



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
ہم سے نیکی بن سید قطان نے، انہوں نے
شیان بن عبید، اور لہا مالک سے، ان دونوں
نے کہا ہم سے، عبد اللہ بن زید نے بیان کیا کہا
میں نے عبد اللہ بن عمر سے سنا وہ کہتے تھے بنی
کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا پیو دی لوگ
جب تم مسلمانوں میں سے کسی کو سلام کرتے
ہیں تو «سام علیک» کہتے ہیں تم بھی جواب
میں «علیک» کہنا کرو۔
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Barkat Rice Mills
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Javed Jabbar addresses ISPR Summer Camp participants

Former senator Javed Jabbar has said that the birth of Pakistan was an extraordinary event in which a dream turned into a reality by the visionary leadership of Father of the Nation Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. He expressed these views while addressing the participants of Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Summer Camp 2026 in Islamabad. Javed Jabbar also held a special interactive session with the participants.



Marriyum highlights PML-N's development legacy in AJK

Senior Minister of Punjab Marriyum Aurangzeb has said Nawaz Sharif shares a historic and unbreakable bond with the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, where he left a lasting legacy of development. Addressing a rally in Gujjar Khan today in connection with the Azad Jammu and Kashmir elections, Marriyum Aurangzeb said development projects initiated during Nawaz Sharif's tenure continue to stand as evidence of the PML-N's commitment to the region.

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Desolation due to extreme heat

LAHORE: Famous Mall road gives deserted look due to hot and humid day in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

DPM/FM stresses upholding ceasefire commitments under Islamabad MoU

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Saturday, underlined the importance of upholding ceasefire commitments under the Islamabad MoU and avoiding any actions that could further escalate tensions.

The DPM/FM received a telephone call from Foreign Minister of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Kuwaiti, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

The two foreign ministers discussed the latest developments in the region.

Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah shared Kuwait's serious concerns regarding the continued attacks on its territory and expressed hope that restraint would be exer-



cised by all sides and that the Islamabad MoU would be fully implemented.

He also appreciated Pakistan's constructive and mediatory role in promoting dialogue and regional stability.

The deputy prime minister/foreign minister underscored the urgent need for de-escalation, stressed the importance of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, and emphasized that maintaining regional peace and security must remain the foremost priority.

The two leaders agreed to remain in close contact on matters of mutual interest.

Amir Muqam vows continued development for AJK, seeks support for PML-N in LA-4 by-election

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFFRON, Engr Amir Muqam, addressed a large PML-N gathering in Khari Sharif, Mirpur, and urged voters to support party candidate Chaudhry Rukhsar Ahmad in the upcoming LA-4 by-election.

Praising party workers, Muqam said, "I congratulate you in advance. We will win this seat," and assured that PML-N would continue to stand with the people of AJK.

Highlighting the development agenda, he credited Nawaz Sharif and PM Shehbaz Sharif for investments in roads, hospitals, colleges, and public infrastructure. He noted the federal government approved five Danish Schools for AJK, continues subsidized wheat and sugar, and is advancing the Mansehra-Muzaffarabad-Mirpur Expressway. Work on Haryam Bridge has resumed



with Rs10 billion allocated, and extending natural gas to the region remains a priority.

He announced Nawaz Sharif and CM Maryam Nawaz will address a gathering in Mirpur on July 24.

During the event, Ch. Banaras Azam Advocate, a member of the District Council, announced his joining of the PML-N along with supporters and family members.

The gathering was also attended by Ch. Shehbaz Munir Advocate, Ch. Riaz Azam, District President Javed Qadir, Raja Waqas Anwar, Tariq Butt, Haji Maroof, Ch. Imtiaz, Ch. Naeem-ur-Rehman, Shakeel and Sardar Tariq.

PM Shehbaz reaffirms Pakistan's unwavering support for Kashmir on Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif reiterated that Pakistan will continue to extend unwavering diplomatic, political and moral support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir until they can exercise their inalienable right to self-determination.

In his message on Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan (Kashmir's Accession to Pakistan Day), the PM said the day is observed annually to mark the historic resolution adopted by the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference at its Srinagar session on 19 July 1947. He noted that the unanimous resolution reflected the collective



political aspirations of Kashmiri Muslims at a defining moment in the subcontinent's history.

It expressed their desire for accession to Pakistan and called on the Dogra rulers to respect the will of the people. The PM said the resolution remains a key milestone in Kashmir's political struggle.

The PM saluted the courage, resilience and steadfastness of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) in their just struggle for fundamental rights. He emphasized that the occasion is a reminder of the enduring bonds between Pakistan and Jammu and Kashmir, rooted in shared history, faith, culture,

geography and longstanding ties. Above all, he said, it underscores the central importance of respecting the freely expressed will of the Kashmiri people.

Reaffirming Pakistan's principled stance, PM Shehbaz said Pakistan remains steadfast in supporting the right to self-determination as enshrined in relevant UN Security Council resolutions. He stressed that the unresolved Jammu and Kashmir dispute has profound implications for regional peace and security.

"Lasting peace in South Asia requires its peaceful resolution in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people," he added.

Naqvi chairs meeting to review arrangements for launching of tourism projects in Islamabad



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi chairs a meeting to review arrangements for launching of mega projects related to tourism, recreation, and the hotel industry.

Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis Salik Hussain attended the meeting via video link. During the meeting, Interior Minister Naqvi directed Capital

Development Authority (CDA) and the Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) to finish the final plan for these joint ventures within 15 days.

A joint project between the two institutions will be launched following the Prime Minister's final approval. EOBI Chairman Javed Sheikh, CDA Chairman Sohail Ashraf, and senior officials from both organizations also attended the meeting.

Bilawal and CM Sarfaraz Bugti Discuss Balochistan Security, Plan APC for Peace

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari met Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti at Zardari House to discuss the province's administrative, political, and security situation, with focus on the recent wave of terrorism.

CM Bugti briefed Bilawal on overall affairs and security developments following recent incidents. He said PM Shehbaz Sharif had consoled families affected by the Ziarat incident and addressed their demands, and a judicial commission had been formed at the families' request to investigate.

Bugti informed that an All-Party Conference (APC) will soon be convened to discuss restoring peace in Balochistan. Political parties from inside and outside parliament will be invited to build consensus on tackling provincial challenges.

Bilawal paid tribute to martyrs of the



Pakistan Army, FC, and police, expressing solidarity with bereaved families. He appreciated Bugti's support for Ziarat victims and the successful negotiation process, and thanked opposition parties for their constructive role.

Reaffirming PPP's stance, Bilawal said dialogue is the only solution to Balochistan's political issues and vowed: "We will stand like a leaden wall against terrorism."

Army and Balochistan people will defeat conspiracies against Pakistan: CM Sarfraz Bugti

Bureau Report

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said the Pakistan Army and the people of Balochistan will jointly defeat every conspiracy against Pakistan.

