



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
ابو ہریرہؓ نے بیان کیا کہ نبی کریم ﷺ نے فرمایا: "میں ایک خطیب ہوں اور میری امت تک کوئی (دینی) چیز لے کر نہیں چھوڑے گی جو میں نے بیان کی ہے۔ یہ یاد رکھنا تھا اس لئے یاد رکھا اور تمہیں بھولنا چاہئے۔" (صحیح بخاری، ج 1، ص 100)



## China calls for early removal of unilateral sanctions on Iran

China on Wednesday called for the early removal of unilateral sanctions on Iran and urged the United States and Iran to implement their signed memorandum of understanding to advance negotiations toward a comprehensive political settlement. Speaking at a regular press briefing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun.



## PSX extends rally, surges over 3,748 points

The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) extended its bullish momentum on Wednesday, gaining 3,748.40 points, a positive change of 2.08 percent, closing at 184,050.10 points against 180,301.70 points on the last trading day.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Muharram-ul-Haram 16, Thursday, July 2, 2026

www.dailyspokesman.net

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Daily Spokesman Vol: 20, Issue: 72

Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

## Meeting

KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari in a meeting with Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah and Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti at Bilawal House on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

## DPM Dar reviews final preparations for upcoming OIC moot on women

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday chaired the 6th meeting of the High-Level Committee for the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Women which will be hosted by Pakistan from July 12-13, 2026.



erment, inclusion, and sustainable development.

The meeting reviewed the final phase of preparations, including the draft programme, conference agenda, protocol, security and logistical arrangements, media and communication strategy, inter-ministerial coordination, and other organizational matters.

The deputy prime minister appreciated the progress made by the Ministry of Human Rights and also issued directions to all relevant stakeholders to maintain close coordination and ensure timely completion of the remaining arrangements.

The meeting was attended by federal ministers Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar and Shaza Fatima, SAPM Tariq Bajwa, Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch, Secretary Human Rights Abdul Khaliq Shaikh and other senior officials.

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## PM Shehbaz orders Fast-Track Completion of Danish Schools Nationwide



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed authorities to expedite Danish Schools across Pakistan and announced a Tech campus of Danish University in Muzaffarabad, calling the projects a major investment in the future.

heritage, and mandated merit-based faculty hiring.

Chairing a review meeting, he ordered early completion of schools in all four provinces, GB, AJK, and Islamabad, with architecture reflecting regional

Officials briefed that 27 Danish Schools are under construction. The Kurri, Islamabad school is operational, while Bagh, Bhimber, Sultanabad, Ghanche, and Astore schools will open by April 2027. Danish University in Islamabad will begin in 2027, admitting merit-based students nationwide, with priority for talented youth from backward areas.

# PM Orders National Emergency System for Monsoon Preparedness Amid Climate Risks

City Desk

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed intensified monsoon preparations, ordering a national emergency response system and stressing coordinated action to address climate risks.

He approved an Emergency Response Committee led by the Planning and Development Minister, including NDMA and federal ministries, to coordinate weekly with provincial authorities during monsoon.

Chairing a meeting on climate resilience, he noted Pakistan's high vulnerability to climate change and urged federation-province cooperation.

The Finance Minister was asked to arrange an emergency fund for severe disasters. Attendees included defense, finance, planning, information, power, climate change, IT, and law ministers, plus provincial



chief secretaries and officials.

The PM ordered the Climate Change Minister and NDMA chair to visit all provinces, AJK, and GB this week to assess monsoon readiness.

He stressed that development partner projects should boost institutional capacity. Mentioning an extra Rs330 billion in this year's budget for water infrastructure, he directed implementing a flood mitigation roadmap, removing encroach-

ments from river channels in flood-prone districts, and deploying all resources for public assistance.

NDMA Chairman Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik briefed on preparedness, expecting global extreme heatwaves, prolonged heat in Pakistan, and above-normal July rainfall raising flood risks. He said contingency measures are underway under a comprehensive strategy.

## Two Children Killed as Severe Weather Wreaks Havoc in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: At least two children were killed and three others injured after heavy rain, lightning, and flash floods struck parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with widespread damage to homes, mosques, shops, and infrastructure in Lower and Upper Chitral, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) reported. Lightning killed the children in Bara, Khyber district, while the injured were hospitalized. In Lower Chitral, a cloudburst triggered flash floods affecting 27 houses, damaging two mosques, two shops, a bridge, four vehicles, and motorcycles. In Upper Chitral's Yarkhun and Mastuj, floods damaged a house, water schemes, and irrigation channels, but no casualties occurred; relief supplies were provided. Two blocked link roads reopened. PDMA, Rescue 1122, and agencies continue operations, with an emergency helpline (1700) active. Heavy rain and hail also hit Abbottabad, Swat, Shangla, and Bajaur, causing local flooding and traffic issues. In Islamabad, strong winds uprooted a tree onto a car, with no injuries.

## Pakistan rejects India's statement on counterterrorism actions in Afghanistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday rejected statement issued by India's Ministry of External Affairs regarding Pakistan's actions against terrorist infrastructure in Afghanistan and described it as baseless while reaffirming its commitment to safeguarding national security in accordance with international law.

Responding to a media query, Foreign Office Spokesperson, Ambassador, Tahir Andrabi said Pakistan's actions were legitimate, targeted and proportionate and dismissed India's allegations as preposterous, a Ministry of Foreign Affairs news release said.

The spokesperson said the Indian statement had been issued by a country that, according to Pakistan, has historically interfered in and undermined the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbouring states in violation of the UN Charter.

He further alleged that India continued to suppress the right to self-determination of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) in contravention of relevant United Nations resolutions.

Ambassador Tahir Andrabi also accused India of actively aiding and sponsoring terrorist groups operating from Afghan territory against Pakistan, alleging that such actions violated the relevant UN Security Council sanctions regime. He said India continued to play the role of a regional spoiler and asserted that its baseless accusations and inflammatory statements against Pakistan should not be entertained.

Reiterating Pakistan's position, the spokesperson said the country had been, and would continue to be, committed to taking all appropriate measures to ensure the safety and security of its citizens in accordance with international law.

## Pakistan Shifts from Crisis Management to Economic Ambition, Minister Declares

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal stated that Pakistan has transitioned from crisis stabilization to a phase of economic ambition, emphasizing the youth as a key driver for growth.

He spoke at the URAAN Pakistan "Mitti Ki Pukar" Overseas Pakistanis Summer Scholars Programme-2026, noting that nearly 2,000 applications from 54 countries led to the selection of 45 outstanding students from 150 universities.

The programme offers exposure to public sector and policymaking, with scholars contributing to the 5Es framework. Iqbal highlighted past achievements like overcoming energy crises and CPEC investments, but noted disruptions due to political instability. He stressed the need for peace, stability, and policy continuity for sustainable development, and called youth Pakistan's greatest asset, urging skill development and opportunities. The ministry also recommended modernizing university curricula.

## Minister calls for water reservoirs to secure Pakistan's future

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Dr. Musadik Malik on Tuesday emphasized the urgent need to construct water reservoirs to address Pakistan's future water and energy challenges.

He stressed that political consensus was crucial for undertaking major dam projects across Pakistan.

Speaking to a private television channel, the minister said building water reservoirs was essential to meet the growing needs of the agriculture sector, which supports nearly 50 percent of the country's population.

Commenting on India's reported plans to stop the flow of water to Pakistan, he said India could not dare to block water flowing into Pakistan.

He noted that the construction of dams would not only enhance water storage capacity but also help generate affordable electricity, contributing to the country's energy security.

He added that the government was informing the international community about what he described as India's attempts to violate Pakistan's fundamental rights.

The minister said Pakistan would pursue the matter at all available international forums if India attempted to stop water flows. He reaffirmed that the country was fully capable of safeguarding its rights and protecting its national interests.

# Abdul Aleem Khan Welcomes New Members

*Pledges Sustainable Solutions to End Deprivation in Azad Kashmir*

**Bureau Report**

ISLAMABAD: In a significant political development ahead of the upcoming General Elections in Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK), prominent political figures called on President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP), Abdul Aleem Khan and formally announced their decision to join the party.

Malik Zulfikar Ali, the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) candidate from LA-8 Kotli and Malik Muhammad Yousaf the Pakistan Peoples Party candidate from LA-10 Kotli City joined the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party during a meeting with Abdul Aleem Khan.

Welcoming the new members, Abdul Aleem Khan said the IPP is committed to addressing the long-standing challenges facing Azad Jammu & Kashmir through sustainable and practical solutions. He emphasized that improved infrastructure and development initiatives would create greater employment opportunities and help eliminate the sense of deprivation among the people of the region.

He further stated that the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party will actively and



vigorously participate in the upcoming AJK elections. On the occasion, Abdul Aleem Khan presented the party flag to the newly inducted members as a symbol of their inclusion in the party. IPP's Member of the National Assembly Aun Chaudhry was also present at the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, Malik Zulfikar Ali and Malik Muhammad

Yousaf said they were beginning a new political journey with the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party and expressed their complete confidence in the leadership of Abdul Aleem Khan.

The meeting was also attended by former local government leaders Malik Muhammad Ilyas, Chaudhry Ameer Qabil, and Malik Nizam Iqbal Minhas. Other members of the dele-

gation included Malik Muhammad Mushtaq, Malik Sarmad Ali, Chaudhry Muhammad Ashraf, Advocate Majid Malik, and Malik Khalid Mahmood.

Former President of the Azad Kashmir Teachers' Association, Hafiz Kazim Malik, also met with Abdul Aleem Khan and announced his decision to join the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party along with his colleagues.

## AJK Supreme Court Suspends Muzaffarabad Judge for Contempt of Court



**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: The Supreme Court of Azad Jammu and Kashmir has ordered the immediate suspension of the District and Sessions Judge, Muzaffarabad, in a landmark contempt case and directed an inquiry.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan and Senior Judge Raza Ali Khan issued the order in *Pakistan Red Crescent Society Azad Kashmir v. Farooq Mehmood Khan*.

Court records show the District Court Bagh was hearing a case on auctioning a Pakistan Red Crescent Society vehicle, while the Supreme Court had already granted a stay. Despite this, the then District and Sessions Judge Bagh, now posted in Muzaffarabad, ordered the auction. The petitioner claimed the vehicle was worth Rs. 60-70 lakh but was to be auctioned for Rs. 8 lakh.

A contempt petition was filed. The judge said he acted on his predecessor's earlier ruling. The Supreme Court rejected the defense, ruling that subordinate courts must follow apex court orders, not a predecessor's judgment. It held the auction violated the stay.

The court warned of further legal action.

## Ex-AJK PM Tanveer Ilyas Quits PPP, takes allies with him

**Bureau Report**



MUZAFFARABAD: Former Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has resigned from PPP's core membership and submitted his resignation to Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, his spokesman confirmed.

