may not solve every mystery of the universe, nor answer

every philosophical question regarding consciousness, existence, or the origins of reality. But it may provide humanity—and nations such as Pakistan—with the most powerful tool ever created for understanding complex systems and making better decisions. In a world increasingly defined by complexity, that capability alone could prove revolutionary. 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

Political Tolerance: Pakistan's Democratic Imperative

Continued from Page 4

The capacity to tolerate diversity may prove to be Pakistan's most important democratic asset in a multicultural society dealing with difficult domestic, regional and international issues. A democracy's ability to tolerate dissent is a better indicator of its strength than the consistency of its beliefs.

Ultimately, adopting political tolerance is a democratic requirement for Pakistan, not just a choice. Dr Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti holds a PhD in Political Science and writes regularly on terrorism, counter-terrorism, countering violent extremism and policing affairs. He can be reached at rizwanbh79@gmail.com.

"The 18th Amendment, Provincial Autonomy, NFC Award, and the Challenge of Public Welfare"

Continued from Page 4

gained greater fiscal capacity to invest in education, healthcare, infrastructure, agriculture, and social welfare programs. In this context, the importance of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and other social protection initiatives has also increased. BISP is Pakistan's largest social safety net program, designed to provide financial assistance to poor households, particularly women, widows, persons with disabilities, and low-income families. Although the program has provided economic relief to millions of households, concerns have occasionally been raised regarding beneficiary selection, transparency, and the inclusion of inel-

igible recipients. Therefore, it is essential that modern digital systems, transparent surveys, and effective monitoring mechanisms ensure that financial assistance reaches only genuinely deserving families. Fair distribution of resources requires that the benefits of all social welfare programs reach the rightful beneficiaries, thereby contributing to poverty reduction and social justice. However, an important question remains: Have these additional resources and powers translated into tangible benefits for ordinary citizens? Although provinces have received increased financial allocations, the expected improvements in public service delivery have not been fully realized. Many regions still face deficiencies in quality educa-

tion, healthcare services, clean drinking water, employment opportunities, and local government services. Many experts argue that the issue is not the transfer of powers itself but rather their effective utilization. Provincial autonomy can only be considered successful when accompanied by transparency, accountability, and strong local government institutions that ensure the direct delivery of benefits to the public. The distribution of resources within provinces is also a major concern. Smaller districts and underdeveloped regions often complain that a disproportionate share of development funds is spent in provincial capitals and major urban centers, while

remote areas continue to lack basic facilities. Therefore, equitable distribution of resources within provinces must also be ensured. Several controversies surrounding the NFC Award have emerged over time. The federal government maintains that responsibilities such as defense, national security, debt servicing, and major national projects fall under its jurisdiction. Since a substantial share of revenues is transferred to the provinces, the federal government argues that its fiscal space has become increasingly constrained. On the other hand, the provinces, particularly Sindh, advocate for greater recognition of their contribution to revenue generation. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

seeks additional resources due to the consequences of the war on terrorism, while Balochistan calls for special financial support on account of its historical deprivation and vast geographical size. Punjab, meanwhile, defends its share based on its large population and extensive public service requirements. Another major issue is the delay in announcing a new NFC Award. The Constitution requires periodic review of the NFC Award, yet consensus on a revised formula has remained elusive. As a result, the existing mechanism of resource distribution has remained under discussion for an extended period. Water distribution is another sensitive issue in inter-provincial relations. Various provinces have

repeatedly expressed concerns regarding water resources, dam construction, and canal water allocation. Such matters can only be resolved through the effective functioning of constitutional institutions and sustained inter-provincial dialogue. The reality is that the true measure of the success of the 18th Constitutional Amendment is not merely the transfer of powers and financial resources but the positive transformation of people's lives. Better educational institutions, quality healthcare services, clean drinking water, modern infrastructure, employment opportunities, and effective local governments are the real indicators of the amendment's success. More than fifteen years after its passage, the 18th Constitutional

