



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
عائشہ رضی اللہ عنہا سے روایت ہے کہ نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے ایک عورت کا ہاتھ کوٹ لیا۔ عائشہ رضی اللہ عنہا نے کہا کہ وہ عورت بد میں بھی آتی تھی اور میں اس کی ضرورت تھی نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کے سامنے رکھتی تھی اس عورت نے کوہِ برنی تھی اور حسنِ تربیت کا ثبوت دیا تھا۔
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 6800)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited



Fuel prices increased by Rs13 per litre

The government announced an increase in the prices of petroleum products, raising the price of petrol by Rs13.18 per litre and high-speed diesel by Rs13.80 per litre. According to the notification issued by the Petroleum Division, the new prices came into effect from Saturday at 12 am.



Toll costs rise on Pakistan's major motorways and highways

Pakistan National Highway Authority has announced a significant increase in toll taxes on major motorways, national highways and expressways across the country, according to a notification. According to the notification, toll tax for cars on highways has been increased to 100 Pakistani rupees, wagons to 200 rupees and buses to 300 rupees.

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Calls on

ISLAMABAD: Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Candidate for the Position of United Nations Secretary-General, Calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday.



Photo: PID

PM, Amir of Qatar discuss regional situation



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a warm and cordial telephone conversation Friday with the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and discussed the regional situation.

During their discussion, the Prime Minister expressed his deep concern over the recent escalation in tensions in the region. While conveying Pakistan's solidarity and support with the people of Qatar on the recent attacks, the Prime Minister stressed upon all parties to exercise restraint and refrain from any actions that could undermine peace in the region.

The Prime Minister

conveyed Pakistan's sincere gratitude to the Amir for Qatar's consistent and steadfast support in the peace efforts that culminated in the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding and the first round of high-level technical talks at Burgenstock.

The two leaders agreed upon the importance of sustained diplomatic engagement and dialogue, and adherence to the commitments made by all parties under the peace memorandum.

The Amir thanked the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for playing a leading role for peace in the region and assured him of Qatar's continued support in this regard.

PM, President of Iran express commitment to peace in region

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Friday held a telephone conversation with President of Iran Dr. Masoud Peshkian and discussed the regional situation.

During their warm and cordial conversation, the Prime Minister expressed deep concern over the recent escalation in tensions in the region and underscored the urgent need to restore regional peace and stability. He called on Iran and all other parties to exercise restraint and refrain from any action that could jeopardize the hard-earned peace gains achieved

over the past few months.

The Prime Minister stressed the importance of upholding the commitments undertaken under the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), describing it as an enduring framework for promoting mutual understanding, respect and shared prosperity in the region and beyond.

Reaffirming Pakistan's steadfast commitment to regional peace, the Prime Minister assured President Peshkian of Pakistan's readiness to continue playing an honest and sincere role in facilitating dialogue and supporting all efforts aimed at preserving peace



and stability.

President Peshkian thanked the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister

Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, and other senior Pakistani leaders for attending the funeral cere-

mony of the late Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. He also reaffirmed Iran's commitment to peace and appreciated Pakistan's constructive support and sincere efforts for regional stability.

The two leaders also reviewed the implementation of the decisions taken during President Peshkian's visit to Islamabad last month and agreed to expedite follow-up actions to further strengthen bilateral cooperation across diverse fields.

The Prime Minister conveyed his respectful regards and best wishes for His Eminence Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei.

PM Shehbaz Stresses Easy Credit for SMEs as Key to Sustainable Economic Growth

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that providing easy financial facilities is essential for sustainable economic development, calling on banks to significantly increase loans to priority sectors, especially SMEs, which he described as the backbone of the country's economy.

Chairing a high-level meeting on promoting access to finance,

the PM was briefed on the Access to Finance Plan. He said easy-to-access financial facilities would help boost exports, create new employment opportunities, and drive sustainable growth. He announced that banks performing well in extending financial facilities would be encouraged.

"I will personally chair the monthly review meeting regarding the progress on the Access to Finance Plan. The government wants to make the

economy stronger and more export-oriented by increasing access to financial facilities," the Prime Minister said.

Officials briefed that the plan aims to accelerate the shift from economic stability to sustainable growth. Key priorities include expanding financial services to the national mainstream, with a focus on SMEs, agriculture, exports, renewable energy, housing, and IT.

The meeting was attended

by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Federal Ministers Attaullah Tarar, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Azam Nazeer Tarar, Ahad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani, Special Assistant Haroon Akhtar, Governor State Bank Jamil Ahmed, Presidents and CEOs of Pakistani banks, provincial chief secretaries and senior government officials.

Govt Prioritizes Doorstep Healthcare, Launches Digital BHU in Phulgrah

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said providing basic healthcare at people's doorstep is the government's top priority. Inaugurating a digitalized health center in Phulgrah, he noted 50% of Islamabad's population lives in rural areas and faces long travel for treatment. PIMS patient load has surged from 400-500 to 8,000-10,000 daily.

He said the federal government allocated Rs 1,163 billion for health, and stressed making Islamabad's 22 BHUs fully functional. Telemedicine will be introduced in all capital BHUs. He lauded Federal Health Minister Mustafa Kamal and said quality care can be delivered at less than half the current cost.

Citing tech-driven progress and recent success against India, he added Pakistan's diplomacy is globally recognized. He called the Balochistan situation a proxy war and paid tribute to 40+ security personnel martyred.

Ahsan Iqbal Seeks NASA, US Aerospace Collaboration for Pakistan's Space Vision

News Desk

HOUSTON: Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal met NASA officials and US aerospace leaders to explore cooperation in space science, education, and technology. He

outlined plans for a national space education programme to foster youth interest in science and innovation.

A key initiative is the proposed Space Exploration Centre in Narowal to introduce students to astronomy

and research. Iqbal said Pakistan has a strong pool of engineers and IT professionals and invited US firms to set up development centers to tap local talent.

Pakistan aims to launch a national lunar mission by 2035

and establish a sustained Moon presence by 2047. Iqbal stressed shifting Pakistan-US ties toward geo-economics, education, and technology, calling space collaboration vital for building a knowledge-based, innovation-driven economy.

Operation Shaaban: Security forces kill 13 khawarij terrorists

Bureau Report

QUETTA: Security forces killed 13 more khawarij terrorists during the past 24 hours as the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps (FC), and Balochistan Police continued Operation Shaaban following the terrorist attack on Mangi Dam Police Station.

Security sources said the total number of terrorists killed during Operation Shaaban has risen to 39. Of these, 26 terrorists belonging to Fitna al Khawarij were killed during operations conducted on July 6 and 7, while the remaining 13 were eliminated over the past 24 hours.

They said multiple ground and aerial operations against Fitna al Khawarij are continuing in the area.



In a separate development, security forces successfully repulsed a terrorist attack on a police station in the Zaidi area of Khuzdar.

The security sources said Pakistan Army and Frontier Corps troops killed eight terrorists in a swift counter-operation, while another five to six terrorists were eliminated in helicopter gunship operations.

Since July 5, security forces have killed a total of 75 terrorists in Operation Shaaban and other intelligence-based operations, the sources added.

President, PM Salute Forces for Successful Operation Shaaban

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif paid tribute to the Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps, and Balochistan Police for the successful execution of Operation Shaaban following the Mangi Dam Police Station incident.

President Zardari commended the professionalism of security forces, saying the operation proved their capability to counter every threat. He vowed that anti-Pakistan elements and proxy groups would fail, adding that national resolve is stronger



than any conspiracy aimed at undermining Pakistan's diplomatic achievements.

PM Shehbaz Sharif praised the killing of 75 terrorists in the operation against Fitna-ul-Khawarij and hailed the forces' strategy in difficult terrain. He reaffirmed the nation's firm resolve to eradicate terrorism and said every conspiracy to disrupt peace in Balochistan will be foiled.

Azad Jammu Kashmir marks 11th Anniversary of Founding Leader Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan

Spokesman Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Like the rest of the country 11th Anniversary of former Prime Minister Mujahid e Awwal Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan observed through out entire state of Azad Jammu Kashmir and Pakistan.

A Special function was held at Kashmir Policy Research Institute on the occasion of the 11th Anniversary of former President and Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Mujahid e Awwal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, under the auspicious of Kashmir Liberation Cell.

Hurryyat Leader Syed Manzoor



Hussain Shah, Director National and Awareness Campaign Liberation Cell Sardar Sajid Mehmood, Media Coordinator Sardar Ali Shan, Chairman Shabab-ul-Muslimeen Munir Ahmad Konchhi, Abdullah Imtiaz Advocate,

women of Women's Development Forum, civil society, people belonging to all walks of life participated in the ceremony.

Addressing the devotees, the speakers said that Sardar Muhammad Abdul

Qayyum Khan is one of the founders of Tehreek-e-Azadi Kashmir. They said that the Personalities are born centuries later, sometimes will not be fulfilled when the void created by the death of some.

He said that Mujahid e Awwal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan was the founder of ideology of Kashmir Banega Pakistan. The speakers said that Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan played an important role in the construction and development of the state during his tenure.

The speakers said that the existing infrastructure of Azad Kashmir is the result of the hard work of Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan.

Alhaj Naseer Yousuf Vohra Visits VTI Faisalabad Main Campus



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Central President of Cloth Board Ittehad Group Pakistan, Alhaj Naseer Yousuf Vohra, visited the Vocational Training Institute, Main Campus. Principal Muhammad Munir Tariq welcomed him with a floral garland, while students showered petals and the Head of Women's Department presented a bouquet. Vohra toured departments including Textiles, Automobiles, IT, Electrician, General Skills and other technical sections.

