



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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ہم سے بچیں صانع نے بیان کیا انہوں نے
کہا ہم سے بچیں مہمان نے بیان کیا انہوں
نے کہا ہم سے سعید بن طارق نے بیان کیا
انہوں نے عبد اللہ بن عمر سے سنا انہوں نے
کہا کیا لوگوں کو نذر سے منع نہیں کیا گیا ہے؟
نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کہ نذر کسی
چیز کو آگے کر سکتی ہے نہ پیچھے ہا بلت اس کے
ذریعہ بچنا کمال کا ایسا کام ہے۔
(صحیح بخاری ص 692)
Barkat Rice Mills
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Pakistan issues visas to 737 Indian Sikh pilgrims

According to the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, the visas were granted to Sikh yatrees who will travel to Pakistan to attend the religious events during the specified period. Where Sikh pilgrims will take part in various religious rituals and gatherings.



Karachi police blacklist 40,000 vehicles under Safe City project

According to police officials, the blacklisted vehicles include those that were sold but have not yet been transferred to the names of new owners. Vehicles with incomplete ownership records or unpaid government dues have also been included in the blacklist.

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Important meeting

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.



Photo: Online

PM congratulates GB people on fair, peaceful polls; felicitates PPP on major win



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday extended congratulations to the people of Gilgit-Baltistan on the successful, transparent, peaceful and politically vibrant conduct of the general elections held on Sunday.

The prime minister, in a statement, congratulated the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), including President Asif Ali Zardari and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, for emerging as the majority political party in the Gilgit-Baltistan elections.

He congratulated the successful candidates of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) who put up strong competition, besides

praising the party's team for their hard work and dedication.

Felicitating all other winning candidates across GB, Prime Minister Shehbaz appreciated the people for their enthusiastic and full participation in the political activities.

Calling the peaceful and transparent elections and active political engagement the "beauty of democracy", he praised the Election Commission for ensuring a fair and impartial electoral process.

The prime minister also lauded the police and law enforcement agencies for playing an exemplary role in maintaining law and order and ensuring the peaceful conduct of the polls.

President Zardari, PM Shehbaz discuss budget, security and Kashmir protests

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday held a meeting at the President's Office to discuss national security, the internal and regional situation and a range of key national issues.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah.

The participants reviewed the country's economic situation, the budget for the next fiscal year, the recent elections in Gilgit-Baltistan, developments

in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, law and order, and other matters of national importance.

During the discussion on budget proposals and public relief measures, President Zardari emphasized the need to prioritise public welfare, provincial rights and economic stability in the upcoming federal budget.

The president directed that every effort should be made

to ensure harmony between economic growth targets and public welfare schemes in the next budget.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi briefed the president about his recent visit to Iran and discussed regional diplomatic relations.

The meeting was also attended by Senator Sherry Rehman, Member of the National

Assembly Syed Naveed Qamar, Senator Saleem Mandviwala and Senator Rahat Cheema.

Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Raja Faisal Rathore and Member of the National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf also participated in the meeting.

Pakistan rejects remarks on Azad Kashmir by overseas activists, British MPs

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday rejected what it termed unnecessary remarks regarding Azad Jammu and Kashmir by some overseas Pakistanis living in the United Kingdom and criticised statements made by certain British lawmakers on the issue.

In a statement, the Foreign Office spokesperson said Pakistan was concerned over what it described as irresponsible and unrealistic insinuations made by some expatriates regarding the situation in Azad Jammu

and Kashmir.

The spokesperson advised such individuals to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir and instead contribute positively to the development of the countries in which they reside.

The Foreign Office also took exception to statements and questions raised by some British Members of Parliament, saying they reflected a lack of understanding of the historical background and facts related to the issue.

The spokesperson said those



holding colonial-era views should be reminded that Pakistan is a sovereign and democratic state.

"Pakistan believes in the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other coun-

tries and expects the same from others," the statement said.

The Foreign Office said the governments of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir remained committed to ensuring citizens' rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and participation in the democratic process.

The statement added that the constitutions of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir guaranteed democratic values, judicial independence and the rule of law, and these principles must be respected by all.

DPM/FM Dar for competitive, innovative automotive ecosystem

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Monday, underscored the importance of developing a competitive, innovative and sustainable automotive ecosystem.

He stressed that such a system could support economic growth, enhance industrial capacity, generate skilled jobs and advance environmental sustainability through a future-ready automotive sector.

The DPM/FM chaired a high-level meeting to review the auto and auto parts policy, with a particular focus on accelerating Pakistan's transition towards Electric Vehicles (EVs), the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by the ministers for power, petroleum and climate change; adviser to the PM on industries and production; ministers of state for finance and railways,



SAPM Tariq Bajwa; secretaries of commerce, industries and production, and petroleum, national coordinator NCMC, senior officials from concerned ministries and leading policy experts and economists.

The committee was briefed on measures to promote EV adoption, strengthen domestic manufacturing, facilitate industry growth through supportive government policies, create new employment opportunities, boost exports, and contribute to Pakistan's climate change mitigation efforts.

To ensure a comprehensive and consultative approach, a subcommittee was constituted to undertake review in consultations with all stakeholder and finalize the draft policy.

Senate Surpasses Savings Target by 500% Through Austerity

City Desk

Islamabad: The Senate has returned Rs1.43 billion to the national exchequer, significantly exceeding its savings target by 500%. This achievement is attributed to a comprehensive austerity and expenditure rationalization program initiated

by Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani.

Measures included suspending 17 out of 18 approved procurement projects, rationalizing recruitments and non-essential expenditures, reducing administrative overheads, and scrutinizing operational costs.

The official transport fleet

was grounded, fuel allocations capped, and refreshment provisions discontinued.

Non-essential foreign visits were suspended, and no official vehicles were procured despite budget allocations. The Senate Finance Committee also decided to forgo the allocation for vehicle replacement in the next fiscal

year, expecting further savings.

These realized savings, amounting to 15.9% of the Senate's budget for FY 2025-26, highlight the institution's commitment to fiscal discipline and prudent stewardship of public resources, demonstrating that meaningful austerity requires decisive action and insti-

tutional commitment, not just rhetoric.

The Senate aims to enhance transparency and accountability through these public records and emphasizes this as an ongoing commitment to responsible governance and public service, with saved funds ultimately benefiting the public.

Life Returns to Normal in AJK After Brief Disruption

Abdul Majeed Tahir

RAWALAKOT: Normal life has resumed in Rawalakot and other Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) cities after a brief disturbance. Law enforcement dispersed a group of miscreants associated with a banned action committee who attempted to disrupt order on June 7. Authorities report the situation is under control, with educational institutions, businesses, and social activities proceeding normally. Police are on alert to ensure public

safety and state authority. Residents largely ignored protest calls, continuing their daily routines. The Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), demanding economic and governance reforms, had its central office sealed and a ban on large gatherings imposed in Muzaffarabad after clashes resulted in seven deaths (three civilians, four police) and dozens wounded. Over 70 JAAC members were arrested over the weekend, with the group condemning their designation as a "terror" group.

Markazi Ulama Council addresses Kashmir stability, religious harmony ahead of Muharram

The Central Consultative Council (Majlis-e-Shura) of Markazi Ulama Council Pakistan convened in Lahore, chaired by Sahibzada Maulana Zahid Mahmood Qasmi.

The council called for an immediate halt to disruptive actions by the Azad Kashmir Joint Action Committee, urging the government to take firm measures against those taking the law into their own hands.

Emphasizing Kashmir's significance for Pakistan's stability and prosperity, the council pledged cooperation with authorities during Muharram-ul-Haram (2026) to foster religious harmony and maintain law and order, advocating for the strict implementation of the "Paigham-e-Pakistan" narrative and the "Mili Yakjehti Council Pakistan" code of conduct.

The council commended ongoing security operations and praised the armed forces and security agencies.



They strongly condemned terrorism and extremism, reaffirming support for state institutions in achieving lasting peace.

Digital terrorism and anti-state propaganda on social media were also condemned, with demands for legal action and a strategy to counter hate narratives. A legal team will be established to assist mosques and seminaries with registration.

Nationwide conferences promoting "Unity of the Ummah" and "Paigham-e-Pakistan" will be organized, focusing on core Islamic tenets and endorsing religious figures like Hazrat Umar Farooq (RA) and Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) through an "Ashra-e-Farooq wa Hussain" event.

The council lauded Saudi Arabia's Hajj arrangements and Pakistan's

constructive role in managing US-Iran tensions. They urged the government to provide relief in the June budget to alleviate inflation and called for policies on subsidized electricity and gas for mosques.

The meeting was attended by prominent members and representatives from across Pakistan, concluding with prayers for national security and unity.

Women Are Not Safe in Kashmir says Mushtaq Ahmed Butt



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Kashmiri Huriyat Leader Mushtaq Ahmed Khan Butt has said that

The arrest of Kashmiri woman Hasina Begum under the controversial PSA is another example of the continuing repression in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Mr Butt vehemently condemned the arrest of Hussina Begum and said that Kashmiri women, political activists, and Huriyat leaders face arbitrary arrests, prolonged detention, and human rights violations under draconian laws such as the PSA and UAPA.

The international community, the United Nations, and human rights organizations must act urgently to protect human rights and secure the release of political self-prisoners in IIOJK.

Free Ambulance Service for Dead Bodies Formally Inaugurated in Faisalabad

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD:

District Emergency Officer Engineer Ehtesham Wahla said that the dead body transfer service provided by Rescue 1122 from government hospitals will be completely free for the common citizens. He said that no citizen will have to pay any fee for the transfer of the dead body. The trained staff of Rescue 1122 will transfer the dead body to the home or desired location with full respect and dignity. He said that the aim of this service is to provide convenience to the citizens in the hour of grief and reduce their financial burden.



Muharram Lessons: Patience, Sacrifice, and Truth, Says Assistant Commissioner Attock

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Assistant Commissioner Attock, Muhammad Arif Qureshi, emphasized that Muharram teaches patience, sacrifice, truthfulness, and humanity. He assured that mutual coordination would ensure peaceful Muharram programs, allowing mourners to perform rituals comfortably. Speaking at Imam Bargah Panjtani, he highlighted that ensuring security is a collective responsibility and the Karbala tragedy is a guiding example of standing for truth. He urged citizens to report suspicious activities and implored Imam Bargah administrators and volunteers to cooperate to prevent disruptions. Qureshi inspected procession routes, directing swift action on cleanliness, security, and facilities. Organizers praised the district administration's cooperation and support from various departments, ensuring the successful and peaceful conduct of Muharram events.