Sources said the move follows differences over election tickets for Central Bagh, Pachtot, and Upper Neelum. Government Minister Ali Shan Soni also quit PPP's primary membership. Ilyas left with political allies and is expected to announce his next strategy within two days.

PPP's ticket allocations are now uncertain. The leadership is reviewing replacements for Javed Butt, Sardar Ahmad Saghir, and Diwan Chaghtai, all seen as close to Ilyas. No formal party statement has been issued yet.

## Pakistan strengthens anticipatory action to reduce the impact of climate-related disasters

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has launched its first Anticipatory Action Strategy, a significant advancement in disaster risk management to mitigate climate-related hazards. The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) welcomed the move, which shifts from reactive disaster response to preemptive action by using risk forecasts to trigger early funding and measures before disasters strike. This approach aims to protect lives, livelihoods, and assets. The strategy builds on a joint initiative by WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), funded by the European Union (EU), which strengthened early warning systems, tested protocols, and integrated anticipatory approaches into government planning. Climate-related disasters have caused over \$18 billion in damages in Pakistan over two decades, rising to \$60 billion when major floods are included. The 2025 monsoon floods affected 6.9 million people, with 2026 already facing El Niño-related warnings. Anticipatory action proved effective during the 2025 floods, when WFP and FAO delivered cash assistance to 15,000 vulnerable people three days before peak flooding, enabling evacuation and protection of assets. Every dollar invested in such action can save up to \$7 in avoided losses. Future efforts will align provincial processes and mobilize pre-disaster public finance, supported by partners like the EU and GLZ, ensuring early warnings lead to timely action.

## Civil Society Condemns Court Order Giving Minor Girl's Custody to Stranger

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Human rights groups have condemned a judicial order placing 16-year-old minor Minali Nadeem in the custody of Shazia Mai, a stranger linked to the accused, after her abduction.

Police recovered the girl two weeks post-abduction and jailed accused Ansar Allah Ditta. Advocate Hanif Hameed Mattu argued a minor cannot marry or change religion independently, citing Lahore High Court precedent, and sought custody restoration to parents.

On June 23, 2026, Judicial Magistrate Sohail Anjum released her from Dar-ul-Aman, Khanewal, to Shazia Mai's custody after the girl alleged family threats, which advocates say the magistrate dictated.

Voice for Justice's Joseph Jansen and Mattu cited medical findings of sexual activity and possible coercion, urging addition of Section 376(iii) PPC to FIR 507/26 and the girl's return to her parents.

## Protest

LAHORE: Residents of Moza Jangal Jesso Dipalpur hold a protest against PTI ticket holder Tariq Irshad Khan and other land grabbers, outside Lahore Press Club, in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

## Lahore building collapse kills 14 kids, sparking calls for judicial inquiry and LDA overhaul

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: Senator Dr. Safdar Ali Abbasi and Ms. Naheed Khan have demanded accountability after the tragic death of 14 children in a tuition centre collapse in Lahore, caused by criminal negligence of a building contractor.

The incident has raised serious questions about the Lahore Development Authority's (LDA) failure to enforce building standards and ensure public safety.

They highlighted long-standing complaints of corruption and unchecked construction in Lahore. They stated this is not merely an acci-



dent but a human tragedy demanding accountability, expressing deep condolences to the bereaved families.

They demanded immediate arrests of those responsible, a high-level judicial inquiry, and suspension and pros-

ecution of LDA officials whose negligence may have contributed.

They emphasized that safety must take precedence over corruption and that comprehensive reforms are needed to enforce building laws across Punjab.

## SIDA Chairman Orders Operation Against Water Thieves in Badin

**Qayoom Sarohi**

HYDERABAD: Chairman of the Sindh Irrigation and Drainage Authority (SIDA), Qabool Muhammad Khatiyani, has taken strict notice of the severe water shortage in District Badin and ordered a full-scale operation against water theft. He issued these instructions after meetings with farmers during his visit to Tando Muhammad Khan, Matli, and the tail-end areas of Badin.

During his visit, the SIDA Chairman inspected the 30th Mile of the Phuleli Canal, the Amma Wah Cross Regu-

lator, Ali Pur Cross Regulator, 70 Mile, and the TPX Regulator, and reviewed the water supply situation.

On this occasion, SIDA Chairman Qabool Muhammad Khatiyani said that IRSA did not provide Sindh with the required amount of water this year, which has delayed the sowing of rice and cotton crops. He added that water availability in the irrigation system is low while demand is high. Irrigation department engineers and staff are working day and night to ensure water reaches the tail-end, but complaints have been received about individuals breaking outlets and installing pipes to

steal water. He has ordered an immediate operation to curb this practice.

He made it clear that no leniency will be shown in cases of water theft. He further stated that due to IRSA's failure to provide water on time, paddy and cotton cultivation in Sindh has been badly affected, and the Government of Sindh has lodged strong protests on every relevant forum.

Left Bank Canals Area Water Board Director Abdul Wahid Kandhar said on the occasion that executive engineers and their teams are on patrol day and night to improve water distribution. He added that due to high

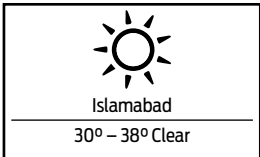
demand and low availability, strict implementation of the *\_warabandi\_* [rotational water distribution] system is being enforced.

He further said that effective measures have already been taken to prevent water theft, and now, through a formal operation, cases will be registered against those involved in water theft to ensure water supply to the tail-end areas.

Relevant executive engineers and other officers were also present during the visit. On the occasion, farmers presented complaints to the SIDA Chairman and the Area Water Board



Director regarding non-supply of water, water theft, and *\_warabandi\_* and several of the complaints were resolved on the spot.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 3:18 am  
Zohr ..... 12:12 pm  
Asr ..... 5:12 pm  
Maghrib ..... 7:22 pm  
Isha ..... 9:05 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
Islamabad Metropolitan  
Corporation ..... 9209224  
Potohar Town ..... 9209224  
Rawal Town ..... 5773343

**COMPLAINTS**

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

**Auqaf Punjab Secretary Calls Imam Hussain's (RA) Life an Eternal Model of Justice, Sacrifice**

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Auqaf Punjab Secretary Dr. Ehsan Bhutta, speaking at the "Syed-ul-Shuhada Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) Conference" at Badshahi Mosque, said Imam Hussain's (RA) life exemplifies patience, courage, justice, and steadfastness, serving as guidance till Judgment Day.

He termed Karbala a decisive battle between truth and falsehood, urging adoption of Imam's teachings to promote peace, tolerance, and Ummah unity. He said Auqaf is upgrading shrines as centers of spirituality and harmony, per CM Maryam Nawaz's directives, to provide facilities and peace for devotees.

Speakers, including Dr. Mufti Intikhab Ahmad Noori and others, stressed rising above sectarian divides and following Imam Hussain's (RA) values. The event ended with prayers for Pakistan's peace, stability, and unity.

**Punjab Targets 10 Million Kissan Cards as Agri Reforms Accelerate**

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Wednesday said the province is undergoing a major agricultural transformation, with 900,000 Kissan Cards issued and a target of 10 million to be met by next month.

Chairing an Agriculture Department meeting, she reviewed the Kissan Card programme, mechanisation, fertiliser supply, and prices. Officials reported Rs960 billion in interest-free loans disbursed via Kissan Cards with a 99% recovery rate. The one-million-card milestone is set for Aug 31, 2026, after adding 50,000 more farmers.

The meeting approved inducting 1,500 more agriculture graduates in the internship programme and 10 new Model Agri Malls to deliver modern farm services. CM Nawaz also cleared the Thal Transformation Programme: 1,000 water storage ponds, new irrigation schemes, and 10,000 acres of orange orchards in underdeveloped Thal areas to boost horticulture and incomes.

So far, 280 advanced machines have been provided, with 2,000 targeted by

June 2027. Under the Green Tractor Scheme, 24,000 tractors have been delivered with a Rs1 million subsidy each. A total of 34,000 tractors are planned across three phases, with 41% of beneficiaries receiving a tractor for the first time. CM Nawaz said 50,000 tractors will be distributed in three years, the largest such effort in Punjab's history. The process is fully computerised to ensure transparency. Of 12,650 tractors physically verified, 99.7% were on farms; notices were issued for 35 missing units.

About 80% of agri loans went to fertiliser purchases. Of Rs116bn for Kharif, Rs62bn is used, with 75% spent on fertiliser. Urea prices have held at Rs4,400-Rs4,500 for over two years due to oversight, and Pakistan remains self-sufficient in urea.

Water conservation is scaling up: 1,000 laser levellers, high-efficiency irrigation expansion, 1,200 new watercourses, 1,000 recharge wells in central Punjab, and systems on 11,000 Thal acres. In Potohar, 2,400 of 4,000 planned acres are prepared, with 1,000 rainwater ponds built.

To curb smog, 5,000 super seeders are



distributed, with 7,000 more this year for a 12,000 total by Oct 2026.

Some 3,000 agri graduates are

advising farmers across 12 million acres. Around 30% secured permanent jobs post-internship, with a 50% overall place-

ment rate. KPMG will submit a Kissan Card impact report by Sept 30, with plans to promote the programme globally.

**Awesome weather**

ISLAMABAD: A man records the dark clouds hovering over the sky of Federal Capital before rain. The Weather turned pleasant after couple of hot days.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

**Zone-VI and Zone-IV Dominate with Third Consecutive Wins in Under-19 Cricket Tournament**

**Sports Desk**

KARACHI: Three more matches were decided in the Third round of the Regional Inter District Under-19 (Karachi Region) One Day Cricket League Tournament at various Grounds of the City.

The highlights of the days play was 3rd Consecutive Victories by Zone-VI and Zone-IV, Some good Batting by Riaz Ahmed 60, Aliyan Asif 56, Muhammad Azaan 50 and deadly bowling by slow left arm spinner Bilal uddin 4/34.

The Tournament is being organized by Pakistan Cricket Board.

Scores in Brief: Zone-VI beat Zone-VII by 6 Wickets at KCCA Stadium. Zone-VII 189/9 in 50 overs Riaz Ahmed 60 5x4 1x6, Talah Irfan Sheikh 32, Adil Khan 31. Saad Sakhawat (ob) 3/19, Jawad Ahmed (sla)3/35, Zaryab Shah(mf) 2/32.

In reply Zone-VI 190/4 in 38.1 overs. Muhammad Azaan 50 3x4 1x6, Rehmat ullah 48 8x4 1x6, Abdul Wahab 28, Hammad Alam

25, Huzaifa Ahsan 22. Shamroz Khan (sla) 3/38.

In the 2nd Match Zone-IV defeated Zone-I by 6 Wickets at Eid Gah Ground Korangi. Zone-I 95 all out in 34.1 overs. Furqan Akram 18, Monis Nadeem 16, Huzaifa Bin Sajid (sla) 3/10, Sheraz Ali (mf) 3/21, Muhammad Masham (sla) 3/28.