Appreciating the administration's arrangements and the principal's performance, Vohra urged Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to increase funding for such institutes. He stressed that with better resources, these vocational centers can train men and women in technical skills and play a key role in national development.

Transparent Policies Are Essential for Sustainable Economic Stability

News Desk



KARACHI/QUETTA: Syed Aman Shah, Provincial President of Awaam Pakistan Party Balochistan, stated that Pakistan is facing extremely serious economic challenges that require comprehensive, long-term, and people-centric economic policies rather than temporary measures.

He said that soaring inflation, rising unemployment, increasing public debt, declining industrial and commercial activity, and the lack of investment have severely affected the lives of ordinary citizens. He emphasized that the government must restore the national economy by taking all political and economic stakeholders into confidence and formulating policies that provide genuine relief to the people.

He further stated that Pakistan's economy can be placed on a strong and sustainable footing by giving special attention to the agriculture, industry, minerals, energy, and export sectors.

Attock Pushcart Vendors Seek MPA's Help After Anti-Encroachment Drive Disrupts Livelihoods

ATTOCK: Dozens of pushcart vendors met MPA Punjab Syed Ejaz Hussain Bukhari at his residence, seeking protection after a district administration anti-encroachment operation allegedly left many without a means of earning.

The vendors told the MPA that carts and merchandise were removed from locations where they had worked for years. They alleged confiscation of carts and goods, and said criminal cases had been registered against several vendors during the operation. They added that similar drives had occurred before, but this time many were left with no source of income and appealed for lawful vending spaces to support their families.

Addressing the gathering, Syed Ejaz Hussain Bukhari urged the district administration to immediately allocate an alternative designated site so vendors could resume business with dignity. He said beautification and development should continue, but not at the cost of depriving hardworking citizens of livelihood.

"If vendors must vacate an area for administrative or urban development reasons, it is the government's responsibility to provide a suitable alternative location," he stated.

The MPA assured vendors he would take every constitutional and legal step to safeguard their livelihoods and, if needed, would approach the courts. He emphasized that labourers and small traders are an integral part of society and deserve protection, not displacement.

The meeting concluded with Bukhari reiterating support for lawful efforts to protect the vendors' rights and livelihoods.

Grand peace rally

BHIMBER/SAMAHNI: Civil society organized a grand peace rally in Samahni. Attendees included administration officials, traders, doctors, political and social leaders, government employees, and citizens. Participants waved the flags of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir and raised slogans of "Long Live Pakistan" and "Long Live the Pakistan Army."



APHC, AJK & Pakistan Hold Seminar to Honor Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan's Legacy

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD/AJK: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) Azad Jammu & Kashmir & Pakistan, in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Cell, organized a dignified seminar to commemorate the death anniversary of Mujahid-e-Awwal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, former President and Prime Minister of AJK.

Presided over by APHC Convener Ghulam Muhammad Safi, the event drew political, social, religious, academic, media and Kashmiri leaders. Speakers paid rich tribute to the late leader as a visionary, courageous and statesmanlike figure



who laid strong foundations for the Kashmir freedom movement.

In his address, Safi said Sardar Qayyum Khan dedicated his life to the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination, commitment to Paki-

stan, and internationalization of the Kashmir issue. He added that the leader's principled struggle continues to inspire Kashmiris.

Other speakers including Muhammad Farooq Rehmani,

Mahmood Ahmad Saghar, Mir Tahir Masood, Sardar Abid Razzaq, Afsar Khan Afsar, Bashir Usmani and Daud Khan Yousafzai reaffirmed their resolve to carry forward his mission for a peaceful and just resolution of the Kashmir dispute. Proceedings were conducted by Altaf Hussain Wani.

Participants urged the UN and world powers to take notice of human rights violations in IIOJK and ensure implementation of UNSC resolutions on self-determination.

The seminar concluded with prayers for Sardar Qayyum Khan, other deceased Kashmiri leaders, martyrs, peace and prosperity of Pakistan, and unity of the Muslim Ummah.

Tribute on the Death Anniversary of the Hero of Freedom, Mujahid-e-Awwal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan

Tariq Farooq

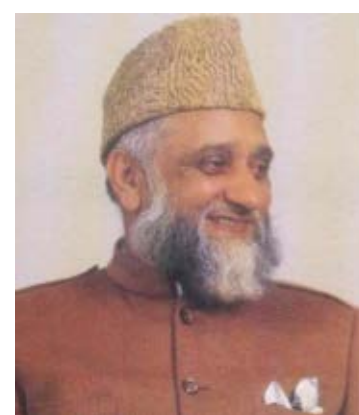
Today July 10th, marks the death anniversary of the driving force behind the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, an eminent statesman, former President and former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the Hero of Freedom, Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan (Late). We pray that Almighty Allah grants him forgiveness, blesses him with the highest place in Jannatul-Firdous, elevates his ranks, and grants him the intercession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Ameen.

Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan was a man of exceptional character and remarkable achievements. A self-made leader, he remained steadfast in his struggle from the earliest days of his life until his last breath. After completing his early education, he joined the British Army. Following the Second World War, he returned to

his homeland and, from a young age, emerged as a courageous, influential, and ideologically committed figure in the Kashmir Freedom Movement.

He strengthened the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference on firm intellectual and ideological foundations and gave a new direction to the political consciousness of the Kashmiri people. His politics reflected tolerance, wisdom, prudence, and maturity. Though simple and humble in his personal life, he possessed an impressive and commanding personality. Few leaders in the history of Azad Jammu and Kashmir have enjoyed the stature, respect, and influence that he commanded.

His admirers and followers extended across Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan, and the wider international community. He not only transformed the Muslim Conference into a vibrant political force but also cultivated a strong and enduring relationship with the Pakistan Muslim League. His long-standing association with



Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, founded on mutual trust and respect, contributed significantly to political harmony between the two parties. The historic and ideological slogan, "Kashmir Will Become Pakistan" (Kashmir Will Become Pakistan), is widely associated with his vision, inspiring renewed determination for the cause of freedom and accession to Pakistan among Kashmiris both within and beyond the State.

Under the leadership of Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, the Muslim Conference provided meaningful opportunities to young people to participate in public life. Many of today's political leaders of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, regardless of their present political affiliations, began their political journey and received their early training under his leadership through the platform of the Muslim Conference. His intellectual and ideological influence continues to be reflected in their political outlook, even though their political paths may have diverged over time.

Today, as Azad Jammu and Kashmir and the Indian-administered parts of the former princely State face complex challenges and growing intellectual and political uncertainty, the absence of a visionary statesman like Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan is deeply felt. The region is confronted with a crisis of leadership, a lack of long-term vision, and a decline in the values of tolerance and mutual respect. These challenges



have adversely affected public welfare, institutional stability, and ideological commitment.

We pray to Almighty Allah to grant us the strength to carry forward the Kashmir Freedom Movement in accordance with the vision and ideals of Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, and to bless the people

of Azad Jammu and Kashmir with sincere, courageous, and farsighted leadership capable of addressing the people's challenges, ensuring good governance, and strengthening the ideological bond with Pakistan.

May Allah have mercy upon him. He was truly an extraordinary son of freedom.



Islamabad

30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:24 am
Zohr 12:13 pm
Asr 5:12 pm
Maghrib 7:21 pm
Isha 9:02 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

Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry Condemns Balochistan Terror Attacks, Backs Armed Forces

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: President of Restaurants, Caterers, Sweets and Bakers Association Pakistan, Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry, strongly condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan. He called them a cowardly attempt to undermine national security and peace. He mourned the martyrdom of 27 police personnel, 11 military personnel, and 4 civilians, saying their sacrifices will always be remembered with pride.

In a joint statement with Chairman Mumtaz Ahmad and Patron-in-Chief Chaudhry Muhammad Naeem, Chaudhry said the fight against terrorism is a national responsibility. He paid tribute to Field Marshal General Syed Asim Munir for effective operations against anti-state elements.

The leaders prayed for the martyrs, injured, and bereaved families, stressing that unity and resolve are essential for lasting peace and stability in Pakistan.

CM Punjab orders swift action on public issues, announces e-bus expansion in Khanewal district

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Friday directed the authorities concerned to take immediate measures for the resolution of public issues highlighted by members of the Punjab Assembly during a meeting held here.

The lawmakers appreciated the chief minister's efforts for the construction of the Multan-Vehari Road and paid tribute to her for launching the electric bus service in Khanewal district. They also conveyed the gratitude of the people of the district over the introduction of the service.

Representing his constituency, MPA Amir Hayat Hiraj said the people of Khanewal saluted the chief minister for introducing what he described as Pakistan's most modern bus service.

MPA Rana Muhammad Saleem said the launch of the electric bus service in Khanewal marked the beginning of a new

and modern transport culture.

MPA Akbar Hayat Hiraj said the electric bus service was nothing short of a blessing for the people of Kabirwala and adjoining areas.

MPA Chaudhry Ziaur Rehman said the people of Jahanian and surrounding localities were grateful to the chief minister for launching the electric bus service.

The chief minister expressed satisfaction over the expansion of the electric bus service to Khanewal and other districts and said the facility was the right of the people of Khanewal, Jahanian and Kabirwala and not a favour.

She said the provincial government was bringing 1,500 electric buses for the people across Punjab.

CM Punjab said the electric bus service was not merely a transport facility but the beginning of a new and modern transport culture.

The chief minister also directed the authorities to begin, at the earliest, the



reconstruction and repair of the damaged bridge on the Khaliqabad-Tulamba Road SM Link.