Addressing over 4,000 students from 18 cities at the ISPR Summer Camp, he said Pakistan was created to endure forever and that Pakistan and Balochistan are inseparable. He expressed confidence that Balochistan will continue moving toward peace.

On terrorism, Bugti said militants brutally martyred brave citizens for refusing to support them and targeted Mangi Dam, a key water project for the province. He stressed that terrorism and violence

cannot be justified.

Referring to the recent attack on police, he said reinforcements were also attacked. A judicial commission has been formed and all facts will be made public. He criticized some political leaders for spreading misleading propaganda during the Quetta sit-in despite TTP claiming responsibility.

On regional security, Bugti said Pakistan, under Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, gave a strong response to Indian aggression during Marka-e-Haq. He alleged Afghan territory is being used for attacks and that militant groups receive support from India's intelligence agency.

He concluded that Pakistan's future is bright and every citizen will one day live free from fear.

President Chaudhry Latif Akbar reaffirms commitment to the historical legacy of accession to Pakistan Day

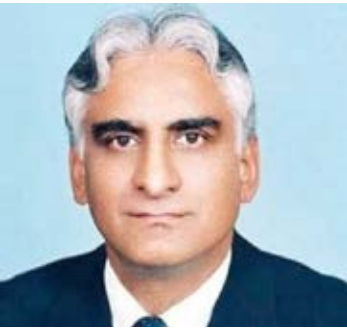
 **Brueau Report.**

MUZAFFARABAD: President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Chaudhry Latif Akbar, has said in a special message on the occasion of Accession to Pakistan Day, reaffirming the historical significance of 19 July 1947 in the political history of the former State of Jammu and Kashmir.

The President stated that the day commemorates the adoption of the historic Accession to Pakistan Reso-

lution by the Muslim leadership of the erstwhile State, which, he said, reflected the aspirations of the people and continues to hold enduring significance in the region's political and historical narrative.

He observed that the people of Jammu and Kashmir have demonstrated steadfast commitment and resilience over the decades, making significant sacrifices in pursuit of their aspirations. He further stated that developments in Indian-ad-



ministered Jammu and Kashmir, including the constitutional changes of 5 August 2019 and the continuing human rights situation, have not diminished the resolve of the Kashmiri people. Reiterating the Government's position, he said that a durable and peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute should be achieved in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Negligence

ISLAMABAD: Number of dead fish floating on the bank of Rawal Lake in the Federal Capital, creating panic among the residents of the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, who mostly get their drinking water from the reservoir. Visitors and residents of the nearby areas are in deep trouble due to the bad smell of dead fish.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Historic 1947 Resolution still guides Kashmir struggle, says AJK Premier

 **Bureau Report**

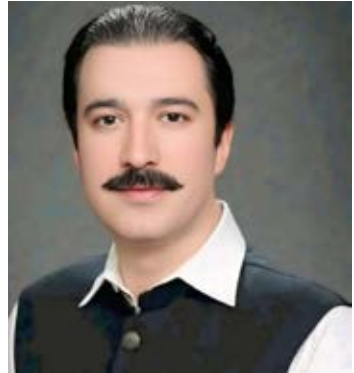
MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore said in his special message on the occasion of Accession Day. On July 19, 1947, the Muslim leadership of the State of Jammu and Kashmir interpreted the wishes of the Kashmiri people and passed the historic resolution

of accession with Pakistan, which is still the basis of our national ideology.

Love for Pakistan is part of our faith, identity and national honor. The Kashmiri people have made unprecedented sacrifices for this relationship and are still steadfast in their struggle for their right to self-determination. And human rights violations cannot discourage

Kashmiris. The only durable solution to the problem of Kashmir is in line with the UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

He said that he thanked the Government of Pakistan, the Pakistan Army and the Pakistani people for their constant political, diplomatic and moral support of the Kashmiris. I believe that the day will surely come when the Kash-



miri people will decide their own future by exercising their right to autonomy, he said.

Today, we reaffirm our commitment that by fulfilling the mission of our martyrs, the annexation of Pakistan will be achieved.

19 July: Accession to Pakistan Resolution Day and the Historic Role of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference

The history of Jammu and Kashmir cannot be meaningfully narrated without acknowledging the pivotal role of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference. Widely regarded as the first organised political platform representing the aspirations of the Muslim population of the erstwhile State, the party occupies a significant place in Kashmir's political evolution and in the development of the movement that advocated accession to Pakistan.

Established to safeguard the political, economic, and social rights of the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir, the Muslim Conference drew inspiration from the organisational model of the All-India Muslim League. It emerged during a period when the Muslim population sought greater political representation and constitutional rights under the Dogra administration. Through its leadership and organisational outreach, the party mobilised

public opinion across the State and laid the foundations of modern political activism in Kashmir.

Among its most prominent leaders were Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas, widely remembered as Raees-ul-Ahrrar, and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who initially worked together in advancing the political rights of the people. Although their political paths later diverged, their early collaboration marked an important chapter in the political awakening of the region.

As the partition of the Indian subcontinent approached in 1947, the Muslim Conference publicly advocated accession of the State to Pakistan. Against this backdrop, the Party's Working Committee adopted the Accession to Pakistan Resolution on 19 July 1947, urging the then Ruler

of the State to take into account the political aspirations and sentiments of the Muslim majority while determining the future constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir. For supporters of the Party, this resolution remains a landmark expression of their political aspirations and continues to be commemorated as a defining moment in the region's history.

Following the events of 1947 and the subsequent division of the former princely State, the Muslim Conference continued to advocate its political position regarding the future of Jammu and Kashmir. Throughout different phases of the Kashmir dispute, the party has maintained its ideological stance while remaining an active participant in the political discourse of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

The Party's subsequent leadership,

including Mujahid-e-Awwal Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan and Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas, is widely credited by its supporters with preserving the organisation's ideological identity and political continuity. In later years, the leadership transitioned to Sardar Atiq Ahmad Khan, former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and President of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, under whose stewardship the party continues its political activities and organisational engagement across Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Today, the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference remains one of the oldest political parties in the region. Its supporters regard the 19 July Accession to Pakistan Resolution as a defining milestone in the party's history and an enduring symbol of its political ideology, while the party continues to participate in the democratic and political process of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

AJK Election Commission Refutes Fake Notification Claiming Postponement of General Elections

 **Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: The spokesperson for the Election Commission of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has categorically rejected a forged notification circulating on social media and other platforms, falsely claiming that the General Elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir have been postponed.

The spokesperson clarified that the fabricated document, circulated on the Election Commission's letterhead, is entirely fake and has no connection whatsoever with either the Election Commission of Pakistan or the Election Commission of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.