Amendment remains a strong pillar of Pakistan's federal democratic system. It has strengthened provincial autonomy, enhanced trust among the federating units, and laid the foundation for a relatively fairer system of resource distribution. However, the need of the hour is to ensure that the benefits of devolved powers and resources genuinely reach the people. Transparent governance, robust accountability mechanisms, effective local governments, and equitable distribution of resources are essential to fully realizing the objectives of the amendment and placing Pakistan on the path of balanced, sustainable, and people-centered development. (Writer can be reached at Email. aahsan210@gmail.com)

Israeli strike

GAZA: Six civilians were killed and at least 15 others injured on Saturday evening in an Israeli strike on Gaza City. Strike targeted a tent sheltering displaced families near the Al-Rimal Boys' Preparatory School in the Al-Rimal neighborhood, west of Gaza City.



Photo: WAFA

PPP-govt budget meeting expected today at Presidency

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting between the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the government on the development budget for the fiscal year 2026-27 is expected to take place at the President's House today, according to sources.

Sources said the meeting will be held tonight under the chairmanship of President Asif Ali Zardari. PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has also arrived in Islamabad from Gilgit-Baltistan on a special

plane to join the discussions. According to sources, Bilawal is expected to present the party's reservations regarding the federal budget during the meeting.

The PPP delegation will include Bilawal, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, Sherry Rehman, Naveed Qamar and Raja Pervez Ashraf. The government side will be represented by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and National



Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, Sources said the Pakistan People's Party had already

edly has no opposition to the introduction of new bills but has raised objections to existing tax policies.

According to sources, the PPP has expressed reservations over the repeated imposition of taxes on the same sectors and has also voiced serious concerns regarding federal expenditures.

The meeting is expected to focus on addressing these concerns and finding common ground ahead of final decisions on the development budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Barrister Aqeel Malik emphasizes ethical and responsible political conduct ahead of GB polls

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Law Barrister Aqeel Malik on Saturday called upon political stakeholders to preserve the dignity of politics, use civilized language and focus on delivering results instead of making lofty promises, referring to the upcoming Gilgit-Baltistan elections as a key test of democratic conduct and political responsibility.

While speaking to a local media outlet, Minister Malik said, "the public is closely observing governance and development performance in Punjab, where the Chief Minister has carried out extensive development work.



I am confident that voters in Gilgit-Baltistan will exercise their democratic right in the June 7 elections on the basis of performance," he added.

He expressed confidence that voter turnout would be high in favor of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in Gilgit-Baltistan, adding that public support would reflect the party's performance and governance record.

Aqeel Malik said, "public expectations are now centered on visible results and improved service delivery."

Aqeel Malik emphasized, "all political stakeholders must focus on addressing public issues through tangible results rather than slogans, as democratic competition should be grounded in accountability, service delivery and performance."

AJK SC reserves verdict in case of refugee seats in Legislative Assembly

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Saturday reserved its verdict on the presidential reference seeking its opinion on 12 seats reserved for refugees in the AJK Legislative Assembly, reported 24NewsHD TV channel.

A two-member bench of the AJK SC, headed by Chief Justice Raja Saed Akram, heard the reference.

Another judge on the bench was Justice Khalid Yousaf Chaudhry.

The apex court will formally convey to the AJK president its constitutional opinion on the reference tomorrow.

Speaking during the hearing, senior legal expert Raja Sajjad Ahmad Khan Advocate opined that under Article 33 of the constitution, legislation



was the sole prerogative of the legislative assembly, and that members of the assembly had clearly given their opinion on the matter at an All-Parties Conference.

He was of the view that the matter should have been taken up by a high-powered committee for delib-

eration.

Barrister Humayun Nawaz, Raja Sadaqat Hussain and Sardar Abdur Razzaq also gave their arguments on the occasion, while former AJK PM Raja Farooq Haider Khan and a member of the assembly Abdul Majid Khan remained present during the

hearing.

The court tried to find an answer to the question that whether 12 seats reserved for refugees could be changed without constitutional amendment.

The AJK government had on Thursday filed a reference in the AJK SC under the constitutional provisions seeking constitutional and legal opinion from the apex court regarding refugee seats in the legislative Assembly.