Mango Festival

ISLAMABAD: Foreigner women take interest in varieties of mangos displaying during Mango Festival at local mall, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

National CERT and PEMRA Convene Cybersecurity Session for Pakistan's Broadcasting Sector



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Cyber Emergency Response Team (National CERT) of

Pakistan, in collaboration with the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), hosted a high-level cybersecurity engagement

session at PEMRA Headquarters. The session was co-led by National CERT, PakSat, and the Pakistan Space and

Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO). It brought together Chief Technical Officers, cybersecurity professionals, and technical representatives from satellite television broadcasters and distribution licensees.

The engagement aimed to enhance the resilience of Pakistan's electronic media industry against cyber threats. Participants discussed challenges, best practices, and coordinated measures to safeguard broadcasting infrastructure and ensure secure media operations nationwide.

CM Maryam Nawaz expresses deep grief over death of three people in roof collapse incident in Faisalabad

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has expressed profound sorrow over the death of three people, including a mother and her son, after the roof of an under-construction building collapsed in Faisalabad.

The chief minister extended her heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the bereaved families. She also directed the authorities concerned to ensure the provision of the best possible medical treatment to those injured in the incident.

CM Maryam Nawaz said the Punjab government stood with the grieving families in this difficult time. She further reaffirmed her commitment to making dilapidated houses with unsafe roofs and walls secure through the "Apna Ghar... Mehfooz Ghar" scheme.

Concerns Mount Over Reko Diq Project as Locals Say Benefits Haven't Reached Balochistan

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Concerns have grown over the Reko Diq mining project in Chagai district, with local communities, civil society, political leaders and the business sector in Balochistan saying they have not received expected economic or social benefits despite nearly 15 years of work on one of the world's largest copper and gold projects.



The issue was raised by Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman, Chairman of Haq Do Tehreek, who said the provincial assembly and people of Balochistan have not been given complete information on investment, production, exports, revenue, royalties, profit-sharing, local employment, environmental impact, or social programs. Members of JUI and BNP also backed calls for greater transparency and protection of provincial rights.

The resolution seeks a clear policy for local employment, technical training, and business opportunities for Balochistan companies. It demands a fair share of Reko Diq revenue be spent on education, healthcare, clean drinking water, infrastructure, and jobs in Chagai and other underdeveloped districts. Six-monthly progress reports to the Assembly were also proposed.

The Quetta Bar Council and Quetta Chamber of Commerce echoed concerns over lack of transparency and limited local benefits, stressing the need for jobs and fair economic distribution.

The resolution emphasizes that under the Constitution, Balochistan's people have rights over natural resources, and the project's success should be measured by transparency, public participation, and local welfare.

DPO Akhlaq Ullah Tarar Orders Immediate Redressal of Police Personnel Issues



Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: District Police Officer Akhlaq Ullah Tarar met with police officers and officials from various wings to hear their professional, administrative, and welfare concerns. Participants presented challenges and suggestions related to departmental affairs.

The DPO directed relevant officers to resolve all genuine issues on a priority basis without delay. He said timely redressal of personnel problems is key to improving performance, and that negligence will not be tolerated.

Calling police personnel the department's most valuable asset, Tarar stressed welfare, professional development, and a better working environment as top priorities. He urged supervisory officers to maintain regular contact with staff and uphold merit, transparency, and discipline across the district.

SMBR Punjab Reviews Data Darbar Development to Enhance Facilities Ahead of Annual Urs

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Senior Member Board of Revenue (SMBR) Punjab Nabeel Javed chaired a high-level review meeting to assess progress on calligraphic embellishment and infrastructure development at the shrine of Hazrat Ali Hajveri (RA), revered as Hazrat Data Gunj Bakhsh (RA).

Addressing the meeting, SMBR Javed said Data Darbar is not only a spiritual sanctuary but an emblem of Punjab's religious, historical and cultural heritage. He stated that preservation and development of the shrine are top priorities for the provincial government. Under the directives of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, he added, the project is being executed with transparency, quality craftsmanship, and adherence to time-



lines. The administration is focused on facilitation, security, and comfort for the millions of devotees expected at the upcoming annual Urs.

The meeting was attended by Secretary/Chief Administrator Auqaf Punjab Dr. Ehsan Bhutta, Khateeb

Data Darbar Mukhtar Nadeem, Administrator Muhammad Ali Khan, GM NESPAK Adil Nazeer, calligraphy expert Irfan Qureshi, AC City Rana Aamir, SDO Qaiser Munir, and other senior officials.

Dr. Ehsan Bhutta reaffirmed Auqaf's

commitment to the Chief Minister's vision, highlighting modernization of infrastructure, improved crowd management, and meticulous calligraphic restoration. He said weekly review meetings are being held to monitor progress and remove bottlenecks.

Priority works for the Urs include the Outer Piazza, Parking, Pedestrian Walkway, Underpass, and Façade enhancement by TEPA and LDA. The C&W Department will complete the main courtyard slab before Urs to ensure safe and smooth movement. The overall development is slated for completion by June 2027.

Officials said these interventions aim to provide a safe, seamless and spiritually enriching environment for pilgrims while setting new benchmarks in heritage conservation.

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Hormuz: The Fourth Road Is the Only Way Out

The latest U. S.-Iran strikes have turned the four possible futures of Hormuz from strategic theory into an urgent choice between negotiation, devastating war, prolonged economic strangulation and a regional settlement.

The Strait of Hormuz crisis has entered a new and far more dangerous phase. What only days ago remained a tense diplomatic standoff has now descended into a violent cycle of American strikes and Iranian retaliation. The United States has attacked scores of Iranian military targets along the coast, while Tehran has fired missiles and drones at American-linked military facilities across the Middle East. The fragile peace arrangement reached in June is now close to collapse.

The Strait of Hormuz crisis has entered a new and far more dangerous phase. What only days ago remained a tense diplomatic standoff has now descended into a violent cycle of American strikes and Iranian retaliation. The United States has attacked scores of Iranian military targets along the coast, while Tehran has fired missiles and drones at American-linked military facilities across the Middle East. The fragile peace arrangement reached in June is now close to collapse.

Instead of allowing that process to mature, an American-supported passage closer to Omani waters emerged as an alternative to Iran's preferred route. Washington viewed it as a safe route for international shipping. Tehran saw it as an attempt to bypass Iran's remaining leverage and determine the future of Hormuz before negotiations had reached a settlement.

ment contained an unresolved Hormuz question. Its relevant provision envisaged Iran and Oman discussing the future administration and maritime services of the Strait during the interim period, with other Persian Gulf littoral states involved and the sovereign rights of coastal states recognised.

President Trump has already threatened Iran's energy infrastructure. The conflict will move from military degradation towards the systematic destruction of Iran's economic foundations.

become part of the battlefield. The global economic consequences could be catastrophic. Millions of people who have never seen Hormuz would pay through higher fuel and food prices. Vulnerable economies carrying heavy debt and weak currencies could face recession and renewed poverty. Iran does not claim leadership of the global economic system. The United States does. With that claim comes responsibility for calculating the global consequences of military escalation.

The third scenario is neither peace nor full war. It is a prolonged low-intensity confrontation. Indeed, the present situation may already be moving in that direction. Iran attacks or pressures shipping. Washington responds with large but geographically limited strikes. Tehran fires missiles at American-linked facilities. Regional states intercept them. Sanctions and oil restrictions intensify. Mediators attempt to reopen diplomatic channels.

Then the cycle begins again. The greatest danger is miscalculation. One missile killing dozens of American personnel, one U. S. strike causing mass Iranian civilian casualties or one tanker disaster killing an international crew could destroy the invisible limits of low-intensity conflict within hours. The third road therefore offers no peace. It simply stretches the crisis over a longer period and distributes its economic pain across the world.

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Analysis

Qamar Bashir

The latest developments make one reality impossible to ignore: the four scenarios facing Washington and Tehran are no longer academic possibilities.

The first scenario is a return to the MoU. Washington and Tehran could suspend military operations, restore the 60-day diplomatic process and resume negotiations. Iran would immediately halt attacks on commercial vessels and guarantee safe passage, while the United States would stop further strikes and withdraw its threats against Iranian civilian-supporting infrastructure.

But a simple return to the MoU may no longer be enough. The original arrange-

Oman's participation was particularly damaging to Iranian trust. Muscat has historically been one of the Gulf's most respected mediators between Iran and the United States. By helping facilitate a route that Tehran interpreted as an American-backed bypass, Oman risked compromising the neutrality that made its mediation valuable.

The second scenario is now frighteningly close: full-scale war. The scale of the latest American strikes shows how quickly limited retaliation can expand. The United States has already targeted a large number of Iranian coastal military

en Iranian missile force and damaged command structure could improve Israel's immediate strategic position. But Israel would remain a principal target of Iranian retaliation and could face another prolonged period of missile and drone attacks.

The Gulf states would face perhaps the greatest immediate danger. Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and other countries host American military facilities. Iran may regard those installations as part of the American war structure regardless of the wishes of the host governments. The latest Iranian retaliation has already demonstrated how quickly Gulf territory can

Investing in Pakistan's Youth Is Investing in the Nation's Future

As the world observes World Population Day 2026 under the theme, "Realising the Hopes and Aspirations of Young People – Today and for the Future," Pakistan has an opportunity to reflect on one of its greatest national assets—its young population. With more than 65 percent of its citizens under the age of 30, the country possesses immense human potential that, if properly nurtured, can become the driving force behind sustainable economic growth, innovation, and social progress.

A youthful population is not automatically a demographic dividend. It becomes one only when supported by quality education, accessible healthcare, market-oriented skills, and meaningful employment opportunities. Without these essential investments, the same demographic advantage can transform into a challenge, increasing unemployment, poverty, and social inequality. Therefore, empowering young people must remain a central pillar of Pakistan's long-term development strategy.