The Election Commission has urged all political parties, contesting candidates, media organizations, and members of the public not to be misled by such false and baseless information. It advised all stakeholders to rely exclusively on official announcements issued by the Election Commission and authenticated news disseminated through the Department of Information.

Reaffirming its commitment to the electoral process, the Commission stated that, God willing, the General Elections will be held as scheduled in accordance with the officially notified election programme. It further emphasized that any amendment to the election schedule, should such a need ever arise, would be announced solely through an authorized and official notification issued by the Election Commission.

The Election Commission also appealed to the public to act responsibly by refraining from creating or sharing unverified and fabricated information and to rely only on credible and official sources for election-related updates.

Sardar Attique Reaffirms Commitment to 19 July Accession to Pakistan Resolution

 **Bureau Report**



MUZAFFARABAD: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former AJK Prime Minister, Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan, issued a special message on Accession to Pakistan Day, calling 19 July a defining milestone in Jammu and Kashmir's political history. _ (t)_

He stated that on 19 July 1947, the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference adopted a historic resolution at the residence of Ghazi-e-Millat Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan in Srinagar, outlining what it saw as the future political direction of the State. According to him, the resolution reflected the collective aspirations and ideological convictions of the region's Muslims and their association with Pakistan.

Sardar Attique said the resolution holds significance for Jammu and Kashmir comparable to the Pakistan Resolution in the Pakistan Movement. Despite partition-era developments, the people of Jammu and Kashmir continued pursuing their political aspirations, with 1947 remaining a key reference point.

He urged people to honor the sacrifices of earlier generations by staying united, steadfast, and committed to the ideals of the 19 July resolution, and reaffirmed the party's pledge to continue its struggle through democratic and peaceful means.

Election Commission of Pakistan Rejects Fake Press Release Regarding AJK Elections

 **Spokesman Report.**

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has categorically rejected a fake press release circulating on social media that has been falsely attributed to the Commission regarding the General Elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).



In a clarification issued on Friday, the ECP stated that the purported press release is fabricated, baseless, and misleading, and emphasized that no such press release has been issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan.

The Commission further clarified that the conduct of elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir does not fall within the constitutional or legal jurisdiction of the Election Commission of Pakistan, and therefore any statement suggesting otherwise is entirely false.

The ECP urged the public to obtain information relating to the Election Commission only through its official channels and advised citizens to refrain from believing or disseminating unverified and misleading content circulating on social media or other platforms.

Assassination attempt on Sardar Attique's convoy condemned, all leaders remain safe

 **Abdul Majeed Tahir**

DHIRKOT/RAWALPINDI: An assassination attempt was carried out on the convoy of Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan, President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former AJK Prime Minister, in the Paniali-Sahliyan area of Dhirkot during his election campaign.

According to initial reports, two unidentified armed assailants opened fire on the convoy before fleeing. By the grace of Almighty Allah, Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan and all party leaders, workers, and supporters remained completely safe. No casualties or injuries were reported.

Despite the attack, the convoy continued its scheduled campaign, reflecting the party's commitment to democratic and peaceful political engagement.

Muslim Conference leadership, including Secretary General Mehar-un-Nisa, former President Mirza Shafique Jarral, and other senior leaders, strongly condemned the incident as a cowardly attempt to intimidate political leadership and undermine democracy.

The party urged the government and law enforcement to conduct an immediate, impartial, and transparent investigation and bring the perpetrators to justice. Leadership reaffirmed its resolve to uphold democratic values, rule of law, and peaceful political participation.

Islamabad
30° – 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:30 am
Zohr 12:14 pm
Asr 5:11 pm
Maghrib 7:18 pm
Isha 8:57 pm

EMERGENCY

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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH 561111
MH 561116
MH 561116
Cantt Hospital 9270907-11
DHQ 5556311-4
RGH 9290301-7
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

Founders Panel Achieves Historic Clean Sweep in COMSATS University Statutory Bodies Elections 2026

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) has concluded the Statutory Bodies Elections 2026 for the Senate, Syndicate, Academic Council, and Representation Committee of the Senate. The Founders Panel secured a historic and unprecedented clean sweep by winning all 19 elected seats across all statutory forums. This marks the third consecutive term that the panel has won every elected seat since CUI attained university status under the CUI Act, 2018.

In the Senate elections, the panel won all four faculty seats: Prof. Dr. Rab Nawaz, Dr. Muhammad Shakeel Aslam, Engr. Nauman Khan Tareen, and Mr. Taimur Sajjad. For the Syndicate, elected members include Prof. Dr. Muhammad Yasin, Prof. Dr. Mazhar Ali, and Prof. Dr. Mudassar Rashid Khawaja. The panel also won all positions in the Academic Council and Representation Committee of the Senate.

Expressing gratitude, the Founders Panel thanked faculty across all CUI campuses and appreciated Rector Prof. Dr. Raheel Qamar and the administration for ensuring a transparent electoral process.

CM Maryam Nawaz hands over symbolic keys of sewerage machinery to WASA officials

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Saturday said that the journey of development was not confined to Lahore but encompassed the entire province, as the government

completed the delivery of 272 modern drainage and sewerage machines to WASA in 15 districts of Punjab. She added that the supply of 696 machines and related equipment to WASA in 41 districts was also underway.

The chief minister formally handed



over the symbolic keys of the newly procured sewerage machinery to the relevant WASA officials.

During the ceremony, Maryam Nawaz removed the security cordon to personally interact with WASA workers. She also fulfilled their request for a group photograph and appreciated their commitment to public service. She urged the workers to continue performing their duties with dedication and described the provision of

modern machinery as a significant step towards improving municipal services.

Provincial Minister for Housing Bilal Yasin and Housing Secretary Noor-ul-Amin Mengal briefed the chief minister on the project. They informed her that in the first phase, 272 machines belonging to 12 different categories had been supplied to WASA authorities across Punjab.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief

Minister Maryam Nawaz said: "Providing ease and convenience to every citizen in every city is our commitment." She noted that the WASA network had been expanded from two districts to 41 districts across Punjab.

She added that the Punjab government was upgrading sewerage infrastructure and modern drainage systems to provide better civic services and greater convenience to the public.

Bueatyfication

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) workers trimming the plants along Srinagar Highway during a hot and humid day, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

PIHRO Appoints Shakeel Ahmed Abbasi as Coordinator for Overseas Affairs

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan International Human Rights Organisation (PIHRO) has announced the appointment of Mr. Shakeel Ahmed Abbasi as Coordinator for Overseas Affairs. In this role, Mr. Abbasi will lead PIHRO's international outreach by building stronger partnerships with overseas Pakistani communities, international organizations, and global human rights stakeholders. His focus will be to advance PIHRO's mission of promoting human rights, peace, equality, justice, and youth empowerment worldwide. PIHRO Chairman Mr. Habib Malik Orakzai welcomed the appointment, stating:

"I am confident that his dedication, leadership, and



commitment to humanitarian values will strengthen PIHRO's international engagement and contribute significantly to our mission of promoting human

rights, peace, equality, and justice worldwide." PIHRO congratulated Mr. Abbasi on his new responsibilities and expressed confidence that he

will help expand international cooperation and build stronger global partnerships in support of human rights and sustainable development.