In reply Zone-IV 96/5 in 13.2 overs. Daniyal Khan Niazi 33 3x4 3x6, Saad Murtaza 21. Afrasayab (mf) 2/38.

In the 3rd Zone-II beat Zone-III by 6 Wickets at UBL

Sports Complex. Zone-III 166 allout in 41 5 overs. Aman Ahmed 56 6x4, Haider Ali 44 9x4, Mustafa Umair 24. Bilal uddin (sla) 4/34, Muhammad Huzaifa (ob) 3/35.

In reply Zone-II 167/4 in 38.2 overs. Aliyan Asif 56 8x4, Mahad Furqan 36 7x4 not out, Zain Ali Jaffri 25. Ali Habib (sla) 2/37.

Fixture on Thursday 2nd July: Zone-I vs Zone-VI at KCCA Stadium, Zone-II vs Zone-V at Eid Gah Ground Korangi, Zone-IV vs Zone-IV vs Zone-VII at UBL Sports Complex.

**Europe Sweats Through Historic Heatwave as Temperatures Top 40°C**

**Adnan Yaqoob**

ISLAMABAD: Europe is enduring one of its worst heatwaves on record, with temperatures exceeding 40°C, red weather alerts across multiple countries, and mounting fears over climate change. The UK, France, Spain, and Germany are among the hardest hit.



France faces the highest alerts, with over half the country under maximum warning and hundreds of schools closed. It has already recorded 44.3°C in Pyrénées-Orientales. Tragically, at least 40 people have drowned trying to cool off, including a 13-year-old girl in the Seine near Fontaine-le-Port. Sports Minister Marina Ferrari warned against unsupervised swimming in rivers and canals during extreme heat.

Germany expects up to 40°C by week's end, with several drowning deaths reported. Health officials urge hydration and caution for children, the elderly, and those with health conditions. Spain's agency forecasts 44°C in parts of the country, while the UK has issued similar heat safety guidance.

Scientists link the frequency and intensity of these events to rising greenhouse gases. Experts warn heatwaves are becoming longer, hotter, and more common, straining health systems, energy, agriculture, and water, and raising wildfire and mortality risks. They stress urgent emission cuts and climate resilience investment to prevent record heat from becoming normal.

**APP Leaders blame 'criminal negligence' for Kahna tuition centre collapse**

**News Desk**

LAHORE: Awaam Pakistan Party Central Vice President Chaudhry Inaam Zafar and Additional General Secretary Hafiz Usman Abbasi expressed deep sorrow over the deaths of 14 children in the Kahna tuition centre building collapse.



Calling it "tragic and unacceptable" criminal negligence, the leaders demanded a transparent investigation and strict legal action against the builder, responsible government officials, and all negligent parties to prevent recurrence.

They offered prayers for the deceased, wished speedy recovery for the injured, and condoled with bereaved families. The duo urged the Punjab government to strictly enforce building codes and strengthen monitoring of construction projects.

**VC Dr. Yasir Nawab Pledges Quality, Research-Focused Education at University of Kamalia**

**Zafar Chishti**



TOBA TEK SINGH: University of Kamalia Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Yasir Nawab said the university is pursuing quality, modern, research-oriented education aligned with global standards.

In an exclusive talk, he said the institution offers an updated curriculum, qualified faculty, labs, digital learning, a library, research centers, and co-curricular activities. Character building, ethics, and leadership remain priorities alongside academics. He noted rising admissions due to trust in the learning environment, with transparent, merit-based entry currently open across faculties. The university is building industry and academic partnerships for internships, research, and practical training to produce skilled, innovative graduates.

Dr. Nawab urged students and parents to apply, expressing confidence the university will deliver competent graduates for national development.

**ICT anti-encroachment drive: 24 detained as crackdown expands across F-10, Golra**

ISLAMABAD: A citywide anti-encroachment campaign continued in the federal capital, with district authorities detaining 24 people and removing illegal structures during operations in F-10 and Golra.

The action was carried out under the supervision of the Assistant Commissioner Shalimar, while the Deputy Commissioner directed officials to expand the scope of the campaign and intensify daily enforcement across Islamabad.

According to the spokesman of ICT administration, the authority has continued its drive against encroachments in different parts of the city as part of efforts to clear public spaces and address illegal occupation of land.

According to officials, a major operation was conducted in Sector F-10 and Golra under the supervision of the Assistant Commissioner Shalimar. During the crackdown, teams removed illegal sheds and other unauthorized structures built on public land. Authorities said the operation



was carried out in line with ongoing efforts to recover encroached areas and ensure compliance with municipal regulations.

The district administration reported that a total of 24 individuals were taken into custody during anti-encroachment actions. Officials said the detainees were

shifted to police custody as part of legal proceedings linked to violations identified during the operation.

Deputy Commissioner Islamabad directed authorities to widen the scope of the campaign and continue enforcement measures in additional areas of the capital. He instructed all Assistant

Commissioners to conduct operations against land grabbers and encroachment networks on a daily basis within their respective jurisdictions.

The Deputy Commissioner further emphasized that action should be taken without discrimination to keep public areas clear and accessible. He said all enforcement teams must maintain regular monitoring and take prompt action wherever illegal occupations or structures are identified.

The district administration also appealed to residents to support the ongoing campaign by reporting encroachments and cooperating with enforcement teams. Officials said public cooperation would help authorities maintain roads, markets, green belts, and other public spaces for the benefit of citizens.

Authorities indicated that anti-encroachment operations would continue across Islamabad in the coming days as part of efforts to reclaim public land and prevent new illegal occupations.

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# How Pakistan Became Israel's Primary Target-II

The convergence of the AfPak insurgency, the Balochistan separatist movement, and the rise of Pakistan as a geopolitical power has created a perfect storm. Israel, viewing Pakistan as the primary obstacle to its regional hegemony, is allegedly employing its formidable intelligence apparatus to fracture the country from within.

The nexus between the TTP, the BLA, and external actors like India and Israel represents the most significant threat to Pakistan's national security in decades. Pakistan is not a stupid country; it is smart, resilient, and has repeatedly proven its ability to punch above its weight.

History rarely announces the arrival of a new geopolitical order; it reveals itself gradually through shifting alliances, changing perceptions, and the emergence of unexpected diplomatic actors.

Whether one agrees with every aspect of Pakistan's recent foreign policy or not, there is a growing perception among several analysts that Islamabad has become a more consequential player in regional diplomacy than it was only a few years ago.

As Pakistan's diplomatic profile rises, so too does the possibility that it may become the target of increasingly sophisticated forms of geopolitical competition, including proxy conflict, intelligence rivalry, and information warfare.

Former CIA analyst Larry C. Johnson recently remarked that if someone had predicted only two months earlier that Pakistan would emerge as a significant political force helping shape a new security architecture for the Persian Gulf, many observers would have dismissed the idea.

Yet, he argued, "that is exactly what has happened," describing Pakistan as "a major force" and expressing admiration for both what Pakistan is doing and how it is doing it. While this represents Johnson's assessment rather than an established fact, it reflects a perception that Pakistan's diplomatic influence has expanded significantly.

Pakistan's importance stems not only from geography but from strategic relevance. Situated at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia, China, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Arabian Sea, Pakistan occupies one of the world's most strategically important locations. It is also the only declared Muslim-majority nuclear power, giving it a unique position in regional security calculations.

Recent regional crises have reinforced this importance. Pakistan has maintained active diplomatic engagement during periods of heightened tension involving Iran, Afghanistan, and the Gulf

region. Whether these efforts ultimately reshape the regional order remains to be seen, but they have undoubtedly elevated Pakistan's visibility within international strategic discussions.

As Pakistan's diplomatic significance increases, its security challenges will become more complex. The security environment stretching from Afghanistan through Iran to the Persian Gulf has undergone profound transformation.

Aaron Y. Zelin of The Washington Institute argues that the "AfPak" and Iran theatres should no longer be viewed separately because militant organizations, cross-border insurgencies, terrorism, and regional conflicts increasingly overlap. In his analysis, the Taliban's return to power has strengthened the operational environment for the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and associated jihadist organizations, creating interconnected security challenges extending beyond Pakistan's western frontier.

These concerns are echoed by Richard Lindsay, the United Kingdom's Special Envoy to Afghanistan. In an interview with Amu TV, Lindsay described the TTP as a terrorist organization and stated that Afghan authorities in Kabul and Kandahar need to address concerns involving safe havens, training camps,

weapons, and financial support associated with the group. He also affirmed that every sovereign state possesses the right to defend itself against genuine terrorist threats while emphasizing the need to avoid civilian casualties.

These observations from international officials reinforce what Pakistan has argued consistently for several years: that instability along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border has become one of the country's most serious national security challenges.

Another important development is the deepening strategic partnership between India and Israel. Military cooperation, intelligence sharing, drone technology, missile systems, cyber capabilities, and surveillance technologies have become defining features of this relationship. These developments are widely documented and are increasingly viewed in Pakistan as significant components of the country's evolving security environment.

While Pakistan has never fought a direct conflict with Israel, Israel has nevertheless entered Pakistan's threat perceptions through indirect strategic developments. Israel's expanding partnership with India, its increasing attention to Balochistan, and broader regional dynamics have collectively altered Pakistan's strategic calculations requiring sound national security decisions that require careful evaluation of evidence.

*Continued on Page 7*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Heavy rain, glacier melt raise flood threat across Pakistan

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Wednesday warned of an increased risk of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), flash floods, landslides and urban flooding across northern and central Pakistan from July 1-4 due to heavy rainfall and accelerated glacier melting.

The alert, issued by the National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC), said rising temperatures, an active monsoon system and westerly waves were expected to trigger heavy rainfall and speed up glacier melt.

The NDMA said glacier-adjacent areas of Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Jammu and Kashmir faced an elevated threat of GLOFs, while sudden flash floods, debris flows, landslides and rockfalls could endanger vulnerable mountain communities.

It advised residents and local administrations in Hunza, Nagar, Ghizer, Skardu, Shigar, Ghanche, Kharmang, Astore, Diamer, Upper and Lower Chitral, Swat and other glacier-fed valleys to remain vigilant.

The authority also warned that rising temperatures and forecast rainfall could significantly increase water flow in the Hispar-Hopper Nullah, raising the risk of flash floods, debris flows and riverbank erosion.

In a separate advisory, the NEOC warned that heavy rainfall from July 1-4 could cause flash flooding in hill torrents and seasonal streams across parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Balochistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

It said increased water flows were expected in streams and hill torrents in Charsadda, Nowshera, Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Kohat, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Dera Ismail Khan, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Swat, Upper and Lower Dir, Chitral, Shangla, Buner, Battagram, Torghar and Kohistan.