Armed Attack on Police in Rawalakot Results in Fatalities

Abdul Majeed Tahir

RAWALAKOT: The Inspector General of Police Azad Jammu and Kashmir has strongly condemned the pre-planned firing, sabotage of law and order and attack on CMH Rawalakot by armed miscreants affiliated with the Non-Governmental Action Committee in Rawalakot.

Today, armed elements of the ringleaders affiliated with the Non-Governmental Action Committee in Rawalakot gathered in the name of protest and directly targeted the law enforcement personnel on duty. As a result of the firing, 04 law enforcement personnel have been martyred so far, while more than 20 police and security personnel have been injured and have been shifted for immediate medical assistance. The injuries of the martyred and injured personnel are of firearm and gunshot nature.

IG Police Azad Jammu and Kashmir has said that this incident is not a continuation of any peaceful political protest, but a systematic armed and terrorist act in which the state writ, public order, law enforcement agencies and a medical facility were targeted. The attack on CMH Rawalakot is not only a serious violation of the law but also amounts to directly endangering the safety of patients, medical staff, injured personnel and civilians.

Direct firing on law enforcement personnel, martyrdom, gunshot injuries, and the subsequent attack on CMH Rawalakot is clear terrorism. The legal consequences of this attack will be inevitable, evidence-based and in accordance with the Constitution and law. No armed group will be allowed to threaten the security of the peaceful citizens of Azad Kashmir and the state order.

Rex City Computer Market Annual Elections Announced

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Two groups are competing in the Rex City elections: Mukhlis Group whose election symbol is a flower while Ittefaq Group's election symbol is a laptop

The panel of candidates consists of 7 officials, including Ittefaq Group's presidential candidate Muhammad Mustafa, General Secretary Naveed Butt, Senior Vice President Umair Akhtar, Finance Secretary Sheikh Faisal Riaz, Information Secretary Yousuf Baig, Vice President Rana Kashif Jalil, Joint Secretary Tahir Bashir and Group Leader Ansar Mahis

The candidates from the Mukhlis Group are President Mian Asif, General Secretary Mian Saqib, Senior Vice President Mian Sohail Shahzad, Finance Secretary Rana Obaid-ur-Rehman, Rana Hasnain Ahmed, Vice President, Muhammad Rizwan, Information Secretary, Muhammad Adnan are the candidates for Joint Secretary

The group leader is Mian Saqib Bashir Both groups are engaged in manipulation for votes for the Election Commission Five members have been elected to perform the duties of the Election Commission, including Chief Election Commission Jaffer Malik, Secretary Election Commission Waseem Afzal, Finance Secretary Shoaib Nazir Butt, Rizwan Butt, Mian Naem Salam, and the Election Commission is responsible for administrative affairs. The election will be held on June 11.

Fire on Margalla Hills

ISLAMABAD: Smoke rise after a fire broke out in the Margalla Hills, in the Federal Capital. The Margalla range, part of the Himalayan foothills, frequently experiences bushfires during the summer months.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Election Code of Conduct Issued for AJK General Elections 2026

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission has issued a code of conduct for the general elections 2026.

All appointments, transfers and creation of new posts have been banned. According to a press release issued by the spokesperson of the Election Commission, he said that in view of the unavoidable situation, the consent of the Azad Jammu and

Kashmir Election Commission will have to be obtained.

Ministers and members of the assembly will not distribute government funds in kind, such as development funds, Zakat, Social Action Plan funds and Bait-ul-Mal funds.

Government goods such as electricity poles, pipes, commercial and construction timber, trees from forests, etc. will not be able to distribute. The use of government resources, including government vehicles, will

be banned.

The press release further stated that all types of allotment or lease in the Board of Revenue, development agencies including Mangla Dam Housing Authority will be banned.

In case of violation of the code of conduct/instructions issued by the Election Commission or on receipt of a complaint with solid evidence, the Election Commission will take disciplinary action which may include suspension of the government servant



or disqualification of the candidate contesting the elections.

Al Khidmat Foundation partners foodpanda for a Grand Beach Clean Drive on World Environment Day

News Desk

KARACHI: In celebration of World Environment Day the Al Khidmat Foundation, successfully partnered with foodpanda to host a "Grand Beach Clean Drive" at Sea View, Karachi. This collaborative community initiative brought together volunteers and team members to focus on environmental restoration and awareness along one of Karachi's most iconic shorelines.

As part of this environmental effort, foodpanda's delivery partners joined forces with volunteers to remove waste and debris from the beach. By participating in this drive, foodpanda aimed to contribute directly to the preservation of Pakistan's natural landscapes and advocate for sustainable living, reinforcing its ongoing commitment to the communities it serves.



"At foodpanda, we believe that being a responsible corporate citizen goes beyond our daily operations, and it is about actively contributing to the well-being of the environments where we operate," said Ahsan Malik, Director Logistics, foodpanda Pakistan. "We are honored to once again stand along-

side the Al Khidmat Foundation for yet another important initiative. Our delivery partners are the heart of our community, and seeing them step up to represent foodpanda in such a meaningful, hands-on environmental activity is a testament to the shared values of care that define our team."

PMA Attock condemn Dr Mah Noor Incident

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: President of the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA), Colonel Dr. Sajjad Naqvi, expressed deep anger and concern over the acid attack on Lady Doctor Mah Noor at Civil Hospital Quetta. He stated that the PMA Executive Council and the entire medical community of Attock strongly condemn this brutal incident and demand that the authorities bring the perpetrator to justice.

He further urged the relevant authorities to pay special attention to hospital security, emphasizing that hospitals should have a comprehensive security plan and an organized security system. Additionally, he advised doctors that if they face any threats or security concerns, they should immediately inform their administration and medical association and identify any individuals who may pose a risk to their safety.

Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES
Namaz Timings
Fajr 3:14 am
Zohr 12:07 pm
Asr 5:07 pm
Maghrib 7:17 pm
Isha 9:00 pm

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

Women Police Stations
Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

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

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

DEPARTMENTS
CDA 9221334-43
CDA 9208301-04
Met Office 9250360-6
RDA 5555864
TMA 5770886

South Punjab Lawyers Distribute Sweets to Mark PPP's Election Win

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Peoples Lawyers Forum South Punjab A Sweets Distribution Ceremony at the High Court Bar Association Hall Multan on the Grand Victory of the PPP in the Gilgit-Baltistan Elections. PLF South Punjab President Sheikh Ghiyas-ul-Haq Advocate Supreme Court said that the victory of the PPP in Gilgit-Baltistan is the victory of the people. Under the leadership of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto and the guidance of President Asif Ali Zardari, the Pakistan Peoples Party is still the largest political party in Pakistan. The coming time and elections will prove that Bilawal Bhutto will be the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Gilgit-Baltistan elections have also proven that the Pakistan Peoples Party is a popular party in all provinces. At the end, the sweets were distributed. Naveed Ahmed Rana, Chaudhry Muhammad Akram, Rana Muhammad Hussain and other lawyers attended the ceremony.

SHINE Humanity and AIESEC in IBA Deliver Free Healthcare in Jhampir, Thatta Through Medicothon 2026

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: SHINE Humanity, in partnership with AIESEC IBA, hosted Medicothon 2026 at Government Boys School Jhampir, Thatta. This event provided free, comprehensive medical care to an underserved community, serving 583 patients. The camp offered consultations with general physicians, a dermatologist, and an ophthalmologist, along with vital screenings for anemia and malnutrition. Patients received essential medicines, and specialized sessions on family planning and menstrual hygiene were conducted. SHINE Humanity aims to address healthcare and education gaps in districts like Thatta, emphasizing that showing up and providing care demonstrates a commitment to the well-being of these communities.

Punjab Education Minister Lays Foundation Stone of New Administration Block at Emerson University Multan

Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: Punjab Minister for Education Rana Sikandar Hayat visited Emerson University Multan and laid the foundation stone of the university's new Administration Block. The ceremony was attended by Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Khaliq Qureshi, Members of the Provincial Assembly Aamir Hayat Hiraj, Barrister Osama Fazal, Shazia Hayat Tareen, Rana Iqbal Siraj, XEN C&W Ifthikhar Ahmed, university officials, and several political and social personalities.

During the visit, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Khaliq Qureshi and Project Director Dr. Irfan Javed briefed the minister on the ongoing development projects at

the university and the details of the new Administration Block. Rana Sikandar Hayat also planted a sapling as part of the tree plantation campaign and appreciated the university's academic and administrative performance.

Addressing the gathering, the Education Minister said that the appointment of a permanent Vice Chancellor would enable Emerson University to achieve new milestones of growth and stability. He emphasized that the Punjab Government is committed to promoting higher education and strengthening universities across the province, assuring full support to Emerson University.

Considering the university's development needs, Rana Sikandar Hayat announced an additional



grant of Rs500 million alongside the ongoing development project worth Rs100 million. He said that the provision of modern facilities and a quality educational environment remains among the government's top priorities.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Khaliq Qureshi thanked the Education Minister for the

government's support and said that the assistance for development projects and new initiatives would help further strengthen the university's academic, research, and

administrative infrastructure. He reaffirmed the university's commitment to promoting higher education, research, and innovation in the region.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Commerce, Rana Ihsaan Afzal Khan, meets H.E. Mr. Mervin N. Chedumbarum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Mauritius, to discuss strengthening bilateral trade, investment, and economic cooperation between Pakistan and Mauritius.



Photo: PID

Punjab Govt Empowers Districts for Muharram Peace, Seeks Scholar Cooperation

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The Divisional Peace Committee meeting, co-chaired by Commissioner Aamir Karim Khan and RPO Usman Akram Gondal, focused on comprehensive arrangements for Muharram, including law and order, security, interfaith harmony, and mourner facilities.

The Punjab government emphasized cooperation with scholars to ensure peace, delegating full powers to district administrations.

Instructions were given to



promote tolerance and religious unity from mosques.

A strict code of conduct will be enforced, with zero tolerance for hate speech and

inflammatory content, alongside enhanced cyber patrolling. To combat heat, water sprinkling, facilitation camps, and clinics on wheels will be

established, with 14 permanent "sabil" points in Multan Division.

Routes will be cleared of hazards like hanging wires and open manholes, with streetlights ensured to be functional. Private drones are banned, and monsoon arrangements for rainwater drainage are prioritized.

Over 10,000 police personnel will be deployed across the division for security, with special attention to sensitive locations. Scholars pledged full support for maintaining peace and interfaith harmony.