Equally important is the health and well-being of women and children. Sustainable development begins with healthy families. Reducing maternal and infant mortality, addressing malnutrition, expanding access to quality healthcare, and ensuring girls receive equal educational opportunities are not merely social obligations but national priorities. No country can achieve lasting prosperity if women continue to face preventable health risks or children are denied the chance to develop their full potential.

The vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who consistently advocated women's empowerment, education, and reproductive health, remains highly relevant today. Her belief that empowered women are essential to national development continues to guide policies aimed at creating a more inclusive and equitable society.

Population management should never be viewed in isolation. It is closely linked with education, healthcare, poverty reduction, gender equality, and economic opportunity. Strengthening these sectors will not only improve the quality of life for millions of Pakistanis but also build stronger families, resilient communities, and a more productive workforce.

Achieving these goals requires collective action. Government institutions, parliamentarians, academia, civil society, development partners, religious scholars, the media, and the private sector must work together to promote awareness, improve public services, and create opportunities for young people and women.

Pakistan's demographic profile offers a historic opportunity that must not be wasted. By investing in its youth, empowering women, and protecting the health and future of every child, the country can transform its population into its greatest strength. The choices made today will determine whether Pakistan secures a future marked by prosperity, inclusion, and sustainable human development for generations to come.



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

Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayoom Khan: Mujahid-e-Awwal, Statesman and Seer

There are many people whom I owe a great deal—my parents, family, teachers, friends and countless others in society who have shaped my values. Yet, if I am asked to name the one man who influenced and nurtured my political beliefs, the answer is unhesitating: Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayoom Khan, affectionately and historically remembered as Mujahid-e-Awwal—the First Warrior of Kashmir's freedom struggle. He was not merely a politician; he was a soldier, a strategist, an international-relations thinker and, above all, a man whose foresight often left those around him astonished.

Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan was born on 4 April 1924 in Ghaziabad, in the Bagh district of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. Coming of age in a turbulent era, he witnessed the twilight of British rule and the explosive birth of the Kashmir dispute. When the people of Poonch rose against the autocratic rule of the Dogra maharaja in 1947, Qayoom Khan was among the first to take up arms. His courage and leadership in those early days earned him the title Mujahid-e-Awwal. He did not fight as a mercenary or a partisan of any narrow faction; he fought because he believed that the people of Jammu and Kashmir had been denied their right to decide their own future. That conviction remained the lodestar of his entire life.

In the decades that followed, he became the most dominant political figure in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. He served multiple terms as President and Prime Minister of the territory, guiding its infant institutions through periods of uncertainty, external pressure and internal discord. Whether in office or in opposition, he never allowed the Kashmir cause to be reduced to a

mere slogan. While others were content with emotional rhetoric, Qayoom Khan insisted on understanding the geography of the state, the balance of power in South Asia and the mechanics of international diplomacy. He knew that a liberation movement without a map of the world would eventually lose its way.

What distinguished him was not only his standing among his own people but the esteem in which he was held across borders and continents. In Pakistan, he commanded the respect of successive governments, military establishments and civil society alike, not through flattery but through the force of his arguments and the consistency of his principles. His stature extended far beyond South Asia. In the capitals of the Islamic world, in European parliaments and in Washington, he was received as a statesman rather than a provincial politician. Indian civil society leaders, European parliamentarians and even senior officers of royal armies sought his counsel, recognising in him a leader who spoke the language of justice with the precision of a diplomat. This global regard was no accident; it was the reward of a lifetime spent articulating the Kashmir cause with reason, dignity and an unshakable commitment to dialogue.

I came to understand this side of him through a personal encounter that changed the course of my own political thinking. When I first arrived in Muzaffarabad in search of support for the Kashmir freedom struggle, I was a young and relatively unknown activist, travelling with a small group of friends. We had crossed over from Indian-occupied Kashmir, where, at that time, the movement was largely united against Indian occupation, whether one spoke of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front or other

groups. Muzaffarabad, however, was a different world. It was polluted by ideological divisions. The divide was not only among local parties; even those who had earlier crossed the Line of Control were caught in a bitter battle of ideologies. Much of this stemmed from top leaderships that offered popular slogans and fiery rhetoric but little vision for the future—no sense of the geographical boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir, its strategic location or its place in international relations.

In that confusing atmosphere, I asked colleague Ghulam Muhammad Wani—(Gul Wani Sahib)—to arrange a meeting with Sardar Sahib. Gul Wani Sahib was a firm believer in an independent Kashmir and an important member of the JKLF. His home in Muzaffarabad, however, was open to all ideologies, a rare island of tolerance in a sea of factionalism. He was reluctant at first, warning that his own organisation would be unhappy if he helped me meet a man they viewed with suspicion. But we had no other route. Sardar Sahib was President of Azad Kashmir at the time.

All of us who attended that meeting had arrived with prejudices. In the polarised environment of Muzaffarabad, one rarely heard a good word about Sardar Sahib from any camp. Yet that single meeting transformed us. It did not merely change my opinion of the man; it broadened the entire canvas of my understanding about resistance, politics and the long road a freedom movement must travel. I still do not know what convinced him to hold me close to him afterwards, but what he said in that room turns page by page in my mind even today. He predicted events that have since unfolded and others that are unfolding now. In a region where most leaders could see no further than the next rally, he possessed genuine foresight.

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Positive Action: Empowering a Global Community for All

The world is once again witnessing a dangerous escalation in geopolitical tensions, raising serious concerns over international peace, security and humanitarian stability. The recent United States military strikes on Iran have added a new and alarming dimension to an already volatile Middle East, triggering widespread debate over the future of regional stability and the effectiveness of the existing international legal framework. The intensifying conflict has not only heightened military tensions but has also created significant economic uncertainty. Global energy markets remain vulnerable to disruption, international trade routes face growing security concerns and financial markets continue to react to fears of a broader regional conflict. Analysts warn that any prolonged military confrontation could adversely affect global inflation, investment, food security and economic recovery, particularly in developing countries.

Beyond the economic implications, the humanitarian consequences remain deeply concerning. Every escalation increases the risk of civilian casualties, displacement, destruction of infrastructure and long-term social instability. International humanitarian organisations have repeatedly stressed that innocent civilians continue to bear the greatest burden of armed conflicts, regardless of political or military objectives.

Pakistan has maintained a measured diplomatic approach, consistently advocating dialogue, restraint, respect for international law and peaceful resolution of disputes. Islamabad has reiterated that regional stability can only be achieved through diplomacy rather than military confrontation, while emphasizing the impor-

tance of protecting civilian lives and respecting the sovereignty of all states. The evolving situation is also placing increasing pressure on international alliances and regional partners. NATO members continue to face strategic challenges as tensions grow, while concerns are mounting over the possible expansion of military operations through regional airbases. Security experts caution that any further militarisation of the Middle East could widen the conflict, drawing additional countries into an already fragile security environment.

At the centre of the debate lies the principle of self-defence under international law. While every sovereign nation possesses the inherent right to safeguard its citizens and national security, the use of force remains subject to the provisions of the United Nations Charter and established principles of international humanitarian law. Many legal experts argue that any military action must satisfy the requirements of legality, necessity, proportionality and accountability.

These developments place renewed responsibility upon the United Nations to respond swiftly, impartially and effectively. Observers believe that the UN Security Council must actively pursue diplomatic engagement aimed at preventing further escalation and encouraging peaceful negotiations among all parties concerned.

Human rights organisations have also expressed growing concern regarding the humanitarian impact of continued hostilities. Calls are increasing for the United Nations Human Rights Council and other international institutions to closely monitor developments, investigate alleged violations of international humanitarian law where appropriate, and

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Analysis

Altaf Hussain Wani



Analysis

Fizza Shah

The Noble Hijra: Reviving Jerusalem in Our Conscience



HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal

With the dawn of a new Hijri year, Muslims do not merely commemorate a historical event of the past. Rather, they draw inspiration from the philosophy of the Hijra as a foundation for deepening awareness and strengthening the values of steadfastness, dignity, justice, the championing of truth, solidarity, and responsibility. These meanings are embodied today in our consciousness as we turn our gaze toward the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first qibla, which

has remained firmly embedded in the Ummah's consciousness, in obedience to the words of the Prophet, peace be upon him: "No journey should be undertaken except to three mosques: the Sacred Mosque, my mosque here, and Al-Aqsa Mosque."

This prophetic connection among the three mosques is not merely a geographical arrangement; it is a unity of destiny that Muslims have long affirmed, making Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem a single spiritual space where distances dissolve and worship merges with responsibility. Today, as millions of hearts turn toward Mecca during the season of Hajj, we recognise that these multitudes are not merely numbers in a census but rather an immense civilisational force and a single living body. They remind us that the Ummah possesses tremendous latent potential. When transformed into conscious presence and collective action, this power ensures that Al-Aqsa—the first of the two qiblas and the third holiest sanctuary in Islam—remains present in our movement just as it is firmly rooted in our hearts.

It is also worth remembering that Islamic civilisation was sustained through caravans of knowledge, trade, and pilgrimage. The caravan was never merely a means of transportation; it was a civilisational institution that connected the farthest reaches of the Islamic East with the depths of Africa, carrying people, ideas, knowledge, and

expertise. Along its routes emerged rest houses, lodges, zawiyas, libraries, hospitality facilities, and relief stations that served travellers and helped them reach their destinations.

As time evolved, the means changed, and caravan routes gave way to modern forms of transportation that compressed distances. Yet the mission remained unchanged: connecting humanity to the sacred and binding communities to one another.