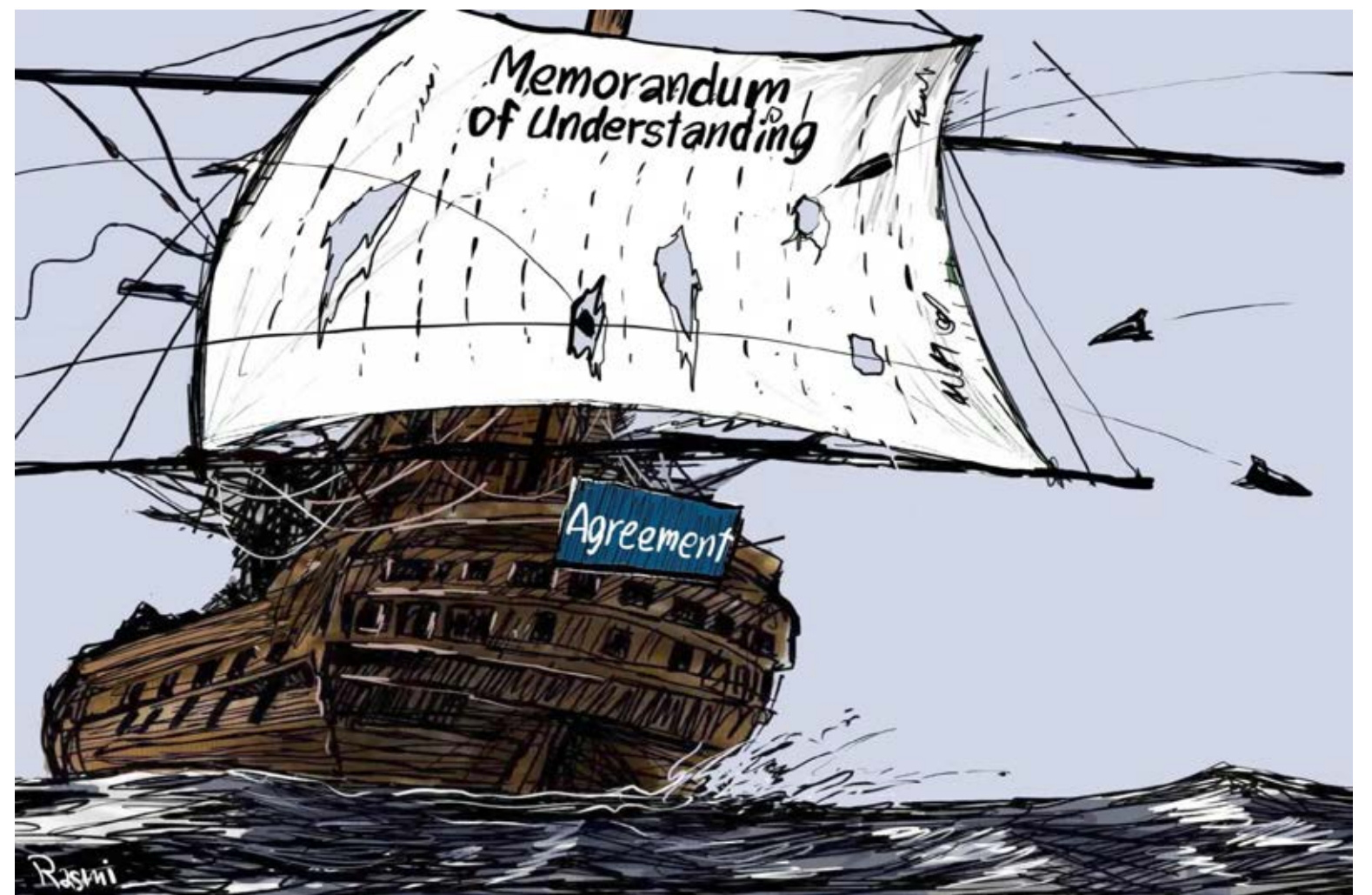
Seasonal streams in Rawalpindi, Attock, Jhelum, Chakwal, Mianwali, Bhakkar, Khushab, Sargodha, Faisalabad, Jhang, Sialkot, Narowal, Gujranwala, Lahore, Sheikhupura, Hafizabad and Mandi Bahauddin were also at risk of flooding.

In Balochistan, localised flash floods were forecast in Zhob, Sherani, Musa Khel, Barkhan, Sibi, Kohlu, Dera Bugti, Loralai and adjoining areas.

The NDMA said heavy rainfall could also trigger overflowing streams and localised flooding in mountainous areas of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, while urban flooding was expected in low-lying parts of major cities.

It warned that roads, bridges, irrigation infrastructure and other public facilities could be damaged by flooding and landslides.

The NDMA directed relevant departments to ensure precautionary measures, drainage arrangements, emergency preparedness and continuous monitoring of river flows and glacial lakes. It advised residents in low-lying areas and along riverbanks to avoid unnecessary travel and remain alert during the forecast period.



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

## CM reviews PERA performance, warns against abuse of authority

To ensure the effective enforcement of laws and to curb profiteering, hoarding, encroachments, and various administrative irregularities, the Government of Punjab established a unique and modern institution: the Punjab Enforcement and Regulatory Authority (PERA). The authority was created under the Punjab Enforcement and Regulation Act, 2024, which was passed by the Punjab Assembly and became law on October 17, 2024. The primary objective of this legislation is to bring the enforcement of various laws under a structured, coordinated, and efficient system, reduce overlapping powers among institutions, and ensure uniform implementation of laws relating to public welfare.

Under the law, PERA is an autonomous corporate body headquartered in Lahore. The Chief Minister of Punjab serves as its Chairperson, while the Chief Secretary Punjab acts as Vice Chairperson. Senior officials from the Home Department, Finance Department, Local Government Department, Prosecution Department, Police, and other relevant institutions are also part of the authority to ensure effective coordination and harmonized law enforcement across sectors.

The purpose of PERA is not merely to conduct enforcement operations but to strengthen public welfare, transparency, administrative discipline, and the rule of law. The authority has been empowered to remove illegal encroachments, monitor prices of essential commodities, take action against hoarding and profiteering, address public complaints, and enforce relevant laws. According to the Punjab Government, PERA's central mission

is the "welfare and well-being of citizens."

Recently, an important meeting chaired by Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was held at the Civil Secretariat Lahore to review PERA's performance, digitalization efforts, legal framework, and future strategy. During the meeting, a detailed briefing was presented on the authority's overall performance. The Chief Minister stated unequivocally that "the arrogant culture of 'pick up your belongings and get out' will not be tolerated in PERA." She stressed that officials who intimidate citizens, misuse authority, or harass the public have no place in the institution. She emphasized that every action taken by PERA must be citizen-friendly, lawful, and transparent.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif also declared the Digital Requisition System mandatory to ensure that PERA's operations remain fully documented and subject to oversight. She directed that, except for specific anti-encroachment and price-control cases, all enforcement actions should be carried out only after a prior digital requisition. This, she said, would eliminate opportunities for misuse of authority and ensure that every action is properly recorded. She further instructed that the "Ask PERA" public complaint portal be made more effective and directed the Director General of PERA to strengthen direct engagement with citizens.

According to the briefing, PERA has so far acted upon more than 62,000 digital requisitions and completed 1,527,028 inspections across the province. During these inspections, 3,509 shops were sealed for violating laws. Similarly, anti-encroachment operations led to the recovery of more than 21,000 kanals

of government land, while 1,700 individuals were arrested in cases related to profiteering and encroachments.

PERA's judicial performance was also described as remarkable. According to the briefing, the authority achieved a 99 percent conviction rate, while 99 percent of the 136 writ petitions filed against it were decided in its favor. Likewise, PERA secured nearly 98 percent success before judicial magistrates and hearing officers. The Chief Minister described these results as evidence of the institution's legal strength and professional competence.

To promote transparency, PERA's challan system is being fully digitized. Digital evidence, operational records, and all trial-related information are being preserved electronically. The briefing revealed that the first FIR under the PERA Act regarding a manual challan has already been registered, reflecting the authority's seriousness in transitioning to a fully digital system.

PERA has also taken strict measures regarding internal accountability. According to the briefing, 351 employees temporarily deputed from various government departments were returned to their parent departments due to disciplinary violations. In addition, 700 departmental penalties were imposed, while 20 employees were dismissed from service for negligence and maladministration. The official briefing, however, did not disclose the departments from which the 351 employees had originally been deputed. It is understood that officers and staff from various government and administrative departments were initially assigned to PERA on a temporary basis to meet operational requirements until permanent recruitment could be completed.

The Chief Minister further emphasized that adequate notice must be provided and affected

*Continued on Page 7*

## There is no shame left in the eyes of time

The true beauty of human society does not lie in its material progress, scientific inventions, or economic prosperity; rather, it is reflected in its morality, noble character, and sense of modesty. When the members of a nation embrace modesty, chastity, purity, decency, and an integral part of their lives, that nation attains dignity, honor, and stability. However, when modesty begins to disappear from society, moral decline, family disintegration, waywardness, crime, restlessness, and spiritual degradation inevitably become its destiny.

Islam regards haya' (modesty) as an essential component of faith. Modesty instills within a person the moral strength to refrain from evil, immorality, oppression, betrayal, and sin. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "النِّسَاءُ شُعْبَةٌ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ" "Modesty is a branch of faith." This hadith clearly demonstrates the inseparable relationship between faith and modesty. When modesty diminishes, the light of faith also begins to fade. For this reason, Islam instructs both men and women to guard their gaze, maintain purity in their dress, speak with dignity, uphold noble character, and observe the proper boundaries in relationships so that society may become a cradle of moral purity.

The Holy Qur'an declares: قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغْضُؤْنَ مِنْ عَيْنِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا أَرْوَاحَهُمْ "Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their chastity." (Qur'an 24:30)

The following verse gives the same instruction to believing women. These verses make it evident that modesty is not confined merely to clothing; rather, it encompasses the purity of one's gaze, speech, heart, thoughts, behavior,

and overall personality. When a person's gaze remains pure, their thoughts become pure; pure thoughts lead to righteous actions, and righteous actions establish the foundation of a virtuous society.

The modern era is characterized by the overwhelming influence of social media, digital technology, fashion, films, television dramas, and Western cultural trends. Young people are growing up in an environment where immodesty is often portrayed as freedom, fashion as civilization, and crossing moral boundaries as progress. Advertisements, web series, short videos, and numerous online platforms frequently display content that weakens the natural sense of modesty. If a young person lacks the fear of Allah and the treasure of modesty, they can easily become a victim of these temptations. Therefore, it is the collective responsibility of parents, teachers, religious scholars, and every responsible member of society to provide intellectual, moral, and spiritual guidance so that the younger generation can successfully confront the challenges of the modern age.