The reference has been sent through the presidential office asking the apex forum to provide legal opinion regarding the constitutional position of 12 refugee seats elected from outside of the territorial jurisdiction of AJK and the framework to change the position of these seats in the legislative Assembly.

NAB Karachi attaches foreign bank accounts valued at USD 4.5 million in Mauritius under AMLA 2010

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a significant move against international money laundering, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Karachi has successfully attached two foreign bank accounts belonging to accused Ahmed Ali Riaz and Mubashira Ali Malik located in Silver Bank, Mauritius. The attachment was carried out under the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA), 2010, following formal authorization and permission granted by the Accountability Court, Karachi.

The Bureau's investigation established that M/s Bahria Town Pvt Ltd utilized an illicit Hawala/Hundi network within Pakistan to launder crime proceeds out of the country. These funds were initially transferred to the United Arab Emirates and subsequently laundered to Mauritius, where the crime proceeds originating from Pakistan were placed in joint bank accounts.



A total of USD 4.5 Million is currently lying in these accounts, which have now been legally frozen as part of the ongoing pursuit of asset recovery. NAB has initiated legal proceedings through foreign office and is at the advanced stage for the forfeiture and repatriation of the stolen funds in accordance with the provisions of the Anti-Money Laundering Act-2010. This action reaffirms NAB's commitment to pursuing illicit assets across jurisdictions and securing their recovery through international cooperation.

PML-N leader Safdar Khan Leghari passes away



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Sardar Safdar Khan Leghari, PML-N leader and son of MNA Azhar Khan Leghari has passed away in a local hospital in Lahore on Saturday.

Sardar Khan Leghari was also a ticket holder of PML-N in PP 266 in Sadiqabad during the general elections in 2024.

Sardar Safdar Leghari, suffering

from a stomach ailment, was on ventilator after undergoing surgery yesterday.

The deceased was the head of the social media team of PML-N Punjab. The news of the death of Sardar Safdar Leghari has caused a wave of sorrow and grief in political and social circles.

PML-N leadership has expressed grief over the death of Sardar Safdar Khan Leghari.

Section 144 imposed in Diamer for two months

News Desk

GILGIT BALTISTAN: Display of weapons and aerial firing were prohibited as the deputy commissioner Diamer, Gilgit Baltistan (GB) Lt (r) Muhammad Owais on Saturday imposed section 144 in the district for two months in view of the fragile law-and-order situation.

The notification, which came into effect on June 5, also placed a ban on flying drones, unmanned aerial vehicles and explosion of crackers in the district during the aforementioned period.

The flight of drones will only be allowed with the permission of the district magistrate who will issue a

no-objection certificate (NOC) for the purpose. However, the personnel of law-enforcement agencies would be exempted from these restrictions, read the notification.

Similarly, administrative measures have been taken for the protection of sensitive installations.

The district administration has appealed to the citizens to comply with these orders; or otherwise, strict action would be taken against them.

It is worth-mentioning here that two PML-N workers had been killed in an incident of firing during the party's public gathering in GB on Friday. The general elections for the GB Assembly will be held today (Sunday, June 7).

Pakistan Interior Minister Carries Army Chief's Message to Iran's Supreme Leader

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi, departed for Tehran on Saturday carrying what an informed source described as an important message from Pakistan Army Chief Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir to Iran's Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, according to Iran's state news agency IRNA.

The source told IRNA that Naqvi's visit comes after a series of high-level consultations in Islamabad, including discussions with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, underscoring the significance of the mission amid evolving regional diplomatic developments.

According to the source, the Pakistani interior minister has been

entrusted with delivering a message from Field Marshal Asim Munir to Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, during his visit to Tehran.

The source further said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif provided Naqvi with special instructions concerning ongoing discussions related to Iran-U.S. talks, highlighting Islamabad's close attention to developments affecting regional stability and diplomacy.

Naqvi's visit is being closely watched in diplomatic circles as Pakistan and Iran continue to engage on a range of bilateral and regional issues, including security cooperation and broader geopolitical developments in the region.