It is particularly significant that the Holy Qur'an links Hajj to capability, with the Almighty saying: "And pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by all who can make their way there." Historically, the notion of being able to undertake the journey was closely linked to perseverance and endurance in overcoming the hardships of travel. Today, although many of those physical difficulties have diminished, the value of striving remains unchanged. While technology has eased access to many destinations, Jerusalem reminds us that some forms of hardship no longer lie in the journey itself but in the obstacles and restrictions encountered along the way, and in the determination to reach and remain present despite the barriers that visitors and Jerusalemites alike continue to face.

Jerusalem is not merely a geographical location. It is also a spiritual extension of the Night Journey and Ascension and a true test of the Ummah's conscience. It faces persistent attempts

to distort its identity and impose a singular narrative upon its history, despite having remained throughout the centuries a human space where religious and civilisational memories converged into a shared tapestry. In its alleyways, the calls to prayer of mosques blend with the bells of churches, preserving its character as a symbol of coexistence and shared human heritage.

For this reason, the defence of Jerusalem is not limited to protecting stone. It encompasses defending the human right to life, dignity, and belonging to one's land, as well as the right of future generations to inherit a city alive with its people, heritage, and civilisational diversity. There is no Jerusalem without Jerusalemites, both Muslim and Christian. Supporting Jerusalem is not confined to preserving sacred sites or restoring historical landmarks; it also extends to supporting the schools, hospitals, libraries, and community institutions that sustain life in the city and strengthen its ability to endure, allowing body, spirit, and mind to flourish together.

Building bridges of connection with Jerusalem is among the most meaningful expressions of solidarity with its people. It breaks the barrier of estrangement and provides a practical embodiment of an enduring Islamic principle: strengthening bonds of fellowship and standing with the vulnerable. Among the meanings conveyed by the

Almighty's words, "You are the best nation brought forth for mankind: you enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and believe in God," is the imperative to translate values into action. The excellence of the Ummah is not measured solely by the size of its population but by its ability to transform that number into ethical action and into a moral and human presence that inspires hope and solidarity.

For this reason, Islam did not leave solidarity as a mere abstract value; it established practical mechanisms and enduring institutions to embody it. Zakat is a social system that directs a portion of wealth toward those in need, while the waqf has historically represented a pioneering model for institutionalising generosity and supporting education, social welfare, the preservation of sacred sites, and the continuity of public good.

Among the honours of belonging to a house entrusted with the custodianship of the Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem—as a trust and responsibility rather than a privilege—is the recognition that this responsibility has never been a substitute for the Ummah's own responsibility but rather an expression of it. Jerusalem is the trust of the entire Ummah and its shared responsibility.

The Hijra carried within it the meanings of resolve, sacrifice, and rising to meet one's duty. The caravans of Hajj carried the meanings of unity, soli-

darity, and connection to the sacred. Jerusalem deserves today to reclaim its place in this unbroken procession. Sacred places transcend politics and outlast its shifting tides, for they are bound to truth, dignity, and shared human memory. Just as truth ultimately prevails, Jerusalem remains a sacred trust for all who believe in the values of justice, dignity, and fidelity, and a true test of our ability to transform our convictions into action worthy of its place in both the Ummah's consciousness and the broader human conscience.

As we welcome a new Hijri year, we ask God to make it a year of goodness and blessing, to make us among those who serve the interests of the Ummah and its human mission, and to guide us toward what is best for humanity and its dignity.

We likewise ask the Almighty to protect Jerusalem and to bless its people, Muslim and Christian alike, who each day safeguard the identity and mission of this blessed city. Jerusalem is blessed not only by its sacred sites but also by its people and their steadfastness, and it will remain a sacred trust in our hearts and consciences, in every age and at every moment. The writer from the Hashimite Kigdom of Jordan is among the most influential scholars of the world. He is a distinguished intellectual, global thinker, and strong advocate of science, knowledge, and human development.

Pakistani Mango Festival at Danube Supermarket in Jeddah Draws Strong Interest from Saudi Visitors

Spokesman Report

JEDDAH: The Consulate General of Pakistan in Jeddah, in collaboration with the Pakistan Investors Forum, organized a one-day "Pakistani Mango Festival" at Danube Supermarket, Red Sea Mall, to showcase Pakistan's premium mangoes and mango-based products.

The festival was inaugurated by Consul General Syed Mustafa Rabbani, along with Sheikh Imad Al-Aboud, Vice Chairman Jeddah Chamber of Commerce, Chaudhry Shafiqat Mahmood, Chairman Pakistan Investors Forum, and prominent Saudi businessmen. Also present were Dr. Shagufta Zareen, Minister for Trade and Business Development, Embassy of Pakistan Riyadh, and Saadia Khan, Commercial Consul, Jeddah.

The exhibition featured renowned

Pakistani varieties including Chaunsa, Anwar Ratol, and Sindhri, plus mango cakes, pastries, biscuits, and other products. A large turnout of Saudi nationals, Pakistani community members, and other visitors praised the taste, aroma, and premium quality of Pakistani mangoes, calling them among the finest in the world.

Addressing the gathering, Consul General Rabbani said the Consulate will continue such events to promote Pakistani products in Saudi Arabia. He noted strong demand for Pakistani kinnow and announced plans for a Kinnow Festival during citrus season to further boost bilateral trade.

Chaudhry Shafiqat Mahmood said the Forum aims to promote Pakistan's agricultural and food products in the Saudi market, create new trade and investment opportunities, and increase exports and foreign exchange earnings. Dr. Shagufta Zareen and Saadia



Khan briefed Saudi guests on Pakistan's agricultural quality and export

potential. Saudi business representatives highlighted that such events

strengthen both trade and cultural ties. Similar successful exhibitions

have earlier been held in Riyadh and Dammam.



Al-Shifa Trust warns heat, humidity increase eye health risks

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Doctors at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital have warned that persistent heat and high monsoon humidity are contributing to a rise in dry eyes, irritation, redness and blurred vision, urging people to take preventive measures as temperatures remain above normal.

According to eye specialists, the combination of intense heat, humidity, dust, pollen, smoke and prolonged exposure to fans or air conditioners can disrupt the eye's natural tear film, leading to irritation and discomfort. People who work outdoors, drive for long hours or spend extended periods

in air-conditioned environments are particularly vulnerable.

Dr. Tayyab Afghani, Head of the Orbit and Oculoplastic Department at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, said dry eye disease is more than a minor irritation. Repeated dryness can cause burning, excessive watering, a gritty sensation and difficulty focusing, while frequent rubbing of the eyes may further damage the eye surface and increase the risk of complications.

He said office workers, students, older adults, contact lens users and people living with diabetes or allergies are more likely to experience symptoms during the current weather conditions.

Dr. Afghani urged patients recovering from eye surgery, particularly cataract, glaucoma, corneal or retinal procedures, to take extra care by using their prescribed eye drops regularly and attending follow-up eye examinations as advised by their doctors.

The Pakistan Meteorological Department has forecast above-normal temperatures across much of the country from July to September 2026, with prolonged heatwave conditions possible in parts of Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan.

Dr. Afghani advised people to stay well hydrated, wear sunglasses, avoid rubbing their eyes and minimise exposure to dust and smoke. He also

recommended taking regular breaks from digital screens, blinking more frequently, removing contact lenses if the eyes become dry, and using lubricating eye drops only on the advice of an eye specialist.

He urged people not to ignore persistent redness, eye pain, light sensitivity, discharge or sudden blurred vision, saying these symptoms require prompt medical evaluation to prevent complications.

He added that children, outdoor workers and older adults should be monitored closely during periods of extreme heat and humidity, as they are more susceptible to dehydration and weather-related eye irritation.

Hamdard Pakistan Celebrates "Mango Fiesta 2026" with Great Enthusiasm

Spokesman Report

Hamdard Pakistan hosted its vibrant "Mango Fiesta 2026" at its Head Office at Tariq Road, Karachi, on Friday, July 10, 2026, in a festive and cheerful atmosphere. The event aimed to celebrate the joy of the mango season, promote Pakistani culture, strengthen unity among employees, and reinforce Hamdard's family-oriented work environment. The theme of this year's celebration was "Celebrating the Sweetness of Mangoes, Cultural Colors, and the Joys of Summer with the Hamdard Family."

The event was attended by Ms. Sadia Rashid, Chairperson of Hamdard Pakistan; Fatema Munir Ahmed, Managing



Director & Chief Executive Officer; Faisal Nadeem, Group Chief Operating Officer; Abu Talib Bhutto, Group Head Human Resources & Administration; along with Directors, Deputy Directors, Heads

of Departments, and a large number of employees.

Guests were treated to a variety of premium mangoes, fresh mango juice, and delicious ice cream, adding to the festive spirit of the occasion.

Employees enjoyed the seasonal delicacies while sharing moments of joy and camaraderie with their colleagues. The celebration also featured a range of recreational, cultural, and literary activities. On the occasion, Kaleem Chughtai presented a beautiful poem that was warmly appreciated by the audience and received enthusiastic applause. In addition, Ali Jalali from the Marketing Department and Meena Noor from the Supply Chain Department captivated the audience with their melodious songs, making the event even more lively and memorable. Both male and female employees enthusiastically participated in target-shooting competitions, and prizes were awarded to the



best performers. These activities promoted healthy competition, teamwork, mutual cooperation, family values, and employee engagement.

On the occasion, the management of Hamdard Pakistan reaffirmed its commitment to providing a positive, pleasant,

and family-friendly workplace, emphasizing that such events are an integral part of Hamdard's traditions. They not only strengthen interpersonal relationships but also foster a culture of respect, unity, teamwork, and mutual appreciation within the organization.