Sweetened Beverages Fueling National Health Crisis, says PANAH

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Medical and patient associations in Pakistan have urged the government to increase the federal excise duty on all sweetened beverages, including juices, to a minimum of 40 percent in the 2026-27 budget. They are advocating for this measure as part of a strategy to combat the country's escalating non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Pakistan faces a severe diabetes epidemic, with nearly 35 million people affected and over 1,100 daily deaths attributed to the disease and its complications. The annual cost of diabetes management in Pakistan has reached \$2.6 billion, a significant burden on the nation. Organizations like the Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH), supported by others including the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives and the Pakistan Kidney Patients Associ-



ation, emphasize that the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends fiscal measures like taxing sweetened beverages to prevent obesity, diabetes, stroke, and other diet-related illnesses. They highlight that sugars in sweetened beverages,

including fruit juices, contribute significantly to excessive sugar intake and health risks. The associations are concerned that some industry elements are misleading the public and policymakers by promoting juices as healthy alternatives, contradicting scientific evidence and WHO recommendations. The WHO advises taxing all sweetened beverages, regardless of sugar source. PANAH and its partners have formally requested policymakers, including the Prime Minister and Finance Minister, to reject industry pressure for tax relief on juices and similar products. They are calling for a 40 percent Federal Excise Duty (FED) on all sweetened beverages—carbonated drinks, packaged juices, sweetened teas and coffees, flavored milk, and chocolate drinks—in the Finance Bill 2026-27. This would help curb NCDs and generate revenue for public health initiatives.

Ammad Rasheed Attends U. S. 250th Independence Day Celebrations in Islamabad



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Ammad Rasheed, Honorary Consul General of Tunisia KPK chapter attended the U. S. 250th Independence Day celebrations hosted by the U. S. Embassy in Islamabad. The event marked 250 years of American independence and brought together diplomats, government officials, and members of the business community.

During the event, he extended warm congratulations to U. S. Chargé d'Affaires to Pakistan Natalie A. Baker on the occasion.

SDPI: Invest in Human Development & Climate Resilience, Not Just Short-Term Fixes

Sustainable Development Policy Institute experts urged a shift in Pakistan's fiscal approach from crisis management to addressing root causes of poverty, inequality, and climate risk, while presenting pre-budget recommendations for 2025-26. They called for prioritizing human development, climate resilience, and productive investment over short-term stabilization. SDPI Deputy Executive Director Dr. Shafiqat Munir Ahmed said Pakistan faces both a fiscal and resilience challenge. He urged increased allocations for education, health, nutrition, social protection, and climate adaptation. "We cannot keep financing post-disaster recovery while underinvesting in prevention and human development," he noted, adding that budgets should be judged by poverty reduction and resilience, not just fiscal numbers. He also pushed for public investment in agriculture, SMEs, and green economy jobs, framing social spending as investment in productivity. On taxation, Deputy Executive Director Dr. Sajid Amin Javed warned against further burdening salaried taxpayers, as most direct tax already comes from the documented sector. He advocated broadening the tax base and improving productivity instead of taxing middle-income households more. He backed tariff rationalization to boost competitiveness and exports, stressing need for structural reforms over annual revenue fixes. Research Fellow Dr. Khalid Waleed said the budget should be a development strategy, not just accounting. He welcomed climate budget tagging but cautioned against it becoming a box-ticking exercise, urging integration of climate risk in spending and stronger incentives for renewables. Zainab Naheed of SDPI proposed earmarking 50% of Climate Support Levy and 20% of Carbon Levy revenue for a dedicated Climate Fund for adaptation and resilience. She also suggested fiscal incentives for recycling and mandatory climate-risk screening for PSDP projects over Rs7.5 billion, aligning with IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility.



South Punjab Lawyers Distribute Sweets to Mark PPP's Election Win in Gilgit Baltistan.

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Challenges to Nuclear Disarmament in the 21st Century

Haleema Zubair

Nuclear disarmament is the international process of reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons, with the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear arms. Nuclear weapons are the most destructive devices on Earth, utilizing rapid nuclear fission, fusion or both to create massive explosion. The existence of nuclear weapons remains one of the greatest threats to humanity in the modern world. Since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, the international community has understood the destructive power of nuclear warfare. These weapons are capable of causing massive loss of life, environmental destruction, economic collapse and long-term human suffering. For this reason, many countries and international organizations have supported the idea of nuclear disarmament. However, despite decades of negotiations and international treaties, nuclear disarmament remains one of the most difficult challenges of the 21st century.

The modern international system is largely based on competition, power politics and national security interests. Many states believe that nuclear weapons provide protection against external threats and increase their political influence in global affairs. Because of this belief, nuclear powers are often unwilling to fully eliminate

their weapons. Instead of reducing their military capabilities, many countries continue to modernize and improve their nuclear arsenals. This situation creates mistrust among states and weakens global disarmament efforts.

One of the biggest obstacles to nuclear disarmament is the lack of trust between countries. States fear that reducing nuclear weapons could leave them vulnerable if rival nations secretly continue developing military power. International politics operates in an environment where no central authority can fully guarantee the security of every country. As a result, states prioritize their own survival and national interest. This security dilemma pushes countries to maintain strong military and nuclear capabilities even when they publicly support peace and disarmament.

Competition among major powers has also increased the difficulty of achieving nuclear disarmament. Relations between the United States, Russia and China have become increasingly tense in recent years. Although the United States and Russia signed several arms control agreements during and after the Cold War, both countries still possess thousands of nuclear weapons. At the same time, China continues expanding its military and strategic capabilities. Instead of complete disarmament, major powers are investing heavily in advanced missile systems, modern nuclear submarines and strategic defense technologies. This military competition encourages other countries

to strengthen their own defense systems as well.

Regional conflicts further complicate nuclear disarmament efforts. In South Asia, tensions between Pakistan and India remain a major concern for international security. Both countries became nuclear powers in 1998 and have experienced several periods of military tension since then. The unresolved Kashmir dispute, border conflicts and political hostility continue to create instability in the region. Pakistan and India both consider nuclear weapons necessary for deterrence and national defense. As long as these political disputes remain unresolved, meaningful disarmament in the region appears difficult.

Similarly, North Korea's nuclear program has become another major challenge for the international community. Despite international sanctions and diplomatic pressure, North Korea continues developing nuclear weapons and missile technology. The country views nuclear capability as essential for regime survival and protection against foreign intervention. This situation demonstrates how security concerns can motivate states to pursue nuclear weapons despite global opposition.

Technological advancements in modern warfare have also created new difficulties for arms control and disarmament. The development of cyber warfare, artificial intelligence, hypersonic missiles and advanced surveillance systems has transformed the nature of military competition. Modern weapons

are becoming more sophisticated, faster and more difficult to regulate. As technology continues advancing, traditional arms control agreements often struggle to keep pace with new forms of warfare. This makes the process of monitoring and limiting weapons more complex than in the past.

Another serious problem is the weak implementation of international treaties. Agreements such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) were created to reduce the spread and testing of nuclear weapons. NPT aims to prevent non-nuclear states from developing nuclear weapons while encouraging peaceful nuclear cooperation and gradual disarmament. However, criticism exists because some nuclear powers continue maintaining large arsenals while expecting other countries to avoid developing such weapons. This creates accusations of inequality and double standards in the international system.

Similarly, CTBT was designed to ban nuclear weapon testing worldwide, but the treaty has still not fully entered into force because some important states have not ratified it. Similarly, many arms control agreements suffer from political disagreements, lack of enforcement mechanisms and poor international cooperation. Without strong implementation and sincere commitment from powerful countries, disarmament efforts remain limited.

Continued on Page 7

Pakistan-Korea Education Partnership Opens New Avenues

Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui inaugurated the Korea-Pakistan Education Corridor (KPEC) Expo in Islamabad. He emphasized Pakistan's youth as a valuable asset capable of contributing to the national economy and addressing global workforce and demographic challenges. The Minister said Pakistan's young population can meet international demands and drive economic growth through education, skills development, and global engagement.

He highlighted South Korea's development as a model of progress, innovation, and self-reliance, noting Pakistan can learn important lessons from it. Strengthening educational cooperation with Korea, he added, would create new opportunities for Pakistani students and help build a highly skilled workforce.

The KPEC, launched by the Consortium of Asia-Pacific and Eurasian Studies (CAPES), aims to promote collaboration between Pakistan and Korea through higher education, academic exchanges, skills development, and student mobility initiatives.

The inaugural ceremony gathered academics, diplomats, and education leaders. Speakers included Ambassador Syed Moazzam H. Khan, Pakistan's Ambassador to Korea; Prof. Dr. Choi Jong-in, President of Tongwon University, Korea; and Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of Riphah International University.

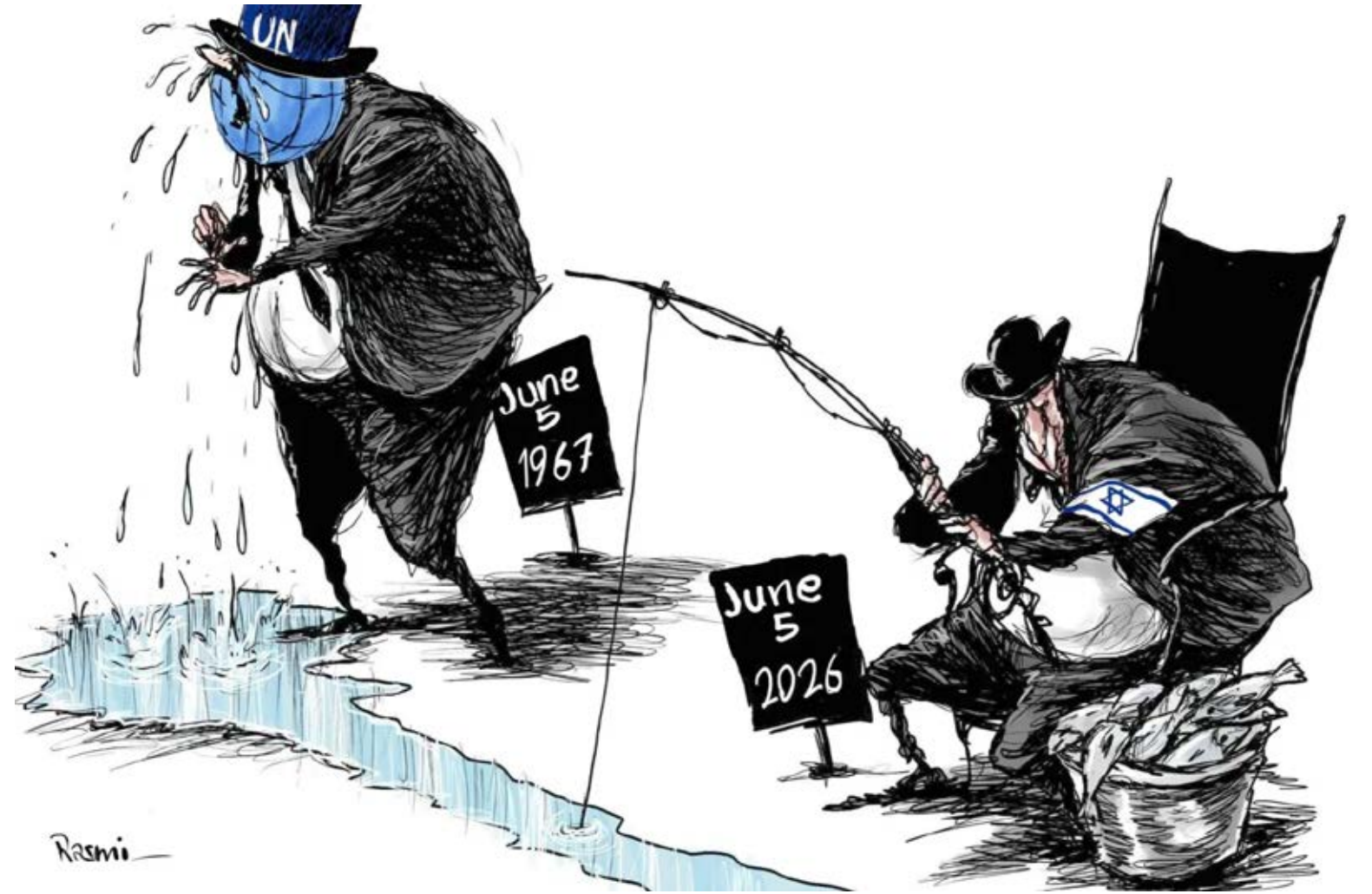
Ambassador Syed Moazzam H. Khan outlined the Embassy of Pakistan in Seoul's efforts to build a sustainable education corridor. He said the initiative focuses on educational exchanges, technical training, and workforce mobility. Four Korean language centers have been established in Lahore, with similar centers planned for Islamabad to boost educational and professional engagement.