Jahangir Khanzada Prioritizes Quality Education for Chhachh Region During College Visit

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Khanzada urges quality in development projects Former Punjab minister and member of the Punjab Chief Minister's Monitoring Committee, Jahangir Khanzada, on Saturday visited the Government Shuja Khanzada Associate Boys College in Hazro to inspect the ongoing construction of the institution's boundary wall. During the visit, Mr. Khanzada reviewed the quality and pace of work and directed officials of the relevant department as well as the contractor to ensure that the project was completed in accordance with prescribed construction standards. He also instructed the



college principal, Safdar Khan, to closely monitor the execution of the work to maintain quality. Speaking to reporters, Mr. Khanzada said his priority was to ensure that students of the Chhachh region had access to quality educational facilities. "Our family has always placed education at the forefront of its public service agenda. We are committed to providing every possible educational facility so that every boy and girl in Chhachh can benefit from quality education close to home," he said. Among those accompanying him during the visit were Ahmad Taj Khanzada, Malik Ansar Ahmad, Principal Safdar Khan, and Rizwan Khan Wardag, along with other local notables.

Noreen Niazi's Remarks Reflect the Mindset of Her Brother: Azma Bokhari

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Information and Culture Azma Bokhari said that Noreen Niazi's recent statement reflects the mindset of her brother. She said the family has consistently appeared uncomfortable with Pakistan's achievements and that remarks made against the national interest are deeply regrettable.

Azma Bokhari said that the entire world acknowledged Pakistan's success in Maarka-e-Haq and India's humiliating defeat. She said that, at such a moment, Noreen Niazi's remarks in support of what she described as "the fascist Modi" were not only shameful but also highly condemnable.

She further said that the Pakistan Armed Forces and the Pakistan Air Force achieved historic success during Maarka-e-Haq, making the entire nation proud. Every Pakistani, she added, salutes the courage, sacrifices, professionalism, and unwavering commitment of the country's armed forces in defending the homeland.

Federal Minister Inaugurates Arena Sports Centre in Toba Tek Singh



Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: A state-of-the-art Arena Sports Centre was inaugurated at Shakar Ganj Park by Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwaar Chaudhry, in line with Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif's youth-focused agenda.

DC Maham Asif Malik said the centre will provide world-class facilities to help youth build athletic potential and adopt healthy lifestyles. She noted that sports instill discipline, teamwork and leadership, contributing to a progressive society. The project continues initiatives started by former DC Umar Abbas Mela.

Federal Minister Junaid Anwaar Chaudhry called the public-private partnership centre a reflection of CM Maryam's commitment to international-standard sports. He said engaging youth in sports and education is key to building a healthy, active society and producing future national athletes.

The complex features a cricket arena, futsal court, padel court and open-air gym, offering safe recreational space for youth, children and families.

DG Sports Punjab Chairs Meeting on CM Punjab Champions League Scheduled for Late July

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi chaired an important meeting at the National Hockey Stadium regarding the upcoming CM Punjab Champions League. Deputy Director Sports Zahoor Ahmed attended in person, while Vice President Pakistan Railways Sports Board Hamdan Nazir joined online. The meeting

reviewed

organizational

arrangements,

team composition,

and competition

format for the

league, set to

be held in the

last week of

July in collaboration

with PCB, Pakistan

Railways, and FBR. DG

Sports Punjab

announced the tournament

will feature four pools:

Pool A: Bahawalpur,

Lahore, Sargodha Pool B:

DG Khan, Lahore Green,

Faisalabad Pool C:

Multan, Lahore Blue,

Gujranwala Pool D:

Sahiwal, Gujrat, Rawalpindi

He said the league will

also include four women's

teams, reflecting

Punjab's commitment

to promoting women's

cricket. Top performers

will be selected for the

Punjab team to compete

in the Pakistan Cup.

Qureshi added the competition

will provide a platform

for talented cricketers

and will feature both

national and international

players, making it a highly

competitive event.



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Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan: Remembering History, Renewing the Call for Peace

Every year on 19 July, Pakistan and the people of Jammu and Kashmir observe Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan (Kashmir's Accession to Pakistan Day) to commemorate the historic resolution adopted by the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in 1947. The resolution reflected the political aspirations of the Muslims of the erstwhile state at a defining moment in the subcontinent's history and called for the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan.

The significance of this day extends beyond historical remembrance. It symbolizes the enduring historical, cultural, religious and geographical bonds that have connected the people of Pakistan and Jammu and Kashmir for generations. More importantly, it serves as a reminder that the future of Jammu and Kashmir remains an unresolved international issue with far-reaching implications for regional peace and stability.

For nearly eight decades, the Jammu and Kashmir dispute has remained unresolved despite the existence of relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions that call for the people of the region to exercise their right to self-determination. Pakistan has consistently maintained that a peaceful and lasting solution should be achieved through dialogue, diplomacy and adherence to international law. This principled stance continues to guide Pakistan's position on the issue.

The continuing situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) remains a matter of concern. Reports by international human rights organizations and global observers have repeatedly highlighted the importance of protecting fundamental rights and ensuring respect for human dignity. Addressing these concerns through peaceful engagement and constructive dialogue is essential for reducing tensions and building confidence in the region.

The international community, particularly the United Nations, also has an important role to play in supporting efforts aimed at achieving a just and peaceful settlement in accordance with internationally recognized principles and commitments. Sustainable peace in South Asia cannot be fully realized without addressing one of the region's longest-standing disputes through dialogue and mutual respect.

Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan is therefore not only an occasion to reflect on history but also an opportunity to renew the collective commitment to peace, justice and regional stability. It reminds us that lasting solutions emerge through respect for international law, meaningful dialogue and the recognition of the legitimate aspirations of the people concerned.

As the day is observed, Pakistan reiterates its continued diplomatic, political and moral support for the people of Jammu and Kashmir while emphasizing that a peaceful resolution remains the only path towards lasting peace, security and prosperity for the entire South Asian region.

Martyrs blood is sacrosanct

A recent statement by Maulana Fazlur Rehman during a public address has generated considerable debate across Pakistan. While expressing his views, he remarked that soldiers of Pakistan's Armed Forces who embrace martyrdom are salaried employees, implying that their sacrifices are compensated through salaries and official benefits.