Islam considers youth to be one of Allah's greatest blessings. It is the stage of life in which human strength, talent, enthusiasm, determination, and potential reach their peak. If this precious period is devoted to worship, knowledge, service, hard work, character building, and the welfare of humanity, both this world and the Hereafter become prosperous. However, if youth is wasted in sinful desires, immorality, substance abuse, frivolous pursuits, and moral corruption, an entire lifetime may be consumed by regret. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taught that on the Day of Judgment every

*Continued on Page 7*

# Chairman Senate Highlights Parliamentary Diplomacy in Talks with Bulgarian Envoy

**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening ties with Bulgaria during a meeting with Ambassador Irena Genadieva Gancheva at Parliament House.

The discussions covered bilateral relations, regional developments, parliamentary cooperation, and economic and people-to-people ties. Gillani congratulated the Ambassador on her successful diplomatic assignment and commended her efforts in fostering mutual understanding.

He noted that Pakistan and Bulgaria share cordial relations based on mutual respect and cooperation on regional and international issues, describing Bulgaria as a key European partner.

He felicitated Bulgaria on joining the Schengen Area and adopting the Euro, and reiterated support for its OECD aspirations. Gillani stressed enhancing



political engagement through high-level visits and institutional dialogue, and expressed hope for an early session of the Pakistan-Bulgaria Inter-Governmental Commission on Economic Cooperation. He thanked Bulgaria for supporting Pakistan's GSP Plus status

and expressed confidence in continued cooperation under the EU's GSP+ framework.

Highlighting parliamentary diplomacy, Gillani noted the role of Parliamentary Friendship Groups in strengthening legislative cooperation

and people-to-people contacts, calling for increased exchanges.

He briefed the Ambassador on the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference (ISC), an initiative under his leadership promoting peace and development, and highlighted Pakistan's role in regional peace and dialogue between the US and Iran, noting global acknowledgment of its peace efforts. Gillani also discussed Senate initiatives for women's empowerment, minority rights, and youth engagement through education and internships, reaffirming commitment to inclusive governance.

He paid tribute to Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Pakistan's first female Prime Minister. In conclusion, Gillani thanked Ambassador Gancheva for her services and wished her success, reaffirming Pakistan's desire to expand cooperation with Bulgaria and the EU in youth development, women's empowerment, education, and economic growth.

## Global Leaders to Gather at London Forum 2026

**Commerce Desk**

DUBAI, UAE: AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics (CIBE) is pleased to announce the 2nd London Forum on Islamic Banking and Finance, scheduled to take place on 22 August 2026 in London, United Kingdom, in association with the London Central Mosque & The Islamic Cultural Centre.

Building on the success of its inaugural edition, the forum will bring together regulators, policymakers, bankers, investors, Shariah scholars, fintech innovators, academicians and industry leaders from around the world to discuss emerging opportunities, innovations and challenges shaping the future of Islamic finance. As one of the world's leading financial centers, London continues to play a significant role in the advancement of Islamic banking, Sukuk, ethical investments, and financial innovation, making it an ideal venue for this global gathering.

The forum will feature keynote speeches, panel discussions, technical presentations and networking sessions focused on Islamic banking, Takaful, Islamic capital markets, fintech, sustainable finance and investment opportunities. The event is expected to attract senior executives and decision-makers from financial institutions, regulatory bodies, development organizations, consulting firms, and academia across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and other regions.

Commenting on the occasion, Mr. Muhammad Zubair Mughal, Chief Executive Officer of AlHuda CIBE, stated, "The London Forum has emerged as an important international platform for knowledge sharing, collaboration and innovation in Islamic finance. The second edition will provide valuable opportunities for industry stakeholders to exchange insights establish strategic partnerships and contribute to the sustainable growth of the global Islamic financial services industry. We warmly welcome sponsors, speakers, partners, and participants from across the world to join us in London."

## Over 44 million people benefit as OICCI members invest Rs15.33 billion in CSR during FY 2025

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI), the collective body of around 200 of the largest foreign investors in Pakistan, has launched its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report 2025, documenting the socio-economic impact of its member companies across the country.



During fiscal year 2025, OICCI members collectively invested Rs15 billion in CSR activities, a 10 percent increase over the previous year, directly benefiting over 44 million individuals nationwide. A significant Rs4.5 billion of this total was channelled towards flood relief and rehabilitation efforts last year, reflecting the private sector's responsiveness to national crises. Member companies logged over 13 million man-hours in social sector work, supported by partnerships with 270 civil society organisations.

Foreign investors' CSR investments were broadly aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with Good Health and Well-being (SDG 3) receiving the largest share, over 60 percent of non-flood-relief contributions.

Members invested Rs6.5 billion in healthcare initiatives, covering free and subsidised medical services, hospital infrastructure, maternal health, and mental health outreach, reaching over 19 million beneficiaries. Education (SDG 4) received Rs1 billion, supporting about 0.9 million individuals through scholarships, digital learning, vocational training, and school infrastructure. Poverty alleviation efforts (SDG 1) drew Rs645 million, benefiting over 1.2 million people through income generation, microfinance, and social protection programmes.

Geographically, CSR activities spanned the length and breadth of Pakistan. Sindh and Punjab collectively accounted for nearly half of all interventions, while underserved regions including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (17 per cent), Balochistan (13pc), Gilgit-Baltistan (12pc), and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (10pc) received substantial outreach.

Commenting on CSR Report 2025, OICCI Secretary General M. Abdul Aleem said: "This report is a testament to the resolve of leading foreign investors in Pakistan to go beyond business and invest in the communities they operate in. Working alongside 270 social sector partners, our members have reached every corner of the country, addressing gaps in health, education, and livelihoods, and in doing so, they are helping build the inclusive, sustainable Pakistan that all of us want to see."

Dr. Samuel Rizk, UNDP Resident Representative Pakistan, who was the Chief Guest at the report launch, commented: "What OICCI members are demonstrating is precisely the kind of private sector leadership that Pakistan needs. Aligning corporate investment with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in health, education, and poverty reduction, is a direct contribution to the country's development trajectory."

The CSR Report 2025 also highlights OICCI's continued focus on climate action and sustainability, with members advancing clean energy, water stewardship, and responsible consumption initiatives in line with Pakistan's long-term ESG agenda.

# D-8 Marks MSME Day with Webinar on Green MSMEs and Medical Tourism

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) convened a special webinar on "Green MSMEs and Medical Tourism: Opportunities for MSME Development" to mark International MSME Day. Over 40 participants from D-8 Member States joined, including ministries of foreign affairs, health, tourism, energy, SME bodies, chambers, and business support institutions.

H. E. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, D-8 Secretary-General, called MSMEs the "engine of growth" and backbone of D-8 economies, driving jobs, innovation, and the SDGs. He said the green transition offers MSMEs new avenues to raise productivity, resource efficiency, competitiveness, and investment. He highlighted green entrepreneurship and medical tourism as sectors that can integrate MSMEs into regional and



global value chains, and thanked SME Corp. Malaysia for expert inputs.

Technical sessions featured Ms. Michelle Tee of Wakili Venture Berhad

on circular practices, AI-enabled inventory, and sustainable procurement, and Mr. Lokman Izam of MHTC on Malaysia's healthcare travel ecosystem and MSME opportunities in hospitality, transport, wellness, and digital services.

KOSGEB's Mr. Emre Gürlük outlined Türkiye's 2024-2028 green MSME plan and flagged finance as a key barrier. Azerbaijan's KOBIA introduced the Baku Climate Coalition for SMEs Green Transition post-COP29. Bangladesh shared sustainable supply chain models, while Türkiye's Ministry of Culture and Tourism noted GSTC-aligned certification and 1.4 million health tourists generating \$3.3 billion in 2025.

Participants affirmed finance, technology, and certification gaps, and committed to deeper cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and the Baku Coalition to build resilient, competitive, and sustainable MSMEs across D-8.

# Diplomacy for Prosperity

The evolving relationship between Iran and the United States has entered a cautious phase marked by diplomatic engagement, strategic negotiations, and persistent mistrust.

After years of sanctions, military confrontations, and disagreements over Iran's nuclear program, both countries have shown an interest in reducing tensions through indirect talks aimed at preventing further regional instability. While discussions have focused on issues such as sanctions relief, nuclear safeguards, maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz, and confidence-building measures, significant differences remain over the scope of Iran's nuclear activities and the conditions under which economic sanctions should be eased.

Consequently, although negotiations represent a positive step

toward de-escalation, they have not yet resulted in a comprehensive or permanent peace agreement. Regional actors continue to monitor these developments closely because any improvement or deterioration in U. S.-Iran relations has far-reaching consequences for the Middle East and the global economy, particularly in relation to energy security and international trade.

In this context, Pakistan plays an important and constructive role. Sharing a long border with Iran while maintaining longstanding strategic and security ties with the United States, Pakistan is uniquely positioned to encourage dialogue and regional stability. Pakistan has consistently

advocated peaceful resolution of disputes through diplomacy rather than military confrontation, emphasizing respect for sovereignty, non-interference, and international law.

Islamabad has also sought to maintain balanced relations with both Tehran and Washington, avoiding alignment with policies that could further escalate regional tensions. As a neighboring country, Pakistan has a direct interest in ensuring stability along its western border, preventing cross-border militancy, facilitating lawful trade, and promoting economic connectivity through regional infrastructure and energy projects. Furthermore, Pakistan has

supported initiatives within international and regional forums that encourage negotiations and confidence-building measures among conflicting parties. A stable relationship between Iran and the United States would not only reduce the risk of armed conflict but also create opportunities for increased regional cooperation, improved trade routes, enhanced energy security, and sustainable economic development benefiting South Asia, the Middle East, and the wider international community.

Therefore, while considerable challenges remain before a lasting peace agreement can be achieved, continued diplomatic engagement, supported by responsible regional stakeholders such as Pakistan, offers the most realistic pathway toward long-term peace, stability, and prosperity.

*The writer is living in Birmingham-UK*



Analysis

Tahmeed Sadiq

# Pakistan Holds First National Summit of Women with Disabilities

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's first-ever National Summit of Women with Disabilities was held June 29-30 under the theme "Advancing Voice, Leadership and Inclusion." Convened by the Aawaz II Programme, funded by UK FCDO and implemented by British Council, UNFPA, and Care International, the summit was hosted by British Council with UNFPA and the National Forum of Women with Disabilities (NFWWD), (WWDs).

Building on three years of Aawaz II work in 37 districts, the summit highlighted 247-member Special Interest Groups in 15 KP and Punjab districts that created safe spaces for WWDs to identify barriers and solutions. Officials including British Council's James Hampson, UNFPA's Dr. Gulnara Kadyrkulova, and Aawaz II's Dr. Yasmin Zaidi stressed "Nothing about us, without us," calling WWDs leaders, not beneficiaries. (SIGs)

Speakers cited stark exclusion: only 0.3% of PWDs are



NADRA-registered and 31% have attended school. Sessions covered GBV, provincial initia-

tives like Punjab's Himmat Card and KP's assistive devices, and the pending KP Disabilities Bill.