Prof. Dr. Choi Jong-in reaffirmed Tongwon University's commitment to academic cooperation with Pakistan. He noted growing interest among Pakistani students in Korean higher education and the university's readiness to support partnerships. He also acknowledged visa challenges faced by admitted students and assured continued efforts to ease academic mobility.

Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmad recalled the East's historic role as a center of knowledge. He urged students to expand their perspectives and align their aspirations with global responsibilities, stressing the need to develop a vision that serves society and humanity.

Earlier, Dr. Khurram Iqbal, President of CAPES, welcomed participants and noted the 21st-century shift of educational innovation and technology toward Asia. He observed that Korea and Japan have become global leaders in technology, industry, and research, making them attractive destinations for Pakistani students seeking quality education and international exposure.

Moderated by Dr. Umair Pervez Khan, General Secretary of CAPES, the event concluded with a shared commitment to strengthen Pakistan-Korea educational ties through partnerships, exchanges, and collaborative initiatives to empower future generations.



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

Supply Chains Are the New Battlefields

Hadia Ahmad

Future conflicts or wars may begin not with bullets and bombs, but with the disruption of supply chains and trading routes. For a moment just think about the answer to what really keeps the modern world state system running? What really is the reason behind the smooth functioning of the affairs of the state? Is it their economic power, their military might, their aircrafts? These all things matter but what truly matters the most is the uninterrupted movement of goods; fuel to run industries, food and medicines for people and raw materials to sustain the production in industries. Without this, statecraft can not be done successfully.

Supply chains have always been of enormous importance in the history but now they can be used as weapons against each other.

Today, your shipping containers hold the real power and they can be used to coerce governments, states, institutions and other stakeholders to do what they don't want to do without using traditional military instruments. States are trying to increase the safety of the supply chains and trading routes to ensure their economic and food security. This is needed for human and social security of the people. This is not possible without holding power on your supply lines and this has become the need of the hour.

It really doesn't matter how big you are, how powerful you are and how great you are, if you are not able to secure food and necessities for your people.

It doesn't matter whether your country is an economic power or military

power until it has influence and control over supply. Your military, jets, aircraft carriers and technology can not save you from supply chain failure if you don't focus on it. Any nation can be brought to its knees through these arteries and veins of trade because when the people of the state are dying of hunger and diseases due to shortage of food and medicines, a state can not stand for a longer time as we all know when the members of the family are dying of hunger or disease due to shortage of food or medicine, how much power does the head of the household. He will not care about any worldly thing when the lives of his dear ones are in danger. The same happens in international arena, the state can not stand longer when its own people are suffering.

Trade routes are the new trenches of this new battle. They can be used against others for increasing the cost of trading and shipping. This happens when states use geography strategically to benefit themselves and impose economic loss on their rivals. The same is happening in great power politics. Countries seek more control on these supply chains and trading routes because they now look at them from a strategic point of view and see them as real geographical assets. Without having influence on these routes, no one can claim food and economic security for its people.

The traditional tools of international relations: diplomacy, military, alliances matter but they are useless if you cannot secure your supply.

States are working on making strategies to use these tools to ensure the security of their trading routes and shipping containers because they have come to the conclusion that they can not become stronger by relying on these tools solely

and that these tools are not the end to the game of power rather they are just the means to ensure the security of their people.

Covid-19 exposed the fragility of the global system of trade.

It was scary how countries were struggling for medicines, food and basic essentials. Countries depended heavily on each other and before Covid, there never was such a situation in which countries have to face this level of disruption and never they have thought about dealing this kind of scenario, they were highly unprepared and the whole situation was very alarming for the policy makers. During that time, industries got shut down, ports got slowed, containers got stranded and supply chains got disrupted. Industries, hospitals and people faced many issues due to the shortage of medical equipment, food and semi-conductors. Even major powers struggled for masks, ventilators and medicines.

When your shipping containers get delayed due to disruption in trading routes, it's not solely the loss of money but of the power too.

In today's world, if we search for the answer to the question: who really hold power then we will come to the conclusion that the one who controls the supply, controls the world. Many countries are already focusing on it and building policies and strategies to adapt to this kind of world, the real question is whether states are paying attention to it or not. And states have to pay attention because there is no other option for any of us to survive in the world of supply chains and trading routes turning into battlefields.

The writer is student at National Defence University, Islamabad

An Insightful Analysis of Pakistan's Current Economic Situation

In one of his recent video posts on the social media platform X, Professor Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, presented a detailed overview of Pakistan's current economic situation.

The scribe was deeply impressed by the comprehensive, informative, and insightful presentation delivered by the minister. There is little doubt that when the incumbent government—of which Professor Iqbal is a prominent member—assumed office, Pakistan was grappling with an unprecedented economic crisis and was perilously close to sovereign default. His analysis effectively highlighted both the challenges inherited by the government and the measures undertaken to steer the country toward economic stability.

Rescuing Pakistan from the severe economic quagmire in which it found itself in 2022 was undoubtedly a formidable task. Had it not been for the tireless and determined efforts of the present government, led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, and strongly supported by the Chief of Defense Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Asim Munir, the country could well have witnessed one of the most devastating economic collapses in its history.

Regrettably, as rightly pointed out by Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Pakistan's progress toward economic recovery has been adversely affected by the ongoing U.S.–Israel–Iran conflict.

The disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz and the resulting uncertainty in global energy markets have sent shockwaves through economies around the world. Pakistan, like many other nations, has felt the impact of rising fuel prices, energy supply concerns, and mounting inflationary pressures. Consequently, countries across the globe are grappling with the far-reaching economic consequences of this instability.

With the parties involved in the conflict continuing to remain at odds, immediate relief from this profoundly

distressing situation appears elusive. This alarming scenario has become a source of growing concern, particularly for developing and economically vulnerable nations.

Pakistan's economy, which had only recently been steered away from the brink of default, is once again facing significant external pressures arising from regional instability. The country's leadership is striving to navigate these challenges and sustain the momentum of economic recovery. Whether these efforts ultimately succeed will depend not only on prudent economic management but also on the success of ongoing diplomatic initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue and securing a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Pakistan's sincere and persistent efforts to encourage diplomacy and dialogue, prevent further escalation, and promote regional stability have contributed positively to the broader international quest for peace. The world, particularly economically vulnerable nations, is eager to witness a permanent resolution of the conflict and the conclusion of a durable peace agreement among all parties concerned.

Such an outcome is indispensable not only for regional stability but also for global peace, progress, and prosperity. Once this critical objective is achieved, Pakistan will be better positioned to accelerate its economic recovery, regain momentum toward sustainable growth, and provide much-needed relief to its citizens. It is only in an environment of lasting peace and stability that the country can fully realize its economic potential and improve the living standards of its people.

Conversely, God forbid, if the parties to the conflict—particularly the United States and Iran—fail to demonstrate the flexibility and statesmanship required to reach an amicable and mutually acceptable settlement, the consequences could be severe. The economic fallout of a prolonged

Continued on Page 7

Recycling, Circular Economy and the Future of Pakistan

University of Kamalia's Global Initiative to Transform Waste into Wealth



Analysis
Dr. Muhammad Jalal Arif

The world stands at a watershed moment. Climate change, resource depletion, and runaway waste generation are converging to demand a fundamental restructuring of how economies produce, consume, and discard. The circular economy — which replaces the linear “take, make, dispose” model with systems that keep materials in productive use — has moved from academic concept to urgent policy imperative. The European Union's Circular Economy Action Plan targets a 55 percent municipal waste recycling rate by 2025. China's “Beautiful China” initiative has channelled over USD 60 billion into circular infrastructure since 2015. These are not merely environmental pledges; they represent a profound competitive restructuring of the global economy.

Against this backdrop, Pakistan's First International Conference on Recycling, scheduled for 10 June 2026 at Serena Hotel Faisalabad, arrives at precisely the right moment. Jointly convened by the University of Kamalia (UKM), Government College University Faisalabad (GCUF), and Government College Women University Faisalabad (GCWUF), the conference brings together policymakers, industrialists, researchers, entrepreneurs, and international experts to forge practical pathways toward a circular and sustainable Pakistan.

A Conference of National Consequence
Pakistan generates over 30 million tonnes of solid waste annually, yet its formal recycling sector recovers less than 20 percent of retrievable materials — a multi-billion-dollar gap that

signals both crisis and opportunity. More than 300 participants are expected, including 80 to 100 CEOs and senior industry leaders, underscoring that recycling is no longer an environmental afterthought but a strategic economic imperative bearing directly on competitiveness, exports, and investment.

The conference convenes under the leadership of Professor Dr. Yasir Nawab (Vice Chancellor, UKM), Professor Dr. Rauf-i-Azam (Vice Chancellor, GCUF), and Professor Dr. Kanwal Ameen (Vice Chancellor, GCWUF) — a triumvirate whose collaboration models a new standard for how Pakistani universities can jointly address national challenges through research, policy engagement, and industry partnership.