Mango Fiesta 2026 beautifully reflected Hamdard Pakistan's warm and family-oriented culture, where employees came together to celebrate the sweetness of mangoes, the richness of Pakistani traditions, and the joys of the summer season, making the event a memorable success.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
182,241.77	181,259.67	
Day's High	Day's Low	
183,477.57	181,880.54	
Index Value	Change	
27,028,481,092	+982.10	
Percentage	Time	
+0.54%	10 Jul, 2026 4:30 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
10,497.29	+24.84	
Percentage	Time	
+0.24%	10 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
52,649.86	+162.45	
Percentage	Time	
+0.31%	10 Jul, 1:57 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
68,557.73	+813.88	
Percentage	Time	
+1.20%	10 Jul, 3:45 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	193.84	197.25
Bahrain Dinar	740.61	750.90
Canadian Dollar	197.27	200.25
China Yuan	38	38.75
Danish Krone	42.56	43.25
Euro	319.42	323.50
Hong Kong Dollar	35.22	36.23
Indian Rupee	2.80	3.15
Japanese Yen	1.7114	1.8100
Kuwaiti Dinar	889.43	899.90
Malaysian Ringgit	67.15	67.95
New Zealand \$	159	160.75
Norwegians Krone	27.99	28.29
Omani Riyal	725.35	735.60
Qatari Riyal	75.335	76.40
Saudi Riyal	74.55	75.10
Singapore Dollar	214.18	217.95
Swedish Korona	28.25	28.90
Swiss Franc	343.59	348.25
Thai Bhat	8.55	8.80
U.A.E Dirham	76.20	76.90
UK Pound Sterling	375.06	378.15
US Dollar	279.00	279.15

PSX & Ministry of Finance Hold Investor Briefing on Debt Strategy, Sukuk Growth and Fiscal Reforms

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX), in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance (MoF), hosted an Investor Briefing Session at the Dr. Shamshad Akhtar Auditorium. The session focused on Pakistan's debt management strategy, Sukuk issuance, secondary market development, and fiscal reforms.

PSX MD & CEO Mr. Farrukh H. Sabzwari said GOP Sukuk issuance in FY2026 hit PKR 3.5 trillion, nearly double FY2025's PKR 2.2 trillion. Total capital market issuance reached PKR 6.4 trillion. ADTV rose to PKR 3.9 billion vs PKR 2 billion last year. Secondary market access expanded with 11 banks, 3 AMCs with direct access, and 51 BNB brokers now trading GOP Sukuk.

Advisor Mr. Khurram Shehzad outlined a strategy based on relief, growth and fiscal responsibility. Debt-to-GDP fell to 68.5% from 75.2% in 2023. Early debt retirement



totaled PKR 4.7 trillion in 2 years. Debt growth slowed to 5%, the lowest in 15 years. Debt servicing as share of revenue dropped from 61% to 40%. Privatization of 3 DISCOs is planned by year-end, with more in energy, airports and banking.

Advisor on Debt Mr. Omer Khan noted ATM extended to 3.9 years from 2.6 years. RDA inflows up \$300m/month. Pakistan re-entered global markets with Eurobonds and Panda bonds. Tokenization of sovereign debt is being launched. LMO peaked at PKR 2,923 billion in FY2026, up 62.7% YoY.

Director Domestic Debt Mr. Khaliq Uz Zaman said gross Sukuk issuance reached a record PKR 3 trillion. WAC was contained at 11.2%. Sukuk trading on PSX surged +275% to PKR 973. A new short-term Sukuk program of PKR 400-500 billion is planned.

The session underscored progress toward a deeper, more liquid and sustainable debt market.

Award

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of National Heritage & Culture, Farah Naz Akhbar awarding prize to a participant during 2nd Edition of the Pakistan International Food & Restaurant Awards 2026 at local hotel, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Pakistan's IT Exports Hit \$4.5B in FY26 as Digital Economy Expands Beyond US

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's digital export economy entered a more mature phase in FY 2025-26, with IT exports reaching approximately \$4.5 billion, up from \$3.475 billion in the same period last year, according to data compiled by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

Moving beyond traditional reliance on the US and European markets, Pakistani SMBs are expanding into key Asia-Pacific (APAC) hubs including Japan and Singapore. The strategic shift is yielding strong results as the sector maintains uninterrupted growth throughout the fiscal year.

In addition to core software development services, BPO, SaaS, and gaming are scaling rapidly on the global stage. Growth is being driven by Pakistan's young, cost-com-

petitive, and highly skilled workforce serving international clients at scale.

"This strong momentum reflects sustained global demand for Pakistan's digital services and highlights a growing industry focus on building resilient, multi-market revenue streams," said Nagesh Devata, SVP and Head of APAC at Payoneer.

Global expansion brings new complexity, particularly in adapting to local payment ecosystems in APAC. To support exporters, fintech company Payoneer is reinforcing its commitment to Pakistani businesses by providing multi-currency capabilities to receive and manage payments in USD, EUR, GBP, CAD, AUD, JPY, and SGD, helping transform cross-border logistical challenges into scalable growth opportunities.

InfraZamin & BOP Consortium Close PKR 4.76 Billion Islamic Financing for Air Link & Select Technologies



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A Bank of Punjab-led consortium, with InfraZamin Pakistan's PKR 3.57 billion credit guarantee, achieved financial close of a PKR 4.76 billion, 10-year Islamic syndicated facility for Air Link Communication Limited and Select

Technologies Limited. MLAs include BOP, Askari Bank, BankIslami, and Pak China Investment Company.

Funds will expand state-of-the-art facilities at Sundar Green SEZ to manufacture smartphones, consumer electronics, and home appliances. The project targets 1 million+ affordable smartphones annu-

ally, 450 direct jobs in 5 years with 25-30% for women, and a 1 MW solar plant to cut 700 tonnes of CO2 yearly.

Executives highlighted the deal's role in industrialization, import substitution, digital inclusion, and setting a new benchmark for Shariah-compliant, long-term blended finance in Pakistan.

PTCL Flash Fiber Crosses 900,000 Subscribers, Strengthens Lead in Pakistan's Fiber Broadband Market

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) announced that PTCL Flash Fiber, its flagship fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) service, has surpassed 900,000 subscribers, reinforcing its position as the country's largest internet service provider.

The milestone reflects growing customer trust and PTCL's push to deliver world-class digital connectivity in line with the Government's vision for a hyper-connected Digital Pakistan.

Now available across 78 cities nationwide, PTCL Flash Fiber has become the

preferred broadband choice for homes, businesses, gamers, content creators, students, and professionals who require fast, stable, and uninterrupted internet for remote work, online education, cloud applications, and digital entertainment.

Network performance was independently validated by Ookla, which awarded PTCL two distinctions: Best Fixed Network for Pakistan and Best ISP Gaming Experience. The recognition, based on Speedtest Connectivity Report metrics, highlighted PTCL's leadership in network performance, low latency, and superior customer experience.

MKL Demands Probe into Agriculture Department Audit Irregularities

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Markazi Kisan League (MKL) has expressed serious concern over the financial irregularities highlighted in the audit report of the Punjab Agriculture Department and its subsidiary institutions, calling for an independent investigation and immediate reforms to safeguard farmers' rights and public resources.

In a joint statement, MKL Chairman Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Olakh and President Ashfaq Virk said the observations presented during the Punjab Assembly Public Accounts Committee-I meeting reflected weaknesses in governance, transparency, and financial management within the agriculture sector. They stated that the reported irregularities, including alleged misuse of subsidy funds, procurement of seeds at higher prices followed by sales at lower rates, delayed disposal of cotton lint, inadequate tax deductions, and procurement in violation of rules, had caused significant losses to the national exchequer.

FPCCI, SIFC Discuss Measures to Boost Pakistan's IT Exports

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), in collaboration with the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), held a meeting of the FPCCI Central Standing Committee on Import and Export Trade to discuss strategies for promoting Pakistan's IT exports and strengthening the digital economy.

Chaired by Convener Tahir Rasheed Bhutta, with Brig. Syed Nadir Hussain Shah, SI(M), Project

Director IT & Telecom, SIFC as chief guest, the session brought together FPCCI Vice President Tariq Jadoon, committee members, business leaders, and IT sector stakeholders.

Tahir Rasheed Bhutta said Pakistan's economic future depends on digital innovation, higher IT exports, and sustainable investment. He called for business-friendly policies, regulatory reforms, and stronger public-private partnerships to unlock digital potential and drive export-led growth.

Brig. Syed Nadir Hussain Shah

reaffirmed SIFC's commitment to facilitating investment and creating an enabling environment for the IT sector.

He noted the council is working to remove investment barriers and position Pakistan as a competitive destination for technology businesses.

Deputy Convener Syed Zulfiqar Haider Shah, Shoaib Mehdi also speak on the occasion.

The meeting concluded with a shared resolve to advance policies and partnerships that expand Pakistan's IT export potential.



Mian Zahid Hussain Calls for Attock-to-Karachi Waterway, Dedicated Transport Authority

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum (PBIF) and All Karachi Industrial Alliance (AKIA), Mian Zahid Hussain, has urged the government to prioritize the development of Inland Water Transport (IWT), describing it as an economic necessity that could significantly reduce logistics costs, conserve fuel, ease pressure on road infrastructure, and enhance Pakistan's export competitiveness.

Speaking on the country's transport and logistics challenges, Mian Zahid Hussain, who is also Chairman of the National Business Group Pakistan (NBG), Chairman of the FPCCI Policy Advisory Board, and former Provincial Minister for Information Technology, said Pakistan's freight transportation system remains overwhelmingly dependent on road networks, making the movement of goods expensive and inefficient.