The summit ended with a National Charter of Demands calling for an end to intersecting

discrimination, inclusive education, legal representation with reserved seats, GBV protection,

and economic empowerment via training and job quotas. Organizers said the summit marks the start of a WWDs-led disability rights phase as Aawaz II concludes.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
184,050.10	180,301.70
Day's High	Day's Low
184,233.57	180,565.83
Index Value	Change
45,942,317,124	+3748.40
Percentage	Time
+2.08%	1 Jul, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,478.34	-18.78
Percentage	Time
-0.18%	1 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
52,330.08	+10.88
Percentage	Time
+0.021%	1 Jul, 3:31 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
70,474.96	+412.64
Percentage	Time
+0.59%	1 Jul, 3:45 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	190.25	193.97
Bahrain Dinar	738.60	748.71
Canadian Dollar	197.31	201.05
China Yuan	38.10	38.85
Danish Krone	43.35	43.75
Euro	318.55	322.17
Hong Kong Dollar	35.06	36.04
Indian Rupee	2.75	3.05
Japanese Yen	1.7121	1.8104
Kuwaiti Dinar	886.34	896.90
Malaysian Ringgit	67.15	68.05
New Zealand \$	155.60	159.65
Norwegians Krone	27.97	28.27
Omani Riyal	723.42	733.50
Qatari Riyal	75.19	77.20
Saudi Riyal	74.35	75.05
Singapore Dollar	213.90	217.64
Swedish Korona	30.25	30.55
Swiss Franc	342.11	346.10
Thai Bhat	8.47	8.77
U.A.E Dirham	75.90	76.75
UK Pound Sterling	368.52	372.25
US Dollar	279.00	279.20

# Telenor Pakistan formally amalgamates into PTML following statutory approvals

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Telenor Pakistan will formally amalgamate into Pak Telecom Mobile Limited PTML (Ufone 5G) with effect from July 2026, marking the completion of one of the most significant transactions in the country's telecommunications history. The amalgamation follows the receipt of the final statutory approval from the Islamabad High Court, which brought to close a comprehensive regulatory process spanning multiple regulatory and statutory



institutions. From here on, Telenor Pakistan will cease to exist as a separate legal entity. With this development, Telenor Pakistan's operations, network infrastructure, and customer base will be fully integrated into PTML (Ufone 5G), creating a combined entity with expanded reach, a stronger spectrum portfolio, and greater

capacity to invest in next-generation connectivity and digital services across the country. Speaking on the occasion, President & CEO, PTCL, Hatem Bamatraf, said, "This is a defining moment for our company and for Pakistan's telecom industry. We are deeply grateful to the Government of Pakistan and to every institu-

tion involved in this process for their diligence, and support throughout this journey. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our customers, whose trust has carried both Ufone and Telenor Pakistan through this transition, and to our employees, whose dedication and hard work made this milestone achievable. As we come together as one company, our ambition is to bring our customers cutting-edge products and services that set a new benchmark for digital experience in Pakistan."

# SMEDA Forms New MSME Committee to Boost Coordination in Sindh

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) has notified the MSME Coordination Committee (MCC) for Sindh to strengthen outreach and provincial liaison, following the decision of the 35th SMEDA Board meeting.



According to the notification, SMEDA Board Member Mashood Ali Khan will serve as Convener, while SMEDA's Regional Chief Sindh will act as Committee Secretary. The 16-member committee is tasked with improving coordination between SMEDA and the Sindh government, relevant stakeholders, and the private sector.

The notification states that the Convener may co-opt additional members from federal or provincial

ministries, departments, development partners, or the private sector as needed for specific agenda items.

The Committee will meet at least once every quarter, or more frequently if required by the Convener. SMEDA will be responsible for preparing and circulating meeting minutes, action matrices, and quarterly progress reports for the Committee's review and for submission to the Ministry of Industries & Production.

## National Day

by Sultan Bashir

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Somalia to Pakistan Sheikh Noor Muhammad Hassan along with Chairman Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) Khalif Mahmood, and others on a stall during the Somalia National Day celebration organized by ISSI in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

# Mian Zahid Hussain backs Visa Crackdown, condemns Karachi Rangers Attack

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Mian Zahid Hussain, President PBIF & AKIA, Chairman NGB, Chairman FPCCI Policy Advisory Board and former IT Minister, has condemned the Jamaat-ul-Ahrar attack on Sindh Rangers in Karachi that killed three personnel. He called the July 10 decision to arrest Afghan nationals without valid visas a necessary step for national security, rule of law, economic stability, and state authority.

Hussain noted Pakistan hosted Afghan refugees for four decades with generosity, but no country can permit indefinite stay without visas, registration, and accountability. He said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is leading Pakistan from stability toward growth, while Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir's role is critical for security and border control. Civil-military coordination,



he added, is boosting law and order and investor confidence.

He stressed that documented Afghans — workers, students, businessmen, and registered refugees — must not be harassed. Those without legal status should face

action under law without discrimination, calling the policy fair and in the national interest.

The Rangers attack, he said, shows terrorism and weak border controls threaten security and Karachi's economy. He urged a coordinated drive by NADRA, FIA, police, and intelligence for biometric checks, visa tracking, and business registration to curb illegal residence and informal trade. Illegal stay, he warned, burdens jobs, housing, health, and fuels smuggling and tax evasion.

Hussain said repatriation should be legal and humane for women, children, elderly, and registered refugees, but undocumented individuals must be returned. "Pakistan's hospitality is not weakness. Sovereignty, security, and law are supreme," he stated, pledging business community support to government and security institutions.

# ISSI-PAIDAR Event Highlights Pakistan's Peacekeeping Role and Growing Ties with Somalia

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with Pakistan Africa Institute for Development and Research (PAIDAR), hosted an event to celebrate Somalia's Independence Day. The proceedings included the national anthems of both countries.

Speakers included Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG ISSI; Ambassador Sheikh Nur Mohamed Hassan, Somalia's Ambassador to Pakistan; Ambassador Aqsa Nawaz, Pakistan's Ambassador to Djibouti, accredited to Somalia; and Dr. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA. The Chief Guest was Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, President PAIDAR. Ambassador Khalid Mahmood highlighted the long-standing, friendly relations between Pakistan and Somalia, rooted in mutual respect, shared values, and people-to-people ties. He recalled Pakistan's contributions to UN peacekeeping in Somalia and stressed expanding cooperation in education, trade, capacity building, and maritime



security. Dr. Amina Khan noted that Somalia's Independence Day honors the resilience of its people. Under Pakistan's "Engage Africa" policy, CAMEA is committed to strengthening engagement with Africa through dialogue and collaboration. She emphasized Pakistan's support and the role of the Somali community in Pakistan, including interns at ISSI, in fostering ties.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed recalled Pakistan's early support for Somalia, including the 1993 sacrifice of Pakistani peacekeepers. He highlighted cooperation in defense, education, counter-terrorism, and capacity building, noting around 2,500 Somali students in Paki-

stan, and welcomed Somalia's progress.

Ambassador Sheikh Nur Mohamed Hassan spoke of Somalia's strategic location and potential as a regional trade hub, with opportunities in the blue economy, livestock, agriculture, and fisheries. He thanked Pakistan for its friendship and reaffirmed Somalia's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations.

Ambassador Aqsa Nawaz underscored Somalia's importance as a key East African partner under Pakistan's "Engage Africa" policy. She reaffirmed support for Somalia's peace, development, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, noting close coordination at the UN, OIC, and G-77, and expressed confidence in deepening relations.

# Supernet Technologies Awarded PKR 1 Billion Contract for Critical Communications Infrastructure Modernization

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Supernet Technologies Limited has been awarded a contract valued at approximately PKR 1 billion for the provision of hardware and services to a leading organization in Pakistan.

According to the company's material information shared with the Pakistan Stock Exchange, the project will involve the enhancement and modernization of critical communications infrastructure and is expected to be executed during FY 2026-27. The contract is anticipated to make a meaningful contribution to Supernet Technol-

ogies' revenue growth and profitability over the project period.

The award reflects Supernet's growing position in Pakistan's technology and communications infrastructure market, where demand for secure, reliable and modern digital systems continues to increase across public and private sector organizations.

Supernet Technologies Limited informed the Pakistan Stock Exchange that the project is expected to be executed over FY 2026-27 and will contribute positively to the company's business performance during the period.

## Pakistan Enters Sustainable Investment Market as SECP Launches ESG Mutual Funds Framework

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has taken a major step towards sustainable finance with the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) issuing the country's first ESG Mutual Funds Framework. The framework enables Asset Management Companies (AMCs) to launch Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)-focused mutual funds, bringing Pakistan's capital market in line with global sustainable investment practices.

Globally, sustainable investing has grown rapidly, with more than USD 16 trillion in assets managed under sustainable investment strategies. As investors increasingly seek investments that combine financial returns with responsible business practices, regulators around the world are introducing frameworks to support ESG investing.

For Pakistan, the initiative is particularly important as the country remains among the world's most climate-vulnerable nations. The new framework establishes a transparent regulatory regime for ESG-aligned collective investment schemes and opens Pakistan's financial market to the growing global sustainable investment ecosystem.

Under the framework, equity-based ESG mutual funds will primarily invest in companies included in the Pakistan Stock Exchange's Sustainability Index and those aligned with SECP's ESG Disclosure Guidelines. Debt-based ESG mutual funds will invest in green, social and sustainability-linked debt instruments in line with Pakistan's Green Taxonomy and Sustainable Finance Framework. The framework is expected to encourage Pakistani companies to improve their environmental, social and governance practices, enhancing their access to sustainable investment capital while promoting responsible corporate behaviour.

To protect investors and maintain market integrity, the framework requires ESG mutual funds to invest at least 50 percent of their net assets in ESG-aligned investments. It also introduces governance, disclosure and independent assurance requirements to prevent greenwashing and enhance transparency and accountability.

# Select Technologies IPO Public Subscription Opens July 2 at Rs34/Share

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Select Technologies Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Air Link Communication Limited, will open its public subscription on July 2-3, 2026, till 11:59 pm, after completing its book-building phase.

The company is offering 88.88 million ordinary shares, equal to 10% of post-IPO paid-up capital. During book-building, 66.66 million shares [75%] were fully subscribed at a strike price of Rs34 by high-net-worth and institutional investors. The remaining 22.22 million shares [25%] are now available to the general public at Rs34 per share.

Select Technologies

manufactures and assembles smartphones, smart TVs, and air conditioners in Pakistan. It holds partnerships with Xiaomi and Hisense and aims to capitalize on Pakistan's shift to local production of consumer electronics and smart devices.