Global Lessons, Local Urgency
The conference draws on international expertise from Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Estonia, Kenya, and Sri Lanka — nations that have converted waste challenges into economic engines. Their experiences are directly instructive for Pakistan.

Germany's Dual System achieves a 70 percent packaging recycling rate and sustains over 250,000 green jobs, demonstrating that robust producer-responsibility frameworks generate employment at scale. The Netherlands has committed to halving consumption of virgin raw materials by 2030 through its National Circular Economy Programme — a model for a country seeking to cut its import bill for primary commodities. Estonia's digital waste-traceability infrastructure has reduced illegal dumping by 40 percent, a lesson with immediate relevance for Pakistan's informal waste sector.

Beyond Europe, Japan's “Sunshine Project” extracts precious metals worth over USD 6 billion annually from electronic waste, making e-waste recovery a sovereign resource strategy. South Korea recycles 95 percent of its food waste, converting it into biogas and agricultural compost — a model applicable to Pakistan's organic-rich municipal waste streams. Singapore has achieved a 60 percent overall



recycling rate through mandatory producer responsibility and public education, demonstrating that even land-scarce, resource-poor nations can build world-class circular systems.

Pakistan's own numbers make the urgency undeniable. The country produces approximately 49,000 tonnes of solid waste daily; less than half is collected in urban areas, and virtually none is treated in rural zones. Plastic pollution alone costs the fishing and tourism industries an estimated USD 1.3 billion per year. Meanwhile, Pakistan's textile sector — contributing 8 percent of GDP and over 60 percent of export earnings — generates roughly 400,000 tonnes of fabric waste annually. That material could anchor a recycled-fibre industry worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

University of Kamalia: An Emerging National Model

Among the conference's convening institutions, the University of Kamalia has emerged as one of Pakistan's most dynamic public universities. Under Professor Dr. Yasir

Nawab's leadership, UKM has pursued a strategy centred on innovation, digitalisation, sustainability, and community impact — mirroring best practices from Wageningen University in the Netherlands, ranked among the world's top institutions for sustainability research, and South Korea's KAIST, which has commercialised research through partnerships with over 1,000 companies.

With fully smart and air-conditioned classrooms, modern laboratories, active learning management systems, and strong industry linkages, UKM is equipping students for the twenty-first century economy. Its emphasis on entrepreneurship from Year One has already produced more than thirty student startups, several with secured funding — a trajectory reminiscent of the early stages of Jordan's King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, whose entrepreneurship programme now supports over 200 active ventures.

The First International Conference on Recycling exemplifies UKM's “entrepreneurial univer-



sity” model — a concept endorsed by the World Bank and UNESCO as essential for linking higher education to national development outcomes. Rather than confining itself to instruction, UKM is positioning itself as a catalyst for regional transformation through interdisciplinary collaboration and stakeholder engagement. Professor Dr. Yasir Nawab deserves recognition for championing this model: integrating higher education with economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social well-being.

GCUF: Research, Innovation and Industrial Transformation

Government College University Faisalabad brings deep expertise in textile science, waste management, industrial sustainability, and resource recovery. Through growing international collaborations and strong industry linkages, GCUF translates research into practical circular-economy solutions. Its role in academia-industry technology transfer and cleaner production is essential to Pakistan's industrial decarbonisation agenda.

Women's Leadership as a Circular Economy Multiplier

The participation of Government College Women University Faisalabad, under Professor Dr. Kanwal Ameen, adds a dimension of strategic importance that the data consistently validates. The United Nations Environment Programme has documented that communities with strong women's leadership in waste management achieve recycling rates 20 to 35 percent higher than comparable communities without it. Rwanda's nationally coordinated, women-led waste collection network has made it one of Africa's cleanest nations



— proof that gender-inclusive governance is not merely ethical but operationally superior. GCWUF's established programmes in home economics, environmental sciences, and social entrepreneurship already equip female graduates to engage sustainability challenges at household, community, and industrial levels. Scaling these programmes and integrating them into formal circular-economy value chains represents a powerful, underutilised lever for Pakistan's green transition.

Circular Faisalabad: From Industrial Liability to Global Showcase

Faisalabad — Pakistan's industrial heartland and third-largest city — encapsulates both the urgency and the opportunity of circular transformation. Its 700-plus textile mills, dyeing units, and allied industries generate vast volumes of liquid effluent, fibre waste, chemical by-products, and packaging, much of it currently discharged without recovery. Yet the city's entrepreneurial culture, dense industrial clusters, and proximity to major agricultural zones create ideal conditions for piloting circular business models.

Kalundborg, Denmark — the world's first industrial symbiosis ecosystem — shows the way. There, waste outputs from one firm serve as productive inputs for neighbouring enterprises, cutting costs, slashing emissions, and generating new revenue. A Faisalabad Industrial Symbiosis Network, modelled on Kalundborg, could transform the city into a regional circular economy showcase. Similarly, Nairobi's Reppie Waste-to-Energy Plant offers a scalable template for converting Faisalabad's organic-rich municipal waste into power and compost, closing the nutrient loop between the city and its surrounding agricultural belt.

A Defining Window for Pakistan

Pakistan stands at a rare inflection point. Mounting waste costs, fiscal pressure on virgin-material imports, tightening environmental standards from trading partners — notably the EU's

Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism — and a youthful, entrepreneurially inclined population create a compressed window for transformative action. The World Economic Forum estimates that a global circular transition could generate USD 4.5 trillion in economic value by 2030. For Pakistan, capturing even a modest share through targeted policy reform, industrial innovation, and strategic academic-industry partnership could yield an estimated 500,000 new jobs by 2035, meaningfully higher export revenues, and a 15 percent reduction in annual raw-material import costs.

Artificial intelligence-driven waste sorting, chemical recycling of plastics, waste-to-energy systems, bio-refineries, and digital traceability platforms are reshaping resource management globally. With 63 percent of its population under 30 and an expanding research ecosystem, Pakistan has the demographic dividend and the industrial base to adopt and localise these technologies at scale.

The First International Conference on Recycling is therefore far more than an academic convening. It is an opportunity for Pakistan to articulate a credible national vision for the circular economy, forge the partnerships needed to realise it, and signal to global investors and trading partners that sustainable industrial development is a serious national commitment.

The University of Kamalia, Government College University Faisalabad, and Government College Women University Faisalabad, through this initiative, are laying the intellectual and institutional foundations for Pakistan's circular future. That is a contribution of enduring national significance.

About the Author: Professor Dr. Muhammad Jalal Arif, Former Professor and Chairman, Department of Entomology, University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Consultant, Punjab Higher Education Commission (PHEC)

APJCCI, Kasur Chamber Join Hands to Boost Pakistan-Azerbaijan Trade and Investment

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Azerbaijan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce & Industry (APJCCI) and Kasur Chamber of Commerce & Industry signed Memorandum of Understanding in Islamabad to strengthen institutional cooperation, promote trade and investment linkages, and explore new business opportunities between Pakistan and Azerbaijan.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari,

Patron-in-Chief APJCCI, welcomed the delegation of Kasur Chamber and said that APJCCI is committed to promoting trade, investment, business linkages, joint ventures and economic cooperation between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. He said that a large number of Pakistani companies are now showing interest in Azerbaijan, particularly in the areas of trade, tourism, food products, FMCG, cutlery, fashions, leather, footwear, rice, agriculture, logistics and

services. He emphasized the need to create genuine two-way business between Pakistan and Azerbaijan and said that APJCCI would extend full support in connecting Pakistani companies with potential buyers, importers, distributors, chambers and relevant business organizations in Azerbaijan.

Kashif Naeem Khokhar, President Kasur Chamber of Commerce & Industry, said that Kasur is an important industrial and agricultural district, famous for agricul-

ture, rice, food products, leather, footwear, textiles and other sectors. He said that Kasur Chamber would work closely with APJCCI to promote exports, identify business opportunities and strengthen trade relations with Azerbaijan.

Haji M. Akram Zaki, Senior Vice President Kasur Chamber, said that Kasur has strong export potential in towels, khamas, rice and other quality products. He also discussed the scope of hoteling, tourism and hospitality oppor-

unities in Baku and stressed the need to explore new areas of cooperation for the business community of Kasur.

Junaid Husnain, Vice President Kasur Chamber of Commerce & Industry, gave a detailed presentation and said that Kasur has strong industrial, agricultural and tourism potential. He said that Kasur has major leather and shoe industries, more than 100 tanneries, over 600 small shoe manufacturing units and around



1,000 to 1,500 cottage industry units.

At the end of the ceremony, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Patron-in-Chief APJCCI, presented

Gifts to Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari.

Vietnamese film ‘Peach Blossom, Pho and Piano’ captivates Islamabad audience

Naveed Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: Peach Blossom, Pho and Piano is a film that continues to resonate with audiences long after the final credits have rolled. Released in Vietnam on February 23, 2024, the film is directed by Phi Tien Son and produced by Phan Dinh Thanh and Nguyen Minh Phuong. This remarkable cinematic achievement has already secured the highest distinction in Vietnamese cinema, winning the prestigious Vietnamese Golden Kite Award for Best Feature Film.

As part of efforts to promote cultural understanding and artistic exchange, the Franco-phone Film Mela, in collaboration with the Vietnamese Embassy to Pakistan, organized a special screening of the acclaimed film in Islamabad. The event attracted a diverse audience, including intellectuals, diplomats, students, and members of civil society. Participants expressed admiration for Vietnamese culture and the country's growing film industry, while acknowledging the significance of such initia-



tives in strengthening cultural ties and fostering friendship between Pakistan and Vietnam.

The film masterfully intertwines three simple yet deeply symbolic elements—peach blossoms, pho, and piano—into a compelling narrative that explores themes of identity, memory, belonging, and healing. Peach blossoms symbolize renewal, resilience, and hope; pho embodies the warmth of tradition, heritage, and home passed down through generations; while the piano



serves as a powerful medium through which emotions are conveyed when words fall short. Together, these symbols form a narrative that is unmistakably Vietnamese in character while remaining universally relatable in its human experience.

One of the film's most striking qualities is its quiet emotional power. Director Phi Tien Son deliberately avoids excessive melodrama and manufactured conflict, choosing instead a restrained storytelling approach that allows every scene and emotion to unfold naturally. The cinematography is visually captivating and painterly, capturing the mist-cov-

ered streets of Hanoi as well as the gentle glow of a piano placed within a modest room. Seemingly ordinary moments are elevated into profound expressions of meaning; a bowl of broth prepared with care, fingers gliding across piano keys, and delicate peach blossom petals drifting through the spring air.