Such remarks require careful reflection because they concern not only a political debate but also the sacrifices of thousands of martyrs, the emotions of their families and the collective sentiments of the nation. At a time when Pakistan faces serious internal and external challenges, the sacrifices of those who defend the country deserve the highest respect and sensitivity.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman is a respected religious scholar and a senior political leader who has every right to express his opinions and criticise government policies. However, political disagreements should not become a reason to overlook or diminish the sacrifices of Pakistan's martyrs. Political matters are temporary, but the honour of those who give their lives for the nation remains eternal.

Islam places martyrs at the highest spiritual level. The Holy Quran states:

"And never think of those who are killed in the way of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision."
(Surah Aal-e-Imran 3:169)

This divine message makes it clear that martyrdom cannot be measured by worldly compensation. No salary, benefit or financial package can ever equal the value of a human life sacrificed for a greater cause.

The soldiers of Pakistan's Armed Forces do not merely perform a profession; they accept a responsibility where every day may bring the possibility of death. From the icy heights of Siachen to the chal-

lenging terrains of Balochistan, from the valleys of Waziristan to the forward posts along the Line of Control, they face extreme conditions, terrorism and hostile threats to ensure that millions of citizens can live in peace. Pakistan's defence is not limited to the Army alone. The Pakistan Air Force has repeatedly demonstrated courage, professionalism and exceptional skill in protecting the country's airspace. From the historic battles of 1965 to modern security operations and national emergencies, the sacrifices of Air

Force personnel have written glorious chapters in the nation's history.

Similarly, the Pakistan Navy has played a vital role in safeguarding maritime borders, ports and strategic sea routes. The dedication and sacrifices of naval officers and sailors remain an integral part of Pakistan's defence history. The Army, Air Force and Navy collectively represent the strength of Pakistan's national security, protecting the country on land,

in the air and at sea.

The truth is simple: a salary can compensate for a service, but it can never compensate for a life. Can any amount of money replace the son lost by a mother, the husband lost by a widow or the father lost by children? The answer is certainly no. The pain of losing a loved one in the defence of the homeland cannot be measured in financial terms.

Pakistan's history is a testimony to the courage and sacrifices of its Armed Forces. From the wars of 1948, 1965 and 1971 to Kargil and the long battle against terrorism, thousands of officers and soldiers sacrificed their lives to protect national sovereignty. Their sacrifices ensured that Pakistan remained secure against numerous threats.

The war against terrorism brought further sacrifices. Soldiers of the Army, as well as personnel of police, Rangers, Frontier Corps and other law-enforcement agencies, laid down their lives while fighting extremism and violence. Many of them were young men with families, dreams and personal aspirations, yet they placed national security above their own lives.

The contribution of the Armed Forces during natural disasters is also unforgettable. Whether earthquakes, floods or other national emergencies, military personnel have always been among the first to reach affected communities, providing rescue, relief and medical assistance. These efforts reflect a spirit of national service and humanity.

Democracy allows criticism and debate. Government policies and institutional decisions can be questioned, but the sacrifices of martyrs should never become a subject of political controversy. There is a difference between criticising policies and undermining the dignity of those who sacrificed everything for the country.

If there are concerns regarding any individual or specific matter related to the Armed Forces, appropriate channels exist for addressing such issues. Relevant institutions, including the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), can respond to concerns in a responsible manner. However, the entire institution and its martyrs should not be drawn into political disagreements. Nations are strengthened not only by economic progress but also by their respect for those who make sacrifices for their survival. Honouring martyrs keeps alive the values of courage, patriotism and national unity.

Therefore, we must rise above political differences and remain united in respecting our martyrs. Governments may change, political alliances may shift, and debates may continue, but the blood of those who sacrificed their lives for Pakistan will always remain the foundation of the nation's freedom, security and dignity.

We salute the soldiers of the Pakistan Army, the brave pilots of the Pakistan Air Force and the dedicated personnel of the Pakistan Navy. We salute the mothers who gave their sons, the fathers who carried their coffins with pride, and the families who endured their loss with patience and courage.

With utmost respect, political leaders may continue to express their views, but the sanctity of martyrs must remain above politics. The martyrs belong to the entire nation; they are Pakistan's collective pride and an everlasting symbol of sacrifice.

America's Iran Strategy in Disarray

The United States' confrontation with Iran has entered a dangerous and increasingly incoherent phase as after months of military action, diplomacy, renewed bombing and contradictory declarations from Washington, the central question remains unanswered: What, precisely, does the United States seek to achieve?

President Donald Trump had already warned that Iran would be hit hard. Yet, almost in the same breath, he indicated that he did not expect the wider war to restart, that any further action would end quickly and that negotiations involving Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner could continue.

These are not merely variations in tone. They represent fundamentally different strategic paths: renewed diplomacy, limited punitive strikes, prolonged coercion, comprehensive military defeat or regime change.

A great power can keep its adversary guessing as a deliberate tactic. But unpredictability becomes dangerous when allies, markets, military commanders, diplomats and citizens cannot determine whether the ambiguity is calculated or whether policy itself is being improvised from one crisis to the next.

The original justification for military action centered on the assertion that Iran was approaching nuclear weapons capability and posed an urgent threat to Israel and the United States. However, Vice President J. D. Vance later suggested that Iran remained far from developing an immediate nuclear threat. Such a statement inevitably weakens the urgency that was invoked to justify the war. If the threat was not imminent, why was

a large-scale attack necessary? If it was imminent, why has the conflict now narrowed primarily to tankers, tolls and freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz?

The war's declared goals have repeatedly shifted. Preventing nuclear weaponization was followed by demands to destroy missile and drone infrastructure. The contradiction became especially visible in Washington's position on transit charges. Secretary of State Marco Rubio stated unequivocally that no country may impose tolls or fees on an international waterway.

President Trump later announced that the United States, acting as the "Guardian of the Hormuz Strait," would charge a fee equal to 20 percent of the value of cargo moving through the waterway as compensation for American protection. He subsequently reversed that proposal and said Gulf states would instead provide trade and investment commitments to the United States.

The Memorandum of Understanding was supposed to create a pathway back from war. Iran claimed that Washington had breached the agreement through renewed sanctions, attacks in southern Iran and continued support for Israeli military action.

American officials accused Tehran of attacking commercial shipping and violating the spirit of the ceasefire. Rather than serving as a bridge toward a comprehensive settlement, the MOU became another contested document

interpreted differently by each side.

The crisis also exposed major differences between Washington and Israel. Vice President Vance accused elements within the Israeli government of attempting to manipulate American public opinion and derail U. S.-Iran diplomacy. He argued that a well-funded influence campaign was designed to keep the war going and shift U. S. policy away from negotiation.

His remarks were extraordinary. Disagreements between American and Israeli governments are not unprecedented, but a sitting vice president publicly alleging that figures within an allied government were attempting to manipulate U. S. political judgment marked a profound rupture. Vance went even further by suggesting that, without Israeli influence, the United States might not have entered the conflict in the same manner.