He noted that more than 206 billion tonnes of cargo were transported through roads in 2023, accounting for over 90 percent of the country's total freight movement. He said this excessive reliance on highways has increased traffic congestion, fuel consumption, road deterioration, and the overall cost of doing business.

Mian Zahid pointed out that although the National Highway Authority (NHA) network represents only a small portion of Pakistan's total road infrastructure, it carries nearly 80 percent of the country's commercial traffic, placing immense pressure on highways and resulting in rising maintenance costs and operational inefficiencies.

He welcomed the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) for highlighting the importance of Inland Water Transport and stressed that the proposed Attock-to-Karachi inland waterway could serve as a strategic and cost-effective freight corridor connecting the country's major industrial and commercial centres.

Highlighting the economic benefits of water-based transport, Mian Zahid said technical estimates clearly demonstrate its efficiency. Transporting 1,500 tonnes of cargo over a distance of 200 kilometres requires approximately 60 trucks consuming around 15,000 litres of fuel. The same cargo transported by rail consumes nearly 4,200 litres, while a waterborne barge requires only about 1,600 litres of fuel.

He said these figures underline why Inland Water Transport is globally recognised as one of the most economical and environmentally sustainable modes of moving bulk cargo. Besides



reducing fuel imports and carbon emissions, it would also lower transportation costs for businesses and improve the competitiveness of Pakistani exports in international markets.

Drawing comparisons with neighbouring countries, Mian Zahid said Pakistan should learn from the successful experiences of India and Bangladesh. He noted that cargo movement through India's national waterways increased from 18.1 million metric tonnes in 2013-14 to 145.5 million tonnes in 2024-25 due to sustained investment, supportive government policies, modern terminal development, and private-sector participation.

Similarly, Bangladesh has developed an extensive inland waterway network spanning approximately 24,000 kilo-

metres, transporting around 194 million tonnes of cargo annually while also serving nearly one-fourth of the country's passenger traffic. He said these examples demonstrate how effective water management, modern infrastructure, and investment-friendly policies can transform natural waterways into valuable economic assets.

Calling for immediate action, Mian Zahid urged the federal and provincial governments, along with all relevant ministries, to move beyond policy discussions and adopt practical implementation measures. He recommended establishing a Permanent Inland Waterway Transport Authority, finalising the regulatory framework, developing modern terminals and navigation infrastructure, and introducing bankable public-private partnership (PPP) projects to attract domestic and foreign investment.

He emphasized that Pakistan cannot achieve its ambition of becoming an export-led economy while relying on an outdated and expensive logistics system dominated by road transport. Inland Water Transport, he said, has the potential to become a game-changing sector for the national economy, provided that government commitments are supported by clear implementation timelines, institutional ownership, and effective execution.

Hamdard Foundation holds meeting on "Growing Population and Dwindling Resources"



City Desk

RAWALPINDI: A meeting on "Growing Population and Dwindling Resources: A Moment of Reflection", proposed by President Hamdard Foundation Pakistan Ms. Sadia Rashid, was held at Hamdard Markaz Rawalpindi under the chairmanship of Speaker Hamdard Shura Imtiaz Haider.

In her message, Ms. Sadia Rashid said Pakistan faces a rapidly growing population and limited resources. Basic sectors including water, food, energy, education, health and employment are already under pressure, and continuous population growth is further complicating the situation. She stressed the need for serious consideration of balance between population and resources, sustainable development, and national responsibility.

Imtiaz Haider stated that the core issue is not just population growth but the imbalance between population and resources. With limited resources and rapid growth, development slows and pressure on national resources increases. He said that through wise planning, effective policies and collective consciousness, Pakistan can overcome current challenges and lay the foundation for a prosperous and sustainable future.

Council members including Dr. Farhat Abbas, Dr. Noman Ahmed Khan, Engineer Muzaffar Iqbal, and Professor Iqbal Nasiri noted that Pakistan stands at a crossroads where population growth and resource scarcity threaten development and economic stability.

They emphasized that combining scientific planning, effective management, judicious use of resources, modern technology, and responsible civic behavior can turn challenges into opportunities. They added that Pakistan's young population can become its greatest asset for economic development and national stability if managed properly, transforming resource scarcity into a new dimension of better governance and sustainable development.

Governor Punjab Reaffirms Support for Women's University Multan Academic Excellence and Institutional Growth

Iram Asim

MULTAN: According to the Spokesperson Miss Anum Zehra, Vice Chancellor The Women University Multan, Prof. Dr. Syeda Shahida Batool, held a productive meeting with the Chancellor and Honorable Governor of Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, to share the university's academic vision, institutional priorities and future roadmap.

During the meeting, Prof. Dr. Syeda Shahida Batool highlighted the university's continued efforts to strengthen academic quality, promote research culture, enhance institutional governance and create a progressive learning environment for students. She also briefed the Governor about the future plans aimed at further improving the academic and administrative standards of the university.

The Honorable Governor highly appreciated the visionary leadership of Prof. Dr. Syeda Shahida Batool and commended her efforts for steering The Women University Multan on the principles of merit, transparency, discipline and excellence. He acknowledged the university's positive direction and encouraged the Vice Chancellor to continue working with dedication for the advancement of women's higher

education.

Reaffirming his full support, the Honorable Governor stated that institutions flourish when merit and quality remain at the centre of decision-making. He assured his cooperation for WUM's continued progress and also graciously accepted the invitation to attend the upcoming Convocation of The Women University Multan.

Evidence-Based Policymaking Key to Strengthening Pakistan's Health System, Experts Say

News Desk

Karachi: Federal and provincial health officials, policymakers, researchers and international health experts have called for evidence-informed policymaking and technology-driven reforms to strengthen Pakistan's healthcare system, improve maternal and reproductive health, and enhance service delivery across the country.

The call was made during a two-day symposium hosted by the Aga Khan University (AKU) in collaboration with Exemplars in Global Health and Results for Development (R4D). The event brought together policymakers, development partners, academics and global health specialists to discuss how successful health policy models from



countries such as Kenya, Malawi, Bolivia and Senegal could be adapted to Pakistan.

Participants stressed that sustainable improvements in health outcomes require a combination of political commitment, supportive public policies, increased domestic investment, stronger healthcare systems, wider

access to reproductive health services, community engagement, effective partnerships with non-governmental organizations and evidence-based decision-making.

Speakers highlighted that despite progress over the past two decades, Pakistan continues to face significant maternal and child health challenges.

According to recent data, the country's maternal mortality ratio remains high at 186 deaths per 100,000 live births, while pregnancy-related complications claim the life of one woman approximately every 50 minutes, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive health sector reforms.

The symposium emphasized that effective policymaking depends on close collaboration between governments, researchers, healthcare providers and development partners. Discussions focused on knowledge translation, adolescent reproductive health, implementation challenges, and the role of universities in integrating research evidence into public policy and healthcare practice.

Dr. Zahid Memon, Convener of the symposium and Section Head of Health Policy and Management at AKU's Department of Community Health Sciences, said the objective was to move beyond discussion and identify practical, evidence-based solutions. He stressed that improving Pakistan's health outcomes requires stronger healthcare delivery systems supported by innovation, including the responsible use of artificial intelligence.

Addressing the gathering, Dr.

Muhammad Amjad Saqib, Founder and Chairman of Akhuwat, stressed that people must remain at the centre of development efforts. He highlighted Akhuwat's success in providing \$1.8 billion in interest-free loans to around four million families with a 99 percent recovery rate, describing it as evidence that public trust and community empowerment can drive sustainable development.

The symposium also featured family planning experts from Kenya, Malawi, Bolivia, Senegal and Sierra Leone, alongside leading academics from Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom, promoting cross-country learning and knowledge sharing.

Senior government officials, including representatives from the federal and provincial health and population welfare departments, parliamentarians, development experts and university leaders, participated in the event. They reaffirmed the importance of adopting data-driven policies, leveraging emerging technologies, and strengthening institutional collaboration to build a more resilient, equitable and efficient healthcare system capable of addressing Pakistan's current and future public health challenges.

Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayoom Khan: Mujahid-e-Awwal, Statesman and Seer

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Sardar Sahib was unique because he combined several roles that are rarely found in one person. He was a political leader who could mobilise the masses, a military commander who understood the realities of armed struggle, and an international-relations expert who could place the Kashmiri dispute in its global context. He had the courage to sit with his enemies and political opponents, because he believed in engagement, not vendetta. In an age when many politicians demand a role, he created his role through action, intellect and sheer persistence. He never allowed any Pakistani government to retreat from its commitment to Kashmir; instead, he provided the moral and political compass that kept the cause on the national agenda without reducing Azad Kashmir to a mere dependency.

Looking back, I wish the wider leadership of the Kashmiri movement had acted on his advice. Things might have been far better on the political front. He understood that slogans could energise a people but could not replace strategy. He understood that alliances could be built even with those one disagreed with, provided the ultimate goal—the right of self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir—remained sacred. And he understood that the struggle was not a single battle but a long war of patience, persuasion and principle.

Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayoom Khan passed away on 13 July 2019, leaving behind a legacy that few in the history of Azad Jammu and Kashmir can match. For those of us who were fortunate enough to know him, his loss is not merely the loss of a leader; it is the loss of a teacher who could see around

corners. His life reminds us that true leadership is not about shouting the loudest or hating the most; it is about understanding the world as it is, holding fast to one's principles, and having the wisdom to prepare for a future that others cannot yet see.

In an era of shrinking attention spans and ideological echo chambers, the example of Mujahid-e-Awwal is more relevant than ever. His struggle was not for personal power but for a people's right to choose their destiny. That struggle continues, and in continuing it, we would do well to remember the man who not only fought for Kashmir's freedom but also taught us how to think about it.