The performances throughout the film are sincere, nuanced, and deeply authentic. Rather than merely portraying their characters, the actors embody them with remarkable emotional honesty. Equally noteworthy is the film's piano-driven musical score, which



functions as more than background accompaniment. It serves as an emotional guide, leading audiences through a journey that moves gracefully from nostalgia and longing to reconciliation and inner peace.

Beyond its artistic excellence, Peach Blossom, Pho and Piano stands as a heartfelt tribute to cultural heritage and enduring roots. The film reminds viewers that home is not defined solely by geography; it is also found in familiar flavors, cherished melodies, and treasured memories. At a time when audiences are often inundated with formula-driven entertainment, the film offers a refreshing and contemplative alternative. It does not rely on spectacle or noise to

make its impact. Instead, it speaks softly yet powerfully, conveying a profound message: healing begins when individuals reconnect with their origins and cultural identity.

Having earned the Vietnamese Golden Kite Award for Best Feature Film, this poetic masterpiece demonstrates that gentle, thoughtfully crafted stories can leave the deepest and most lasting impressions. It is a must-watch for anyone who appreciates cinema that combines artistic integrity, emotional depth, and cultural richness.

During the Islamabad screening, guests expressed admiration for the film's compelling storyline, evocative imagery, and emotional resonance. They

also commended the organizers for bringing such an acclaimed work of Vietnamese cinema to Pakistani audiences. H. E. Mr. Pham Anh Tuan, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to Pakistan, thanked participants for their attendance and highlighted the significance of Vietnamese culture and artistic expression. He emphasized the importance of sharing Vietnamese stories, traditions, and values with global audiences through the medium of film. His remarks provided participants with valuable insights into Vietnam's cultural heritage and further contributed to enhancing mutual understanding and strengthening cultural relations between Pakistan and Vietnam.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

| Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Current | Prev. Close |
| 168,953.70 | 170,478.94 |
| Day's High | Day's Low |
| 169,360.54 | 168,432.45 |
| Index Value | Change |
| 12,814,019,788 | -1525.24 |
| Percentage | Time |
| -0.89% | 8 Jun, 2026 4:30 pm |

| Europe: FTSE 100 Index | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Index Value | Change |
| 10,373.20 | +5.15 |
| Percentage | Time |
| +0.050% | 8 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1 |

| USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Index Value | Change |
| 50,820.80 | -45.98 |
| Percentage | Time |
| -0.090% | 8 Jun, 1:27 pm GMT-4 |

| Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Index Value | Change |
| 64,024.60 | -2,563.52 |
| Percentage | Time |
| -3.85% | 8 Jun, 3:45 pm GMT+9 |

Open Market Forex Rates

| Currency | Buying | Selling |
|-------------------|--------|---------|
| Australian Dollar | 194.24 | 199.65 |
| Bahrain Dinar | 734.83 | 744.90 |
| Canadian Dollar | 198.13 | 203.35 |
| China Yuan | 38.05 | 38.80 |
| Danish Krone | 43.39 | 43.79 |
| Euro | 320.79 | 324.35 |
| Hong Kong Dollar | 34.97 | 35.90 |
| Indian Rupee | 2.80 | 3.05 |
| Japanese Yen | 1.7218 | 1.8209 |
| Kuwaiti Dinar | 884.52 | 894.65 |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 67.18 | 67.88 |
| New Zealand \$ | 159.76 | 164.81 |
| Norwegians Krone | 27.88 | 28.18 |
| Omani Riyal | 719.22 | 730.32 |
| Qatari Riyal | 75.22 | 76.15 |
| Saudi Riyal | 74.00 | 74.75 |
| Singapore Dollar | 214.98 | 220.83 |
| Swedish Korona | 30.27 | 30.57 |
| Swiss Franc | 350.35 | 356.85 |
| Thai Bhat | 8.53 | 8.68 |
| U.A.E Dirham | 75.65 | 76.60 |
| UK Pound Sterling | 371.12 | 376.60 |
| US Dollar | 278.20 | 279.45 |

Business Leader Praises 'Asaan Scheme' for Simplifying Taxes and Boosting Economy

Commerce Desk

Karachi: Mian Zahid Hussain, a prominent business leader and former IT minister, has lauded Pakistan's new "Fixed Tax Asaan Scheme" for traders, calling it a historic step towards economic documentation and tax net expansion. He believes this scheme, developed through extensive consultations and learning from previous failures, will be highly successful, unlike the "Tajir Dost Scheme". Hussain highlighted a significant disparity: the wholesale and retail sectors contribute 18% to GDP but only 4% to taxes, with a mere 300,000 out of 4.4 million traders filing

returns. The new scheme aims to include approximately 3.5 million small traders and shopkeepers, effectively curbing tax evasion and fostering a documented economy.

The scheme's key features include a nominal 1% fixed tax on annual turnovers up to Rs 200 million, a minimum tax of Rs 25,000 with Form submission, and the adjustment of previously paid withholding taxes, making it financially attractive. Simplified tax forms in local languages (Urdu, Sindhi, Pashto, Balochi) will ensure ease of filing. Crucially, adopters are exempt from mandatory Point of Sale (POS) integration and tax audits, alle-



viating fears of harassment by FBR personnel.

Hussain also approved the exclusion of branded outlets and Tier-1 retailers, noting their inclusion in the organized sector, and the exemption of small vendors (kiosks, pushcarts) as a pro-poor policy.

The provision of QR code number plates for shops is a commendable measure to prevent unjustified inspector visits and enhance traders' business profiles, with verification simplified through scanning. He supported the strict penalties for non-compliance with both fixed and regular tax regimes, emphasizing the necessity of a documented economy and the elimination of tax evaders. Hussain urged trade organizations to adopt the scheme, highlighting benefits like improved financial credibility, reduced withholding taxes, and sustainable economic growth, reducing reliance on IMF loans.

LCCI Proposes Sweeping Reforms for 2026-27 Budget to Boost Industrial Growth

KARACHI: The Lasbela Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has urged the federal government to implement comprehensive reforms in taxation, energy, trade, and investment policies for the upcoming Budget 2026-27.



These reforms aim to stimulate industrial growth, attract investment, and boost business confidence. The LCCI's recommendations include a multi-year macroeconomic stabilization framework, tax rate reductions, targeted incentives for FDI, competitive energy solutions, strengthened exports through digitalization and preferen-

tial agreements, improved access to finance for SMEs, workforce development, and increased public investment in broadband infrastructure.

They also advocate for timely payments to suppliers and outcome-based budgeting for enhanced transparency and effectiveness of industrial support programs.

Pakistan Seeks Chinese Chemical Industry Partnership to Boost Competitiveness

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry Commercial Ambassador Adeel Munawar seeks collaboration with China's chemical industry to boost Pakistan's competitiveness.

He highlighted Pakistan's lack of advanced technology for petrochemical complexes and cracking units, hindering its chemical sector development. Munawar proposed learning from China's expertise in biochemical industry and

chemical park models to transform Pakistan's chemical industry from import-reliant to export-oriented.

This collaboration is crucial given rising domestic demand for chemical products and Pakistan's dependence on oil imports.

Establishing chemical industrial parks with essential infrastructure will support SMEs and foster cluster development, ultimately strengthening Pakistan's position as a producer for various downstream industries and enhancing its "made in Pakistan" brand.

Souvenir

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Tahir Mehmood, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry presents Chamber's shield to High Commissioner of Mauritius, H.E. Munsoor Kurrimbaccus. Vice President Irfan Chaudhry, Executive Members Imran Minhas, Waseem Chaudhry, Zulqurnain Abbasi Ms. Shumaila Siddiqui, former Senior Vice President Khalid Chaudhry and other are also present.



ICCI hosts Mauritius High Commissioner to deepen trade and investment ties

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Mauritius to Pakistan, H. E. Munsoor Kurrimbaccus, paid a visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Monday, where he held a productive and result-oriented interactive session with the Chamber leadership and members of the business community to discuss opportunities for strengthening bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation.

Addressing the gathering, the High Commissioner highly appreciated the role

of ICCI as the premier business representative organization of the federal capital and commended its services for the promotion of trade and industry. He said he was deeply impressed by the commitment, determination and proactive approach of the ICCI leadership towards fostering business linkages with countries around the world.

Highlighting the economic strengths of Mauritius, Ambassador Kurrimbaccus described his country as a major economy and a strategic gateway to Africa. He showcased the vast potential available in Mauritius in the fields of trade, investment,

tourism and hospitality and encouraged Pakistani entrepreneurs to explore opportunities in these sectors.

Welcoming the distinguished guest, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that Mauritius enjoys a unique and special position in Pakistan's engagement with Africa, being the only African country with which Pakistan has a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA). He noted that despite cordial relations and considerable opportunities, bilateral trade remains far below its true potential and requires greater efforts from both public and private sectors.

RCCI Welcomes Fixed Tax Scheme for Small Traders; Offers Support for Awareness and Implementation

Commerce Desk

Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President Usman Shaukat has welcomed the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) Fixed Tax Asaan Scheme for small traders, describing it as a positive step towards simplifying the tax system, promoting documentation of the economy, and facilitating the business community.

In a statement, Usman Shaukat said that a simple, transparent, and business-friendly tax regime is essential for improving compliance and strengthening trust between taxpayers and tax authorities. He noted that the scheme has the potential to reduce procedural complexities, lower compliance costs, and encourage more traders to become part of the formal economy. He also urged the FBR to closely monitor the implementation phase of the scheme and proactively address any challenges or operational bottlenecks that may emerge as it unfolds. Continuous evaluation and timely adjustments, he said, would be crucial to ensuring the scheme's effectiveness and building confidence among traders.



The RCCI President urged the FBR to conduct regular and widespread awareness sessions across the country to educate traders about the scheme's benefits, eligibility criteria, and registration process. He emphasized that effective outreach and stakeholder engagement would be key to the successful implementation of the initiative.

"RCCI and chambers across Pakistan are fully prepared to support the FBR in creating awareness and facilitating the implementation of the scheme. Through seminars, workshops, and business forums, chambers can play a vital role in bridging the information gap and ensuring greater participation from the trader community," he said.

SECP Eases Licensing Process for Companies with Foreign Sponsors and Directors



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), in a major facilitation measure, has allowed companies with foreign sponsors or directors to submit licensing applications on the basis of a self-declaration undertaking instead of obtaining prior security clearance of foreign directors from relevant departments.

Under the revised framework, SECP will process licensing applications without requiring security clearance at the application stage. However, the appointment of foreign directors will remain subject to clearance by the relevant authorities. Applicants will be required to provide an undertaking that any proposed director whose security clearance is denied will be replaced accordingly.