This raises a question that can no longer be avoided: Is American policy toward Iran being determined primarily by the independent national interests of the United States, or is it being shaped by Israel's separate strategic objective of permanently weakening Iran?

Israel may consider a fragmented, militarily devastated and politically unstable Iran advantageous because it would remove its strongest regional rival. But such an outcome would impose enormous costs on the United States, Europe and the wider Middle East. Iran is not a small or institutionally hollow state. It has nearly 95 million people, a

substantial industrial base, deep historical institutions, strategic geography and a complex society.

Destroying Iran without a credible plan for what follows could produce state fragmentation, insurgency, terrorism, economic collapse, refugee flows and prolonged regional warfare. The consequences would not remain confined to Israel's immediate security environment. They would affect global energy supplies, European migration, shipping insurance, American military deployments and international markets.

Trump himself now appears trapped between escalation and restraint. Weeks of American and Israeli attacks failed to force Iran into unconditional surrender. The economic reality limits Washington's freedom of action. A prolonged conflict in the Strait of Hormuz could raise fuel, transportation, manufacturing and food costs across the United States. Trump must therefore reconcile his promise to demonstrate military strength with his domestic political need to avoid another inflationary shock before congressional elections.

The war has never commanded overwhelming public support. Influential conservative voices, including Tucker Carlson and Megyn Kelly, have argued that Trump was manipulated into pursuing Israel's war. Meanwhile, hawkish conservatives attacked the MOU for conceding too much to Iran and questioned why the conflict had been fought if Washington was ultimately prepared to compromise.

Trump is thus pressured from both directions. Restraint invites criticism from hawks who demand Iran's defeat.

Continued on Page 7



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

The Middle East Tensions, Rising Inflation and Pakistan's Universities

In the early 90s, Finland experienced one of the worst economic crises in its recent history. The Soviet Union and its trading partners were no longer part of their market, the banking system was in trouble, and unemployment was high, causing the nation to fall into a deep recession. There was a general expectation that budgets would be cut, especially in the education sector as part of the austerity cuts. Finland, however, opted for another way. It protected its universities, it thought they were the basis of its financial rescue, not its burden. One of the most significant 1990s structural reforms was the establishment of a "dual model" of higher education where a number of vocational and professional colleges

became "polytechnics," alongside traditional research universities. The economic crises of the 1990s brought attention to the importance of education in the process of recovery, and Finland moved towards a service economy. What is important in this increase in participation in education is that it has occurred without transferring costs to the student or parents. In the next ten years, Finland became one of the world's most innovative and competitive economies, proving that countries that invest in education in the times of crisis become resilient for the future.

Pakistan today faces a new challenge but no less daunting. Rising conflict in the Middle East has jolted oil prices, and

could cause new inflation. Pakistan is a fuel import-dependent country which is most vulnerable to such shocks. Rising fuel costs invariably lead to higher transportation costs, electricity rates, food prices and cost of living. In this time of economic change, one institution is presently silently suffering the impacts, and that is Pakistan's public university system.

Universities are not just places of learning, they are human capital machines, sources of innovation and national development. However, they are also big institutions that use power, run labs, run hostels and have several thousand staff. All operational costs – be it utility charges, transportation, lab equipment, research materials, etc. – increase with inflation. An additional period of inflation may be devastating for public universities already short of finances, late payments from the government and escalating expenses.

However, in times of economic crises, innovation should be encouraged, not shied away from. As a rule, the first priority of universities should be prudent financial management. Each and every rupee will have to be spent with maximum academic benefit. Administrative waste must be minimized and investment in teaching and research, libraries, laboratories and student welfare must be safeguarded. Open budgeting and periodic financial reviews can help to run things more efficiently while maintaining the quality of instruction.

Continued on Page 7

PAEC Chairman urges young scientists to become tech innovators

City Desk

NATHIAGALI: Chairman Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), Dr. Raja Ali Raza Anwar, on Saturday urged Pakistan's young scientists to become creators of technology rather than mere consumers of innovations developed elsewhere, stressing that sustained investment in science, research and human resource development is essential for securing the country's future competitiveness.

He was addressing the closing ceremony of the 51st International Nathiagali Summer College (INSC) on Physics and Contemporary Needs.

The Summer College concluded after two weeks of scientific deliberations on emerging frontiers of science and technology. Organized by PAEC from July 6 to 18, the prestigious event brought together leading scientists, researchers and young scholars from Pakistan and around the world to exchange knowledge and explore emerging technologies shaping the future.

Addressing the participants, the Chairman said the world is undergoing a defining technological transformation driven by artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, biotechnology and clean energy technologies, where nations increasingly compete through ideas, innovation, talent and technology rather than natural resources. He said Pakistan possesses the talent, institutions and determination



to emerge as a knowledge-producing nation capable of developing indigenous technologies and contributing solutions to global challenges.

Dr. Raja Ali Raza Anwar said the International Nathiagali Summer College has, for more than five decades, played a vital role in nurturing a scientific culture by connecting young researchers with world-renowned scientists and promoting innovation, collaboration and critical thinking. He noted that many former participants now serve in leading research institutions, universities, industries and strategic organizations, reflecting the College's enduring contribution to Pakistan's scientific development.

The Chairman highlighting the international dimension of the programme, the Chairman said the Summer College generated meaningful outcomes beyond the lecture hall by opening new avenues for prospective collaboration with the Institute of Cotton Research, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Anyang, China, in agriculture and biotechnology. Technical meetings with distinguished international faculty also explored opportunities for joint research, technology development and long-term institutional cooperation, further strengthening Pakistan's scientific diplomacy and international partnerships.

This year's Summer College brought together 45 distinguished scientists from 20 countries, while around 300 selected participants attended the programme in person and hundreds more joined virtually through live streaming facilitated by the Higher Education Commission (HEC).

Reaffirming PAEC's commitment to the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology, Dr. Raja Ali Raza Anwar said the Commission continues to contribute to Pakistan's socio-economic development through clean nuclear power generation, comprehensive cancer care delivered by its nationwide network of 21 Atomic



Energy Cancer Hospitals, development of improved crop varieties for enhanced food security, and advanced research in artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, advanced materials and semiconductor sciences.

In his address, Member Science PAEC, Dr. Shakeel Abbas Rofi said that by organising this event we wanted to explore the emerging needs of Pakistan and to the same end,

new courses related to health and environment were added besides emerging technologies, Artificial Intelligence and use of nuclear techniques in agriculture to achieve food security.