Group CEO Muzaffar Hayat Paracha said the book-building response shows confidence in the firm's model and growth prospects. Arif Habib Limited CEO Shahid Ali Habib called it a positive signal for the capital market. The IPO is Shariah-compliant.

Investors can apply online via CDC's Centralized Subscription Portal at cdcaccess.com.pk or PSX e-IPO at eipo.psx.com.pk.

# Govt Extends DTL Scheme 90 Days for Rice Exporters as Exports Eye \$3bn

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: The federal government has granted rice exporters a 90-day extension under the Duty and Taxes Remission for Exports [DTLTL] scheme, financed through the Export Development Fund [EDF], in a move welcomed by REAP.

The EDF Committee approved increasing the DTLTL incentive for Basmati rice from 3% to 5%, while retaining the 9% incentive for Non-Basmati rice. REAP Chairman Faisal Malik Jhangir represented the Association at the meeting.

Former REAP Chairman

Rafiq Suleman said the timely decision will ease financial pressure and help rice exports surpass US\$3 billion this fiscal year. He noted Middle East conflicts over the last 1.5 months caused vessel shortages, route disruptions, and a spike in freight costs, leading to missed orders and reputational losses. REAP Senior Vice Chairman Javed Jillani said the extension will help clear pending orders, secure new contracts, and keep Pakistani rice competitive as Indian rice sells cheaper. He added the support will benefit farmers, millers, exporters, and allied industries, boost forex earnings, and spur rural activity.

# ICCI Marks Africa Day 2026, Calls for Stronger Pakistan-Africa Economic Ties



**Naveed Ahmad Khan**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) hosted Africa Day Celebration 2026, bringing together ambassadors, high commissioners, government officials, diplomats, and business leaders to deepen Pakistan-Africa cooperation. City & Local Guides

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, Chief Guest, said Pakistan's

ties with Africa are rooted in mutual respect, shared anti-colonial struggles, and a common commitment to sovereignty and sustainable development. "The time has come to convert political solidarity into economic partnership in trade, investment, science, higher education, and people-to-people exchanges," he said, inviting African investors to explore opportunities in KP's hydro-power, minerals, agriculture, industry, and human capital.

Additional Secretary for Africa at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hamid Asghar, termed Africa a market of "limitless opportunities" driven by a young population, expanding consumer bases, and rich agricultural land. He noted several African countries are ready to offer thousands of acres for corporate farming and urged Pakistani firms to plan targeted trade missions, with full facilitation from the Foreign Office.

ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood reaffirmed the Chamber's role as a bridge for business delegations, joint ventures, and institutional partnerships to expand market access. High Commissioner of Mauritius H. E. Munsoo Kurrimbaccus, speaking for the African Group, said Africa's 54 nations are among the world's most dynamic regions. "Africa's greatest wealth is its people," he said, citing the youth dividend, resources, agriculture,

and tourism as the basis for strategic cooperation with Pakistan. Chairman Pakistan-Africa Friendship Association Zafar Bakhtawari said direct air links are essential to unlock trade, tourism, and business potential. He urged the government to prioritize connectivity to strengthen economic, political, and cultural ties and address shared challenges like climate change and energy security. ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub conducted the event and thanked participants. The gathering included African ambassadors and high commissioners, the Ambassador of Türkiye, ICCI executive members, and leaders from trade and industry.



Photos by Sultan Bashir

## SMEDA, Akhuwat to Jointly Boost Microfinance and Enterprise Support for Women, Youth

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: SMEDA CEO Ms. Nadia Jahangir Seth met Akhuwat Foundation Chairman Dr. Amjad Saqib for a follow-up to strengthen collaboration under their existing MoU. The meeting aimed to launch a joint program focused on microfinance and enterprise development, with special emphasis on women and youth-led micro enterprises across Pakistan.



The initiative aligns with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's directives and SAPM on Industries & Production Haroon Akhtar Khan's push for inclusive entrepreneurship, financial empowerment, and sustainable

growth. Under the agreed framework, SMEDA will provide business development support and capacity-building to Akhuwat-supported enterprises. This includes Non-Financial Advisory Services [NFAS] covering busi-

ness training, enterprise management, financial literacy, marketing, and other core skills to complement Akhuwat's interest-free microfinance. Ms. Seth said integrated financial and non-financial support is key to sustainable livelihoods and expanding opportunities for women and youth. Dr. Saqib reaffirmed Akhuwat's commitment to underserved communities through partnerships that enhance beneficiary success. Both sides agreed to begin implementation early via coordinated action plans and regular engagement to advance Pakistan's inclusive economic agenda.

## CM reviews PERA performance, warns against abuse of authority

Continued from Page 4

parties properly informed before any anti-encroachment operation is carried out. She stated that the culture of resisting lawful action must come to an end and that the supremacy of law must be upheld in all circumstances. She also made it clear that no investigating officer would be transferred due to recommendations or external pressure. To make PERA a more professional, disciplined, and courteous institution, work has begun on establishing a modern training academy at Kallar Kahar. According to the briefing, PERA's permanent recruitment process will be completed by June 2027, while an Internal Affairs Unit is also being established to further strengthen transparency and account-

ability within the organization. The Punjab Government presents the Punjab Enforcement and Regulatory Authority (PERA) as a model institution for modern governance, digital oversight, accountability, and effective law enforcement. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has repeatedly emphasized that PERA's true success lies in public trust, transparency, and a citizen-friendly approach. However, the situation in New Shams Colony, Multan, and adjoining residential areas raises important questions about these claims. Encroachments occupying roads, footpaths, and parking spaces, persistent traffic congestion outside the NADRA office, illegal constructions, open violations of building regulations, commercial activities in residential properties, unauthor-

ized conversion of houses into shops, alleged occupation of government land, and the unlawful sale of petrol in bottles continue to create difficulties and safety hazards for residents. If PERA has indeed been established to ensure impartial enforcement of the law and protect the public interest, then the authority of law should also be demonstrated in this area. Local residents rightly demand that PERA, the district administration, the Multan Development Authority (MDA), Civil Defence, and other relevant institutions take immediate action to remove encroachments, recover government land, prevent illegal construction, and eliminate unlawful fuel sales. After all, the credibility of the law is not established merely through statistics but through the relief, justice, and protection experienced by ordinary citizens.

## There is no shame left in the eyes of time

Continued from Page 4

individual will be questioned about how they spent their youth. Islamic history is filled with inspiring examples of young people whose purity and righteousness transformed the world. 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA) embraced Islam at a very young age. Usamah ibn Zayd (RA) was appointed commander of a great Muslim army while still a youth. Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr (RA) sacrificed his luxurious lifestyle to dedicate his youth to the propagation of Islam. Likewise, Prophet Yusuf (Joseph, peace be upon him) remained steadfast in modesty, chastity, and piety despite severe temptation. When the wife of the

Egyptian nobleman invited him to sin, he responded: "Ma'adh Allah!" I seek refuge in Allah." It was this very modesty and God-consciousness that ultimately became the source of his honor, authority, and success. Modesty is not merely an ornament for women; it is equally a virtue for men. Islam commands men to lower their gaze, dress with dignity, speak respectfully, and preserve the purity of their character. When the men of a society are modest and morally upright, women feel more secure, families become stronger, children receive better upbringing, and mutual trust and social harmony flourish.

One of the greatest challenges facing today's youth is the careless use of mobile phones and social media. When these tools are used for learning, research, education, da'wah (inviting others to Islam), and other constructive purposes, they become valuable blessings from Allah. However, when they promote obscenity, waste precious time, spread falsehood, encourage backbiting, facilitate immoral relationships, and normalize indecency, they become instruments of ethical destruction. Therefore, young people must uphold the same standards of modesty in their digital lives that Islam requires in their everyday lives, remembering that Allah sees both the

outward actions and the innermost intentions of every individual. The protection of modesty begins within the home. When parents themselves live modest and righteous lives, nurture their children according to Islamic teachings, strengthen their attachment to the Qur'an, encourage regular prayer, guide them toward righteous companionship, and supervise their moral development, they cultivate strong and upright personalities. Likewise, educational institutions should not limit themselves to awarding academic degrees; they should also prioritize character development, moral education, national

service, and religious awareness. Knowledge without character may become a source of harm rather than benefit. Modesty not only protects a person from sin but also elevates their dignity and honor. A modest individual is distinguished by refined speech, a pure gaze, dignified appearance, honesty in dealings, and respect in relationships. Such people earn the trust, affection, and admiration of society. In contrast, immodesty strips a person of honor, inner peace, respect, and spiritual illumination. Today, as the world continues to face numerous moral crises, the greatest need for young

people is to safeguard their faith, modesty, and character. This is true freedom, genuine success, and the path to prosperity in both this world and the Hereafter. The poet's prayer echoes the heartfelt wish of every parent, teacher, scholar, and sincere well-wisher: although society may be drifting toward moral decline, may our youth preserve their faith, modesty, and noble character. Such pure youth is the guarantee of a righteous society, strong families, a protected civilization, and a successful Muslim Ummah. When young people align their vision, thoughts, speech, character, and actions with the pleasure of Allah, they not only

keep their own lives pure and honorable but also acquire the ability to transform the destiny of an entire nation. Every young person, therefore, should resolve to regard their youth as a sacred trust from Allah, to adorn themselves with modesty, to make Taqwa (God-consciousness) their guiding principle, and to develop a character that earns respect in this world and the pleasure of Allah in the Hereafter. This is the true meaning of modesty, its timeless message, and the illuminating path toward a dignified Islamic way of life.