The measure is expected to reduce procedural delays, improve regulatory certainty, and facilitate foreign investment in Pakistan's regulated financial services sector. The revised framework will benefit companies operating in capital markets, non-banking finance, insurance, and other regulated financial services sectors.

Previously, companies with foreign directors were required to obtain security clearance before submitting their licensing applications to SECP. The process often took considerable time and was viewed by investors as a barrier to establishing regulated financial businesses in Pakistan.

SECP Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu said the revised framework strikes an appropriate balance between facilitating investment and maintaining regulatory oversight. He said the measure will enable genuine investors to enter Pakistan's regulated financial sector more efficiently while ensuring compliance with applicable laws and security requirements.

Major PRA crackdown targets tax evaders in various cities

LAHORE: Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) has carried out extensive enforcement actions against tax defaulters across various cities of Punjab.

As a result of non-payment of taxes and tampering with official records, nine business premises were sealed, while warning notices were issued to several other food outlets, PRA spokesman told media here Monday.

In Lahore, three outlets of a well-known food chain were sealed after PRA teams detected manipulation and tampering in tax records. In Rawalpindi, the offices of two builders were sealed for failing to pay due taxes.

In Faisalabad, four housing societies were served notices for non-payment of taxes, and enforcement actions were

taken against their offices. Heavy penalties were also imposed on individuals and businesses involved in fraudulent tax declarations and failure to submit tax returns within the prescribed time.

PRA Chairman Moazzam Iqbal Sipra stated that strict action will be taken against businesses that fail to issue invoices under the Point of Sale (POS) system. He further said that notices are being issued to those involved in tax fraud and causing losses to the national exchequer through deceptive practices.

The Chairman emphasized that PRA is implementing a zero-tolerance policy against persistent tax defaulters and will continue enforcement actions to ensure compliance with tax laws across the province.

SMEDA intensifies efforts for SMEs int'l accreditation

LAHORE: Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) has intensified its efforts to help small and medium enterprises obtain internationally recognized certifications through its landmark 'SME Certification & International Accreditation Grant Programme'.

SMEDA's efforts to reach out a maximum number of entrepreneurs gain resonance as World Accreditation Day 2026 is being marked under the theme "Innovation, Trust and Sustainability: The Power of Accreditation" on June 9.

According to SMEDA spokesman here Monday, the day highlights the critical role accreditation plays in building confidence in products, services and systems. Established jointly by the International Accreditation Forum and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation, the global

observance (under Global ACI) recognizes how accreditation promotes trust, facilitates trade and supports sustainable economic growth.

SMEDA, in line with the Prime Minister's SME development vision to be implemented under supervision of Haroon Akhtar Khan, Special Assistant of PM on Industries and Production, is enabling SME sector to reach out the export markets by having global certification.

"SMEDA is offering 70 percent matching grant to cover the certification cost up to Rs 800,000 and related consultancy cost up to Rs 200,000 under the project. The response from entrepreneurs has been highly encouraging as businesses from diverse sectors and regions of the country have applied for certification support, reflecting growing awareness of the importance of compliance," according to officials overseeing the project.

Long awaited domestic football kicks off

District Football Championships 2026 to help fuel the football campaign at grassroots level

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) has announced the launch of the District Football Championship 2026, a landmark nationwide initiative aimed at revitalising grassroots football, identifying emerging talent, and strengthening domestic football structures across the country.

Addressing a press conference alongside PFF Director Media Umaid Wasim and provincial football heads participating virtually, PFF Chief Operating Officer Muhammad Shahid Niaz Khokhar revealed that, for the first time in Pakistan football's history, the federation will provide comprehensive professional and administrative support to all the districts to ensure the successful organisation of the championship.

Khokhar credited provincial and regional FAs presidents for their productive contribution in the consultation process and PFF President Syed Mohsen Gilani for spearheading the initiative, describing it as a transformative step towards rebuilding Pakistan's football ecosystem from the grassroots level. "Under the leadership of Mohsen Gilani, Pakistan football has already made significant progress internationally and has earned appreciation from FIFA and AFC officials. Now, the focus is on bringing the same vision and commitment to grassroots and domestic football," he said.

The PFF COO emphasised that the District Football Championship 2026 represents a major investment

in the future of Pakistani football, with the objective of creating opportunities for local players and establishing a sustainable talent development pathway. "The PFF is fully committed to making this championship a historic success. Mr. Gilani is very committed and passionate about grassroots events and eager to go to FIFA and AFC for providing all kinds of assistance especially financial in making these events a huge success.

"Through this event, we aim to strengthen domestic football, identify talented players from every corner of the country, and provide them with opportunities to progress to higher levels of the game," he added.

Khokhar further said that for the first time, the PFF will play an active coordinating and supporting role in the organisation of district-level football competitions. District Football Associations (DFAs) will conduct the events, while the federation will provide logistical, technical and administrative assistance.

He stated: "A collaborative framework has also been established to ensure close coordination among districts, provinces and the federation. Formal consultations and regular meetings will be held to finalise all championship-related matters through mutual discussion and consensus."

The COO said that all four provincial football associations and the three regions, Islamabad, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir, are represented on a dedicated committee



tasked with ensuring the successful execution of the championship. The District Football Championship 2026 is expected to deliver several long-term benefits for Pakistan football, including: Strengthening grassroots and domestic football structures, fulfilling constitutional requirements at the District Football Association level, identification and verification of genuine football clubs, nationwide talent identification and player development, capacity building of District Football Associations, greater coordination between districts, provinces and the PFF and enhanced use of modern technology in competition management.

He also revealed that the Pakistan Football Referee Association (PFRA) will also play an important role by providing qualified referees to ensure professional standards throughout the competition. Following the completion of the District Football Championship 2026, the PFF plans to organise the National Club Championship, which will serve as the next stage in the player development pathway.

According to Khokhar, talented players identified through district competitions will receive structured training and development opportunities under qualified PFF coaches. The objective is to systematically prepare promising footballers for representation at various national team levels.

"This pathway will enable talented players to progress from district football to club football and ultimately to the national teams through a structured and merit-based system," he said. Khokhar also announced details of the upcoming National U17 Championship, another major initiative aimed at strengthening youth football development across Pakistan. He stated

that, for the first time, provinces and regions are receiving strategic support from the PFF to establish competitive U17 teams. Each of the four provinces will field two teams, while Islamabad, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir will each enter one team.

The provincial and regional football bodies will be responsible for selecting their squads through the proper channels, while the PFF will bear all expenses associated with the participating teams. The championship is scheduled to take place in the first week of September 2026 and is expected to play a vital role in identifying the country's most promising young footballers.

The National U17 Championship will serve as a talent identification platform for Pakistan's future international campaigns. Outstanding performers will be considered for selection to national youth teams competing in the SAFF U17 Championship and the AFC U17 Qualifiers.

Khokhar said the initiative reflects the federation's commitment to providing greater opportunities for young players under the leadership of PFF President Mohsen Gilani. "Under Mohsen Gilani's dynamic leadership, Pakistani footballers are being provided with maximum opportunities to develop and showcase their abilities. We hope the talented players selected through these competitions will continue to work hard, represent Pakistan with distinction, and bring international success to the country," he concluded.

Olympian Islahuddin and Dr. Shah Hockey Academy Give a Grand Welcome to the National U-18 Hockey Team at the Airport

Sports Desk

KARACHI: The Pakistan National Under-18 Hockey Team has returned home from Japan. Upon their arrival at Jinnah International Airport in Karachi, the team received a grand welcome organized by Islahuddin and the Dr. Shah Hockey Academy. National players and coaching staff were greeted with garlands and flower petals. Among those present to welcome the team were academy coaches Syed Aal Hasan, Moeen Alam, Saleh Omar, and others.

On this occasion, the Head Coach of the Pakistan Under-18 Hockey Team, Qamar Ibrahim, expressed his gratitude to Olympian Islahuddin and the Dr. Shah Hockey Academy for the excellent reception. He stated that before the team's departure to Japan, accommodation arrangements had also been provided by Islahuddin's academy, which were managed very well. He added that now, after the Pakistan team returned home with a bronze medal, the academy's management was once again present to welcome them.

Qamar Ibrahim praised Islahuddin's significant contribution to the development and promotion of hockey in Karachi. He noted that the team had limited time to prepare for the Asia Cup, while other participating teams had played series matches before the tournament. He further mentioned that 12 players in the squad were traveling abroad for the first time, yet they delivered an impressive performance.



He also thanked the selection committee for its full support. Qamar Ibrahim stated that the efforts and initiatives taken by the President of the Pakistan Hockey Federation, Mohyuddin Wani, the Secretary, Chairman Islahuddin, and Hasan Sardar were exemplary and highly commendable.

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Newly-elected Chess Federation of Pakistan officials take oath

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The newly-elected office-bearers of the Chess Federation of Pakistan (CFP) took oath at a ceremony held at Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) in Islamabad on Monday.

Secretary of the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC), Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, administered the oath to the newly-elected officials and assured

full support for the promotion and development of chess in the country.

According to details, Zeeshan Naqvi was sworn in as President of the Chess Federation of Pakistan. Other office-bearers who took oath included Anwar Saleem as Senior Vice President, Agha Wasim as First Vice President, and Muhammad Wasim as Second Vice President.

In addition, Inamullah took oath

as Third Vice President, while Gohar Iqbal assumed the office of Secretary General. Musawir Khan was sworn in as Finance Secretary, Wasif Nisar as Joint Secretary, and Shahid Khan as Press Secretary.

Addressing the ceremony, Mohyuddin Wani said the government would extend every possible support to promote chess across Pakistan. He emphasized that the country possesses



immense talent in the sport and stressed the need to provide players with greater opportunities to showcase their abilities.

The ceremony was attended by officials, players and members of the chess community, who expressed optimism that the newly-elected leadership would work effectively to strengthen and expand the sport at the national level.

Challenges to Nuclear Disarmament in the 21st Century

Continued from Page 4

Despite these challenges, nuclear disarmament remains extremely important for global peace and human survival. A nuclear war would not only affect the countries directly involved but could also create worldwide environmental and humanitarian disasters. Scientists have warned that even a limited nuclear conflict

could lead to long-term climate effects, food shortages and economic collapse. The destructive consequences of nuclear weapons make disarmament a global necessity rather than simply a political choice.

International organizations, diplomats and peace activists continue working to reduce nuclear dangers through dialogue, negotiations and

confidence-building measures. Strong diplomacy, mutual trust and international cooperation are necessary for meaningful progress in disarmament. Countries must recognize that lasting security cannot be achieved only through military strength. Sustainable peace requires political stability, conflict resolution and collective responsibility among nations.