"Lively discussions over tea, technical meetings, curiosity of the participants and generosity of the faculty in answering those curiosities remained the signature note of the INSC-2026. We were successful in trans-

forming scientific meetings into scientific communities and long lasting partnerships," Dr. Shakeel Rofi said and especially thanked Chinese and Malaysian experts for their remarkable contribution for opening up new avenues of cooperation with Pakistan in the fields of agriculture, environment, isotopic hydrology and fuel cell technology. He also thanked Dr. Gerd Helmer from Medical University Vienna for extending complimentary access to Pakistani research institutes to his AI lab on radiotherapy.

Earlier, Scientific Secretary INSC, Dr. Rahat Ullah briefed about key themes of the College and remarkable achievements gained during the two weeks of interactive sessions.

A poster competition was also held which was evaluated by the experts panel comprising foreign faculty. The first prize of the poster competition was won by Ms. Salka Javed from Islamic International University Islamabad for her poster on water quality. The second prize was won by Ms. Rubab Mansoor from Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad for her work on the effects of microplastics on the environment in Northern areas. The third prize was bagged by Ms. Amina Zakaullah from COMSATS University Lahore.

At the end of the ceremony, Chairman PAEC Dr. Raja Ali Raza Anwar distributed prizes among the winners of the poster competition and gave away commemorative shields to the national and international faculty members.

Hamdard Foundation Empowers Karachi Communities with Rickshaws, Sewing Machines, and Dowry Packages

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Hamdard Foundation Pakistan has provided rickshaws to desperate fellow citizens, modern sewing machines and cash stipends to students who completed Team Karachi Welfare's sewing and embroidery course, and dowry packages to 100 low-income white-collar families, in a special ceremony held yesterday at a local banquet, Karachi, organised by Team Karachi Welfare Association.

The President of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, Ms Sadia Rashid, attended the event as

the chief guest and distributed the assistance among the beneficiaries. She was accompanied by the Director of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, Syed Muhammad Arsalan.

Congratulating the graduates of the sewing and embroidery course, Ms Sadia Rashid said that a skill is one of a person's greatest strengths and that self-confidence is equally essential for success. She said that Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said always stressed the importance of time and often remarked, "Time is a trust from Allah, and safeguarding it is an act of worship."

She urged parents, particularly fathers, to respect women, provide them with quality education, and encourage them to learn practical skills so that they can become confident and independent members of society.

Addressing the gathering, Syed Muhammad Arsalan said that Hamdard Foundation Pakistan is dedicated to serving humanity. He said that, the organisation not only carries out a wide range of welfare initiatives but also supports and encourages social organisations such as Team Karachi Welfare so that more deserving people can gain

dignified employment and enjoy a better quality of life.

He added that, with the support of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, loader and passenger rickshaws were distributed among deserving individuals during the ceremony. In addition, 85 female and 55 male graduates of the sewing and embroidery course received modern sewing machines and cash stipends. Dowry packages containing furniture, kitchen utensils, and other essential household items were also presented to 100 deserving families.

The initiative was widely



appreciated by members of the public present at the gathering. One beneficiary said that he had

been unemployed for the past six months, but thanks to the rickshaw provided by Hamdard

Foundation Pakistan, he would now be able to earn an honest and dignified living.



News Desk

KARACHI: The Execu-

tive Programme on Carbon Finance for CEOs was held in Karachi, bringing togeth-

er Pakistan's top corporate executives to explore how climate action can drive busi-

ness growth, investment, and competitiveness.

Organized by NUST's Iqbal

NUST and Partners Launch CEO Programme on Carbon Finance to Drive Climate Investment in Pakistan

Executive Development Centre (IEDC), Nutshell Communications, and CVF-V20, the full-day programme gathered CEOs, Board members, CFOs, and sustainability leaders for dialogue on climate finance and carbon markets. This is the first in a series of workshops.

Speakers including Zulfikar Younas (CVF-V20), Ahsan Kamran, Khurram Lalani, and Maha Qasim stressed

that climate change is now a strategic business issue impacting investment, export competitiveness, and governance. Companies that lead the low-carbon transition can better attract capital and unlock new revenue.

Participants examined opportunities from Pakistan's Carbon Market Policy, Green Taxonomy, and SECP's Sustainability Reporting Framework. A special address

by Mussarat Jabeen, Executive Director SECP, highlighted the need for climate disclosures and board leadership.

A case study on Shell's Carbon Finance Strategy showed how climate action can become a commercial opportunity. The programme concluded that early movers in climate-smart investments and carbon markets will be best placed to attract finance and create long-term value.

Strengthening Human Rights Through Global Learning: Reflections on the 2026 Sakharov Fellowship

The promotion and protection of human rights depend not only on strong legal frameworks but also on the commitment, knowledge and leadership of individuals dedicated to defending justice, equality and human dignity. In an increasingly interconnected world, investing in the education and professional development of young human rights defenders has become more important than ever. International fellowships and exchange programmes play a vital role in preparing future leaders to address emerging human rights challenges with confidence, competence and a global perspective.

A remarkable example of this commitment is Aishah Masood, Project Coordinator and Campaign Staff at DHR, Bahria University, Pakistan, who was selected for the prestigious 2026 Sakharov Fellowship. Through this distinguished programme, she joined 14 human rights defenders from different parts of the world for a two-week fellowship hosted by the European Parliament in Brussels and the Global Campus of Human Rights in Venice.

The Sakharov Fellowship offers much more than academic learning. It provides participants with an invaluable platform to exchange ideas, share experiences and develop practical solu-

tions to contemporary human rights issues. Bringing together professionals from diverse cultural, legal and institutional backgrounds fosters mutual understanding and strengthens international solidarity in defending fundamental rights and freedoms.

The fellowship's visits to the European Parliament allow participants to observe how democratic institutions promote and protect human rights through legislation, oversight and international cooperation. Likewise, the Global

Campus of Human Rights offers an outstanding academic environment where leading scholars and practitioners connect theoretical knowledge with real-world policy and practice. This unique combination equips fellows with the skills needed to translate human rights principles into meaningful action.

From my own academic journey, I understand the transformative value of international exposure. Before completing my M. Phil. thesis, I had the opportunity to

visit several European institutions. Those experiences broadened my research perspective, enhanced my understanding of international human rights mechanisms and demonstrated how global standards are implemented through effective institutions and collaborative policymaking.

The real success of any fellowship lies not only in the knowledge acquired but in its application after participants return home. Such programmes inspire critical thinking, ethical leadership, evidence-based advocacy and stronger partnerships among governments, civil society, universities and international organizations. These connections are essential for

addressing increasingly complex human rights challenges.

I warmly congratulate Aishah Masood on this outstanding achievement. Her selection reflects the growing contribution of Pakistani youth to global human rights discourse and demonstrates the country's emerging role in international advocacy. I am confident that the knowledge, experience and professional networks she has gained through the Sakharov Fellowship will strengthen her future work, empower vulnerable communities and inspire more young Pakistanis to champion justice, equality and human dignity both at home and around the world.