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Positive Action: Empowering a Global Community for All

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and support efforts to protect civilians affected by the conflict. Many international observers are advocating the convening of an emergency session of the United Nations to review existing diplomatic commitments, reaffirm international agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and strengthen mechanisms for ensuring compliance with international obligations. Proposals have also emerged calling for clearer enforcement measures, including appropriate diplomatic, legal or economic consequences for states found to be in violation of internationally recognised treaties, consistent with international law and the UN Charter.

Experts maintain that accountability remains essential for preserving the credibility of the international legal order. They argue that respect for treaties, peaceful dispute resolution and adherence to international obligations are fundamental principles for maintaining long-term global stability.

The International Criminal Court (ICC), where it has jurisdiction, together with other international judicial and human rights institutions, continues to play an important role in addressing allegations of serious violations of international law. Any determinations regarding responsibility, however, must follow established legal procedures and judicial processes.

As the crisis unfolds, the interna-

tional community faces a defining moment. Continued confrontation threatens to deepen humanitarian suffering, weaken global economic confidence and increase insecurity across multiple regions. Diplomacy, dialogue, respect for international law and multilateral cooperation remain the most effective pathways toward lasting peace. The preservation of human dignity, international security and global stability demands renewed commitment from all nations. The world now looks to the United Nations and the broader international community to exercise responsible leadership in preventing further escalation and advancing a peaceful resolution through dialogue and international cooperation.

Hormuz: The Fourth Road Is the Only Way Out

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That brings us to the fourth scenario—the only option that attempts to remove the cause of confrontation rather than repeatedly suppressing its symptoms. A comprehensive regional Hormuz settlement is now urgently required.

The United States must accept an equally obvious reality. It is not a coastal state of Hormuz. American military

superiority does not create geography. Freedom of navigation gives Washington a legitimate international interest in safe passage, but it does not automatically make the U. S. Navy the administrator or political manager of the Strait.

Iran and Oman should form the geographical core of the arrangement. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and other directly affected Gulf countries

should participate in a broader maritime mechanism. International maritime institutions can provide technical expertise and independent verification.

Iran must guarantee non-discriminatory commercial passage and permanently stop attacks on civilian vessels. Any future environmental, navigation or maritime service charges should be transparent and regionally negotiated rather than imposed through military

coercion.

In return, the United States should step away from direct management of Hormuz and should not attempt to become the traffic authority of a Strait thousands of miles from the American coastline.

This fourth road gives every party space to retreat without surrender. Washington can claim that it secured free navigation and prevented unilateral Iranian control. Tehran

can claim that its legitimate coastal role was recognised and that Hormuz did not become an American-administered military corridor.

Oman can recover its historic position as peacemaker. Muscat should understand that the United States can change presidents, military doctrines and strategic priorities. Oman cannot move away from Iran. Geography will remain when aircraft carriers eventually leave

Pakistan should now urgently help revive mediation as the four roads are now clearer than ever. A return to the MoU may temporarily stop the fighting but could fail again if Hormuz remains unresolved. Full-scale war would devastate Iran, expose Israel and Gulf states to retaliation and trap America in another unpredictable Middle Eastern conflict. Prolonged low-intensity warfare would slowly strangle regional and

global economies. The fourth road is different because it addresses the central dispute. The fourth road is no longer simply the best option. After the bloodshed of July 9, it may be the last sensible road still open.

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

Group photo

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of newly elected members Gilgit Baltistan Assembly belonging to the PML-N met Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday.



Photo: PID

GB uplift govt's priority as steps underway to improve infrastructure, create jobs: PM

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday, terming the development of Gilgit-Baltistan a priority of the federal government, said that special attention was being paid to improve infrastructure, communications, energy, education, health, and tourism sectors besides increasing employment opportunities in the region.

The prime minister, in a meeting with the newly-elected members of the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly belonging to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), who called on him here, said that the local economy would be further strengthened by utilizing the natural resources, tourist destinations, and mineral reserves of Gilgit-Baltistan.

Moreover, he said that

providing quality education, modern technical training, and dignified employment to the youth was a key priority of the government, enabling them to play a role in national development.

He said that elected representatives served as a direct source of awareness of public expectations, problems, and priorities, and emphasised that, regardless of political affiliations, the sole purpose

of leadership must be public service and creating ease in people's lives.

Prime Minister Shehbaz directed the formation of a committee, to be chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, which will review the actionable proposals presented by the lawmakers and submit a report. Other members of the committee include Minister for Kashmir Affairs and

Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Muqam and Advisor to PM on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaullah.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Muqam, and Advisor to PM on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaullah.

CCoRR Reviews Dairy and Beverage Sector Reforms to Cut Red Tape and Boost Investment

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Board of Investment Mr. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh chaired the Cabinet Committee on Regulatory Reforms (CCoRR) meeting to address regulatory challenges in Pakistan's dairy and beverage sector. SAPM on Industries and Production Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan, BOI officials, federal and provincial departments, and private sector stakeholders also attended.

The dairy and beverage sector contributes 14.04% to national GDP and supports 8 million rural families. Paki-



stan is the 4th largest dairy producer globally.

The reforms team identified 40 regulatory require-

ments across 25 departments: 17 federal, 17 provincial, and 4 local. In Sindh, setting up a food processing unit requires

235 documents with 57% duplication and 2,040 days processing time.

Proposals include: eliminate 5 regulations, simplify 9, digitize/streamline 18, and retain 8. Implementation would cut documents to 83, reduce time to 634 days, and generate savings of Rs. 58.4 billion.

Minister Sheikh stressed the need for provincial cooperation and private sector input to improve ease of doing business. SAPM Khan said overlapping regulations hinder FDI and urged provinces to compete on facilitation. Dr. Zeelaf Munir, PBC Chair-

person, cited India's single-authority model and noted Pakistan's low dairy exports despite global ranking. FPCCI's Dr. Shehzad Amin flagged quality concerns, noting 40% of children under 5 are stunted despite 72 billion litres of annual milk production, and called for a safe milk law.

Other issues discussed: harmonizing standards via PSQCA per CCI decision, boiler/vessel permits, SBOSS integration for building approvals, environmental, labour, and warehouse regulations. The committee agreed on urgent digitization, harmonization, and data sharing.

AJK govt requests 4,000 FC, Rangers personnel from Centre to deal with protests

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) government has sought immediate security assistance from the federal government to help restore law and order following recent unrest in several districts.

According to official sources, the AJK government requested the deployment of 4,000 personnel from the Federal Constabulary and seven wings of the Pakistan Rangers in a letter sent to the Ministry of Interior.

The letter described the activities of the banned JKJAAC as a serious threat to public order, stating that recent clashes had resulted in the martyrdom of four security personnel and injuries to 174 others.

It said sit-ins were continuing in Poonch and Rawalakot, while



protests in other districts had further heightened tensions. The government also alleged that armed elements had targeted law enforcement agencies and civilians, and set fire to trucks

transporting food supplies.

The AJK government urged the federal authorities to immediately deploy additional security personnel to restore law and order and ensure

the writ of the state.

According to the letter, half of the requested personnel should be equipped with weapons and ammunition, while the remaining 50 percent should be provided with anti-riot gear to deal with protest situations.

Sources said the federal government has responded by dispatching additional contingents of the Federal Constabulary and Pakistan Rangers from Islamabad to Azad Kashmir.

The newly arrived personnel are expected to be deployed in sensitive districts in phases, depending on the security situation.

Sources added that security forces have been placed on high alert across the region, with security measures further tightened to prevent any deterioration in the law and order situation.

DPM Dar directs officials to ensure best Pakistani hospitality, enjoyable stay for OIC Conference delegations



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Friday appreciated the relevant officials for their hard work in managing the preparations for hosting the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Women, and directed them to ensure enjoyable stay and the best of Pakistani hospitality to the foreign delegations arriving from around the world to attend this important event.

The deputy prime minister chaired the 8th meeting of the High-Level Committee overseeing preparations for the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Women, to be held in Islam-

abad on 12-13 July 2026, a DPM's Office news release said.

The Committee reviewed the final preparations for the Conference. The Secretary, Human Rights, gave a detailed briefing on the arrangements for the conference programme, delegate facilitation, protocol, security, logistics, media arrangements, and inter-ministerial coordination, to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the Conference.

The meeting was attended by the Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, SAPM Tariq Bajwa, the Federal Secretaries of Foreign Affairs and Human Rights, and other senior officials from relevant ministries.

Naqvi meets Montenegrin counterpart, discusses bilateral cooperation



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi meets Montenegrin counterpart Danilo Saranovic in New York on Friday and discussed cooperation in areas of common interest, agreed to exchange delegations to promote bilateral relations.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were also held on training of police officers, exchange programs, counter-narcotics and prevention of illegal immigration.

Interior Minister Naqvi invited his Montenegrin counterpart to visit Pakistan as both Interior Ministers agree to form a coordination mechanism to promote relations.

Armed Banned Action Committee Blockades Paralyze Rawalakot



Bureau Report

RAWALAKOT: Armed members of the banned Action Committee have blocked all roads in Rawalakot and surrounding markets in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, causing severe shortages of food and essential supplies, the Poonch Division Administration spokesman said. Protesters cut down trees and placed rocks on roads, while drivers face intimidation and humiliation when transporting goods.

Law enforcement agencies have begun clearing debris to reopen routes. The Bagh-Rawalakot road has now been cleared, and traders can use the Kohala route for supplies. Other blocked routes will also be reopened.

The administration is identifying miscreants through video footage and taking action against those who aided them. A crackdown is underway against blackmailing, illegal weapons possession, and road blockades by the banned committee.