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## How Pakistan Became Israel's Primary Target-II

Continued from Page 4

Incidentally, Balochistan has become one of South Asia's most strategically significant provinces. It hosts the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), borders both Iran and Afghanistan, and provides Pakistan with direct access to the Arabian Sea through Gwadar Port. The province has also experienced a long-running separatist insurgency. The external actors are seeking to exploit local grievances to advance broader geopolitical objectives. Israeli-linked organizations such as MEMRI have increasingly highlighted Balochistan-related issues. MEMRI has translated and

archived statements by exiled Baloch nationalist leaders, including Hyrbayir Marri, who has publicly expressed support for closer relations with Israel and praised Israeli military actions against Iran. These publications demonstrate that some Baloch nationalist figures openly seek international partnerships, including with Israel. Similarly, opinion pieces published in The Jerusalem Post have discussed overtures by exiled Baloch leaders toward Israel. These developments do not by themselves establish operational cooperation. However, they have contributed to a growing perception within Pakistan's strategic

community that Balochistan has become part of a wider geopolitical contest. Most importantly, modern conflict increasingly extends beyond the battlefield. Military force is now accompanied by information campaigns, digital influence operations, cyber activities, political advocacy, and international narrative building. The media platforms, advocacy organizations, think tanks, and digital campaigns increasingly influence international perceptions regarding Balochistan. Whether one accepts these assessments or not, information competition has clearly become an important dimension of contemporary

geopolitical rivalry. The debate surrounding Balochistan therefore extends beyond security operations to include competing narratives over governance, human rights, separatism, terrorism, and regional stability. Pakistan's response should be guided by evidence, strategic patience, and institutional resilience rather than alarmism. Strengthening border security, improving intelligence coordination with neighboring countries, expanding counterterrorism capabilities, protecting critical national infrastructure, enhancing cyber resilience, and investing in economic develop-

ment in vulnerable regions should remain national priorities. Equally important is deeper security cooperation with Iran, whose own border provinces face similar challenges involving cross-border militancy, organized crime, and extremist violence. Diplomatically, Pakistan should continue engaging regional and international partners while explaining its security concerns through credible evidence and sustained dialogue. History demonstrates that countries assuming greater geopolitical importance inevitably attract greater strategic attention from both partners and competitors. Whether Pakistan's growing

diplomatic role proves temporary or enduring, its security environment has undeniably become more complex. The convergence of terrorism, proxy conflicts, information warfare, and regional power competition demands careful strategic planning rather than reactive policymaking. The international analysts increasingly view Pakistan as a country whose security is intertwined with broader regional dynamics. While some claims regarding external involvement in insurgent movements remain contested and require continued scrutiny, they have nonetheless become part of Pakistan's evolving

strategic discourse. Pakistan's greatest strength has historically been its resilience. If it combines diplomatic engagement with effective governance, counterterrorism, economic inclusion, and regional cooperation, it will be better positioned to navigate an era in which influence is measured not only by military capability but also by the ability to withstand hybrid threats and preserve national cohesion. The writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former Press Attaché to Malaysia and Former MD, SRBC. He is living in Michigan, USA.

## Revenue Collection Target meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, addressing FBR leadership and field formations at FBR Headquarters, Islamabad, on Wednesday, for successfully achieving the revised annual revenue collection target for FY2025–26.



Photo: PID

# Finance minister commends FBR for historic revenue achievement

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb commended the FBR on Wednesday for achieving its revised FY2025–26 revenue target, calling it a historic milestone driven by reforms, teamwork, and workforce dedication.

Addressing a meeting at FBR Headquarters, he conveyed the Prime Minister's congratulations, noting

the achievement should be seen within Pakistan's broader two-and-a-half-year reform journey, which nearly doubled revenue collection.

The Minister highlighted that this progress represents one of Pakistan's most significant fiscal improvements, strengthening macroeconomic fundamentals by recording the lowest fiscal deficit and highest-ever primary surplus alongside strong external sector indi-

cators.

He praised Inland Revenue and Customs for delivering robust growth despite providing tariff relief, and lauded the FBR for processing Rs. 599 billion in tax refunds, including Rs. 13.5 billion on the last fiscal day, reflecting commitment to business facilitation.

Emphasizing a forward-looking reform agenda, Aurangzeb stressed that modern tax administration

must balance revenue collection with taxpayer facilitation, transparency, and public trust.

He called for technology-driven compliance, automation, improved services, and reduced corruption opportunities.

The newly approved operating model for FBR focuses on people, processes, and technology, expanding AI and digital systems.

He thanked Parliament for legislative support and

acknowledged the Prime Minister's leadership. Chairman FBR Rashid Mahmood Langrial thanked the Minister for his visit and continued support, highlighting close coordination with the Finance Division and stakeholders during budget consultations.

He underscored the importance of institutional reforms promoting merit, professionalism, and integrity within FBR.

## Passport offices go cashless as Pakistan modernises services



### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has announced the implementation of a cashless payment system at passport offices across Pakistan.

In a statement shared on social media platform X, Mohsin Naqvi said citizens will now be able to pay passport fees through digital channels, eliminating long queues and hours of waiting at passport offices.

He said that, on the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the reform process in passport services has been completed. According to the minister, the introduction of a cashless system will make passport services faster, more transparent and efficient.

The interior minister also congratulated the passport team on the successful implementation of the initiative and appreciated their efforts in improving public service delivery.

## Govt Presents 'Most Balanced Budget' with Record Youth Funding: Rana Mashhood

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: PMYP Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan said the federal government delivered Pakistan's most balanced budget, with record allocations for youth, education, sports, innovation, and skills.

He cited a Rs125 billion public subsidy despite IMF commitments and Rs24.48 billion for new Danish Schools. PMYP programs engaged 300,000 youth in sports, with 9 athletes reaching PSL via merit.

Key initiatives include Pakistan's first nationwide hockey talent hunt and league, a Volunteer Corps, National E-Sports Policy with a new federation in two months, E-Sports



Arenas, National Innovation Awards, and Green Youth Movement clubs in universities.

NAVITC funding will expand technical training. Overseas employment targets rise to 1.7-1.8 million this year from 0.8-0.9 million last year.

## Four drones launched from Afghanistan into Balochistan shot down: ISPR

### News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The military said that four drones launched from across the border by the Afghan Taliban regime into Balochistan were successfully shot down by Pakistan's air defence systems.

According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Pakistan's air defence network has been fully activated following the incident.

The ISPR said that the hostile aerial platforms were immediately picked up by Pakistan's robust air defence network.

Demonstrating high operational readiness, security forces successfully neutralised all four incoming drones using sophisticated counter-



people.

Instead of trying to sedate their population through such antics and hollow rhetoric, they should eschew sponsorship of terrorism and adhere to the principle of peaceful coexistence, the statement added.

The ISPR cautioned the Afghan Taliban regime to stop providing patronage to terrorist elements, stressing that Pakistan's armed forces remain fully vigilant and resolutely committed to defending the country's sovereignty.

The ISPR added that any misadventures or cross-border provocations threatening the sovereignty of Pakistan and endangering its people will continue to be met with swift, decisive, and overwhelming responses under Operation Ghazab-lil-Haq.

The ISPR said that such gimmicks of the Afghan Taliban regime were aimed at misleading the Afghan population suffering under their

oppressive regime. The Afghan Taliban should realise that their irresponsible behaviour is only adding to the hardships of the Afghan

## Acting AJK President Latif Akbar cleared to contest LA-31 Khawara election

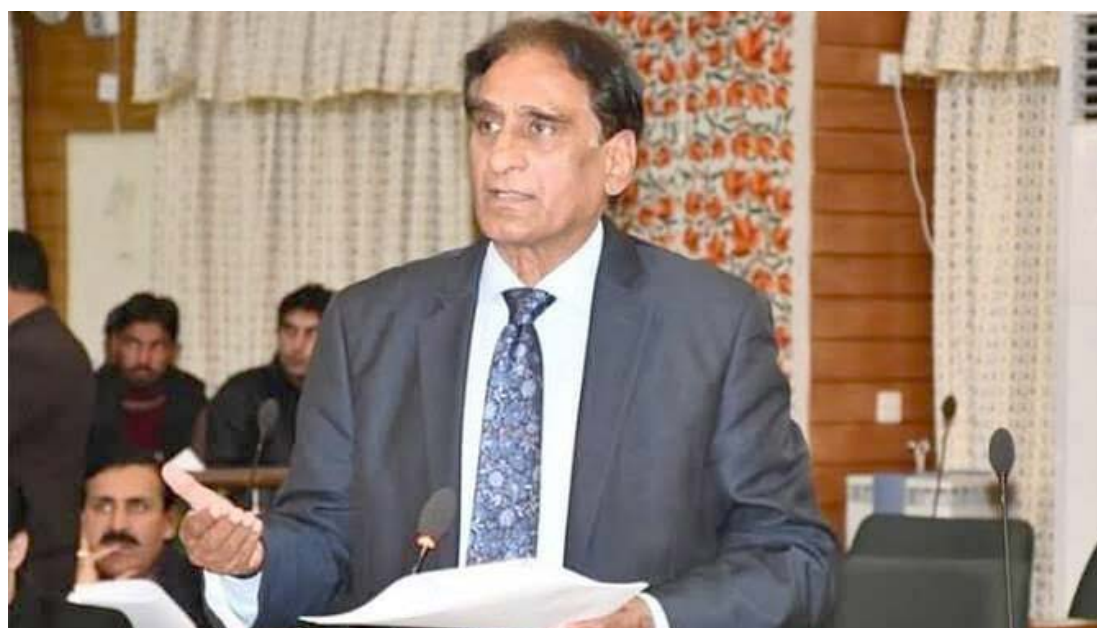
### Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has allowed Acting President Chaudhry Latif Akbar to contest the upcoming election from constituency LA-31 Khawara after accepting his appeal against the rejection of his nomination papers.

According to the details, in a reserved verdict announced on Wednesday, Chief Election Commissioner Justice (Retd) Ghulam Mustafa Mughal set aside the returning officer's decision to reject Akbar's nomination papers, clearing the way for him to participate in the election.

The ruling came after the Election Commission heard arguments from all parties involved in the case. The commission ultimately decided in favour of Akbar, enabling him to remain in the electoral contest for the constituency.

Following the announcement, supporters of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) gathered outside the Election Commission offices to celebrate the decision. Party workers



chanted slogans and described the verdict as a victory for the democratic process.

The decision is expected to reshape the political landscape in LA-31 Khawara, where a closely

fought contest is anticipated. Political observers expect a strong challenge between Akbar and Raja Saqib Majeed of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

The constituency witnessed a

fiercely contested election during the previous poll, with both candidates involved in a closely matched race. The latest ruling has therefore set the stage for another highly competitive electoral battle in the area.

## Pakistan, India swap prisoners' lists

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In pursuance of the bilateral Agreement on Consular Access, Pakistan and India, Wednesday, exchanged, through diplomatic channels, the lists of prisoners in each other's custody.

Under the Agreement, signed on 21 May 2008, both sides are required to exchange these lists on 1 January and 1 July every year.

"The Government of Pakistan handed over a list of 250 Indian prisoners in Pakistan (52 civilian prisoners and 198 fishermen) to the Indian High Commission in Islamabad. Simultaneously, the Government of India provided a list of 439 Pakistani or believed-to-be-Pakistani prisoners, including 386 civilian prisoners and 53 fishermen, who are in Indian jails," the Foreign Office Spokesperson said

in a press statement.

Additionally, the government of India was urged to release and repatriate 97 Pakistani prisoners (64 civilian prisoners and 33 fishermen) who had completed their sentences and whose nationality had been confirmed.

"India was also urged to ensure the safety, security and well-being of all Pakistani and believed-to-be-Pakistani prisoners awaiting release and repatriation," it was added.

The government of Pakistan also called for expeditious consular access to all believed-to-be-Pakistani prisoners to facilitate the early confirmation of their nationality.

The spokesperson further said that the government of Pakistan would continue its efforts to ensure the early return of all Pakistani prisoners.