In conclusion, nuclear disarmament remains one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century because of political rivalry, security concerns, technological developments, regional conflicts and weak implementation of international agreements. Although complete disarmament has not yet been achieved, continued global efforts are essential to reduce the

threat of nuclear war. The future of international peace and security depends on the willingness of states to cooperate, build trust and place human survival above political competition and military power.

The student in International relations Department at International Islamic University Islamabad

Pakistan U18 hockey team get rousing reception



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Under-18 hockey team received a rousing welcome on their return to Karachi on Monday after claiming the bronze medal at the Men's U18 Asia Cup 2026 held in Kakamigahara, Japan. Senior officials of the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) along with the head of PHF Development Committee, legendary Olympian Hassan Sardar were present at Jinnah International Airport to receive the young side.

In a touching gesture of honour, customs authorities at the airport also presented a formal salute to the bronze medallists as they arrived home.

Pakistan had secured third place with a convincing 3-0 victory over Malaysia in the bronze medal match, producing a disciplined performance to finish their campaign on the podium.

Meanwhile, PHF President Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani commended the players for their dedication, resilience and the honour they brought to the nation. He said securing the bronze medal reflected the fighting spirit that has long defined Pakistan hockey. He expressed confidence that these young players represent a bright future for the national game and assured them of the federation's full support in their continued development.

Khanewal to host table tennis championship

Sports Desk

KHANEWAL: District Sports Department will organize the Chief Minister Punjab Table Tennis Championship 2026 at the Sports Gymnasium, Khanewal, at 3:30 p.m. on June 9.

Boys' and girls' teams from all four tehsils of the district will compete in the event. The winning teams will qualify for the inter-district competitions to be held in Multan Division.

Meanwhile, athletics competitions under the annual sports calendar will be held on June 10, featuring boys' and girls' teams from all four tehsils of Khanewal.

The events were being organized by the District Sports Department as part of efforts to promote sports and youth participation at the grassroots level.

An Insightful Analysis of Pakistan's Current Economic Situation

Continued from Page 4

confrontation would likely extend far beyond the region, creating challenges of unprecedented magnitude for the global economy.

At this critical juncture, wisdom, restraint, and constructive engagement must prevail over confrontation and hostility. The stakes are simply too high for the international community to ignore. In the face of this profoundly challenging and nerve-racking situation, the international community must urgently mobilize all available resources

and intensify its collective efforts to secure an immediate and peaceful resolution of the conflict through diplomacy and dialogue.

In pursuing this objective, world leaders must recognize that further delays in resolving this grave crisis are simply untenable and could lead to far-reaching and potentially devastating consequences for regional as well as global peace, stability, and prosperity.

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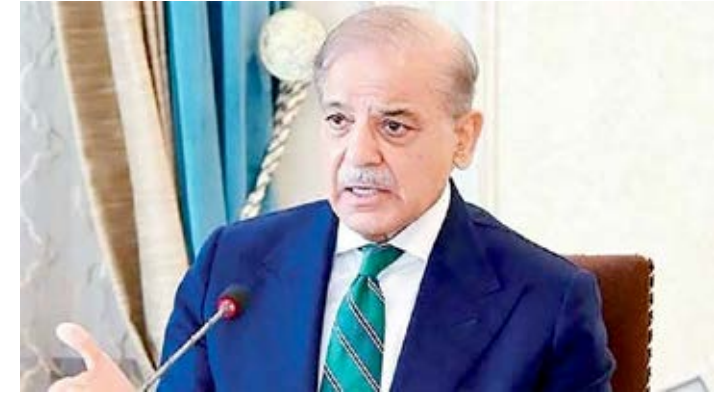
Educational Initiative

ISLAMABAD: Korea-Pakistan Education Corridor (KPEC) initiative and Expo launched by the Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Monday.



Photo: PID

PM calls for restraint amid ME tensions



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Monday, urged all sides to exercise restraint and give peace a little more chance, as they worked earnestly and painstakingly to find a peaceful diplomatic solution to the regional conflict in the Middle East.

In a statement shared on his X handle, the prime minister referred to the recent flare-ups in the region, stressing that the surge in violence serves as a stark reminder of the fragility of ceasefires and the devastat-

tating consequences that follow. He emphasized the importance of earnest and painstaking diplomatic engagement to prevent further escalation and to safeguard regional stability.

The prime minister posted on X, "The recent surge in violence in the Middle East is a stark reminder of the dangers associated with a tenuous ceasefire and the unbearable consequences it may lead to.

He further urged to continue to remain on the path of peace and diplomacy which have bright prospects of success instead of violence and destruction.

Rawalakot incident: Video highlights brutal attack on authorities by banned JAAC

Bureau Report

RAWALAKOT: On 7 June, a disturbing and horrific video surfaced showing a violent attack by banned Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) protestors and the desecration of a body in Rawalakot involving Azad Jammu and Kashmir police personnel.

Members of the outlawed organisation, the JAAC, carried out a premeditated attack in CMH Rawalakot, firing directly at the police and law enforcement agencies. The video shows a violent attack and the desecration of the body of a martyred police officer. This heinous act has exposed the malicious and terrorist face of the banned Joint Awami Action Committee.

The India-sponsored "Fitna al-Khawarij" has also issued strong statements in support of the banned JAAC.



On the other hand, Pakistan- and India-based foreign social media accounts are engaged in spreading misleading propaganda through fake

news and AI-generated content. The way Indian and anti-Pakistan foreign social media platforms have supported the banned JAAC

has exposed their external links and motives.

Within 48 to 72 hours, the terrorist mindset of the leaders of the banned Joint Action Committee and their alleged Indian narrative has been thoroughly exposed.

According to experts, the attacks carried out on law enforcement agencies under the guise of protest have fully revealed their malicious and destructive intentions.

The act of desecrating bodies clearly shows that the Action Committee has no connection with Islamic traditions or moral values, according to experts.

The open support of the "Fitna al-Khawarij" for the banned Joint Action Committee reflects the uneasiness of its handlers in India, as efforts to spread unrest in Azad Kashmir have completely failed.

Nursing Sector Overhaul: Pakistan Aims for Global Professional Supply

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Syed Mustafa Kamal pledged comprehensive reforms for the Pakistan Nursing and Midwifery Council (PN&MC), recognizing the nursing sector as crucial to Pakistan's healthcare infrastructure.

Addressing the press, he emphasized strengthening the sector to fulfill both national and global demand for nurses, noting Pakistan's deficit of 900,000 nurses against its needs and the global shortage of 2.5 million.

Kamal believes a well-organized nursing sector can make Pakistan a supplier of skilled professionals internationally. He acknowledged

historical administrative issues within the PN&MC. To address these, an ordinance has been enacted to reform the council's structure.

Key changes include appointing a Grade-22 officer as council president for enhanced accountability and oversight, and establishing a new 19-member national council. This ordinance is being sent to the Prime Minister for conversion into permanent legislation.

Furthermore, the minister announced a plan to fully digitalize the PN&MC's operations to boost transparency, merit, and accountability, thereby reducing corruption and interference. The government is committed to modernizing the nursing sector, expanding its workforce, and ensuring training meets international standards.

NAB chairman says fraudsters' photos will be published in newspapers

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chairman of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Lieutenant General (ret'd) Nazir Ahmed, announced tougher measures against fraudsters on Monday, saying that individuals accused of deceiving the public would now have their photographs published in newspaper advertisements.

Addressing a ceremony in Lahore, the NAB chairman said the accountability watchdog believes in practical measures rather than symbolic agreements and stressed that fraudsters would face increased public exposure and legal action.

He said the business community had not been given the status and recognition it deserved despite its contribution to the economy. According to him, around 20 cases related to chambers and business forums were brought before NAB, out of which 19 had been resolved.

Speaking about reforms in the real estate sector, Nazir Ahmed said NAB had developed a comprehensive strategy aimed at improving transparency and reducing fraud. He announced that future property transactions would involve only three stakeholders and claimed that cash-based property dealings would be eliminated.

He further stated that the existing system of property files would gradually lose relevance within the next four to five months, while each plot would receive a barcode-based identification number to reduce fraudulent practices.

Attaullah Tarar leads push for film diplomacy with Uzbekistan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Monday held a meeting with Ambassador of Uzbekistan Alisher Tukhtaev, during which both sides agreed to enhance cooperation in media, film and cultural sectors.

The meeting focused on expanding collaboration between Pakistan and Uzbekistan in film production, including the possibility of joint short films, documentaries and drama series.



Both sides also discussed strengthening institutional linkages to promote cultural exchange and people-to-people contact through media. The Uzbek ambassador

appreciated Pakistan's role in promoting peace in the region and acknowledged Islamabad's efforts in peace-related initiatives and negotiations. Minister Tarar said Paki-

stan attached high importance to its relations with Uzbekistan and was keen to further expand cooperation in media, film and cultural fields.

He said various options were being explored for joint creative projects based on shared themes, including short films, documentaries and drama series.

He added that such initiatives would require the involvement of experienced production houses, while large-scale film projects could also be pursued through joint funding arrangements between the two countries.

The minister stressed the importance of highlighting the shared historical and cultural heritage of Pakistan and Uzbekistan through collaborative media content.

Both sides agreed to enhance coordination between their respective social media teams for the development of joint digital content and a coordinated online promotional strategy.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening cultural and media relations with Uzbekistan through sustained engagement and cooperation.

Acid attack victim Dr Mahnoor likely to undergo major surgery

News Desk

QUETTA: Dr Mahnoor Nasir, the female doctor injured in an acid attack in Quetta, is likely to undergo major plastic surgery within the next few hours as doctors continue consultations on her treatment, hospital sources said.

The doctors treating Dr Mahnoor said her condition is no longer in danger, although she is expected to remain under medical care for several more weeks.

She suffered deep injuries to her face, including the outer parts of her eyes, lips and nose. Sources said doctors performed a procedure on her lips on Sunday as part of her ongoing



treatment.

An ophthalmologist conducted a detailed examination of her eyes and found that her eyesight remains safe. However, she has complained of slight blurring of vision, according to hospital sources.

Doctors said the acid attack has also left her under severe mental stress and anxiety.

A team of specialists has conducted various medical tests and consultations to assess the extent of her injuries and determine the next phase of treatment.

Hospital sources said Dr Mahnoor is likely to undergo multiple surgeries at different stages of her recovery. A final decision on the planned plastic surgery is expected after consultations are completed.

This is much closer to the format we've been using over the past week for your court, power sector and political stories.

PM visits Ch Nisar's residence to condole demise of his mother-in-law

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday visited the residence of senior political leader Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan to condole the demise of his mother-in-law.

The prime minister prayed for peace for the departed soul and strength for the bereaved family to bear the loss.

During the visit, the prime minister also inquired after the health of Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan.

Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar accompanied the prime minister.