Analysis

Nazia Naz

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
175,802.78	178,123.56
Day's High	Day's Low
178,694.48	175,790.62
Index Value	Change
20,493,839,828	−2320.78
Percentage	Time
−1.3%	17 Jul, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,600.37	+28.13
Percentage	Time
+0.27%	17 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT +1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
52,335.25	−217.72
Percentage	Time
−0.41%	17 Jul, 1:42 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
64,141.12	−2,694.42
Percentage	Time
−4.03%	17 Jul, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	194.48	205.17
Bahrain Dinar	741.05	751.95
Canadian Dollar	197.72	201.65
China Yuan	38.05	38.80
Danish Krone	42.56	43.25
Euro	321.04	324.40
Hong Kong Dollar	35.24	36.25
Indian Rupee	2.75	3.20
Japanese Yen	1.7114	1.8100
Kuwaiti Dinar	890.02	900.95
Malaysian Ringgit	67.00	68.05
NewZealand \$	161.20	163.75
Norwegians Krone	27.99	28.29
Omani Riyal	725.81	735.65
Qatari Riyal	75.45	76.47
Saudi Riyal	74.65	75.30
Singapore Dollar	214.85	217.85
Swedish Korona	28.25	28.90
Swiss Franc	343.59	348.25
Thai Bhat	8.55	8.80
U.A.E Dirham	76.30	77.00
UK Pound Sterling	376.31	379.15
US Dollar	278.95	279.15

WCCIS meets
CASTECH-UMT
to strengthen
Industry-
Academia links

Commerce Desk

SIALKOT: President of the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot (WCCIS), Dr. Mariam Siddiqua, accompanied by Senior Vice President (SVP) WCCIS Gulzaib Waqas Awan and Vice President (VP) WCCIS Rubina Naveed, held a meeting with Sohail Ashraf, Head of Business Development and Marketing at CASTECH-UMT at WCCIS.

The meeting focused on introducing CASTECH and highlighting its role in fostering stronger industry-academia link-ages. Both sides exchanged views on the importance of collaboration in bridging the gap between educational institutions and the business community.

Discussions also explored potential areas of cooperation between WCCIS and CASTECH-UMT, with a shared commit-ment to promoting innovation, entrepre-neurship, and skills development.

The meeting concluded with both organizations expressing their willingness to work together on future projects aimed at supporting innovation and strength-ening collaboration between academia and industry.

Gold prices rise
again by Rs2400
per tola

LAHORE: Gold prices increased in local and international markets on Saturday. In the international market, gold prices rose by \$24 to \$4,018 per ounce. According to the All Pakistan Sarafa Association, the price of 24-carat gold increased by Rs2,400 to Rs424,236 per tola. The price of 10 grams of gold rose by Rs2,057 to Rs363,714, while silver prices increased by Rs41 to Rs6,070 per tola. It may be recalled that gold prices had witnessed a significant decline in the country on Friday.

Punjab Unveils New Industrial
Incentives to Boost Investment and
Manufacturing

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Industries, Commerce and Investment Chaudhry Shafay Hussain has announced a series of incentives under the province's new industrial policy to attract local and foreign investment and accel-erate industrial growth.

Speaking at the inauguration of the 11th Colour & Chem Expo 2026 at the Lahore Expo Centre, the minister said investors estab-lishing industries in free industrial zones would benefit from a four-year lease offer, a 30-day NOC approval process, zero customs duty on imported machinery and a 10-year income tax exemption. These incentives will apply to industrial estates in Sheikhpura, Bhalwal and



Rahim Yar Khan.

He said Chinese companies were expanding investments in Punjab, with new manufacturing plants planned in pharmaceuticals, synthetic leather, food processing, lithium batteries, electric bikes and tiles during the current fiscal year. A dedicated policy for Pakistan's chemicals industry is also being introduced to encourage investment and strengthen the sector.

The minister highlighted the government's focus on sustainable transport, noting that elec-tric vehicles and e-bikes remain a priority. He revealed that Pakistan's first chip frame manu-facturing plant, being established by Vivo Mobiles in Punjab, is 40 percent complete and expected to begin production next year, while Chinese firms will also manufacture lithium batteries in the province.

Shafay Hussain said the Punjab government has approved infrastructure funding for 24 small industrial estates, adding that around 70 percent of traders have benefited from the Asaan Tajir Scheme. A new financing programme offering loans of up to Rs100 million for large-scale industrialists is also being launched.

The two-day Colour & Chem Expo 2026 features 350 local and international exhibi-tors, providing opportunities for investment, business networking and joint ventures. Busi-ness leaders at the event urged the govern-ment to reduce production costs, support local raw material manufacturing and intro-duce more industry-friendly policies to enhance the competitiveness of Pakistan's chemical sector.

Development

ISLAMABAD: A view of ongoing construction work of underpass at Park road, in the Federal Capital. The Rs. 10 billion infrastructure project is scheduled to be officially opened for traffic by July 30, 2026.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Zindigi
Named
Pakistan's
Best Digital
Bank at
Euromoney
Awards for
Excellence

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Zindigi, powered by JS Bank, has been recognized as Pakistan's Best Digital Bank at the prestigious Euro-money Awards for Excellence. The global awards honour financial institutions lead-ing in innovation, digital transformation, and customer experience.

Since launch, Zindigi has driven market-first innovations and built an ecosystem to make banking simpler, smarter, and more accessible. The bank has focused on empowering freelancers and entrepreneurs and accelerating Pakistan's shift toward a digitally inclusive economy through finan-cial solutions designed to improve everyday lives.

Speaking on the win, Noman Azhar, Chief Officer, Zindigi by JS Bank, said:



“Awards are never the destination, they are milestones that remind us we are moving in the right direction. When we started Zindigi, we had one simple belief: Pakistan deserves digital financial experiences that stand alongside the very best in the world.” _ Euromoney's recognition reinforces

Zindigi's commitment to building glob-ally competitive digital financial experi-ences from Pakistan. With innovation at its core, Zindigi aims to continue redefining digital banking, advancing financial inclu-sion, and shaping the future of financial services locally and beyond.

PIF Jeddah to
Celebrate Pakistan
Independence Day,
Offers Business
Support to Diaspora

Commerce Desk

JEDDAH: The Pakistan Investment Forum (PIF) Jeddah has announced it will celebrate Pakistan's Inde-pendence Day with great enthusiasm this year.

The announcement was made by Forum Chairman Chaudhry Shafqat Mahmood during a meeting followed by a dinner hosted by Secretary General Abdul Khaliq Lak. The event was attended by Pakistani inves-tors doing business in both Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

Speakers shared business experiences and paid tribute to the Saudi government and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for Vision 2030. It was noted that over 2,000 Pakistani investors operate across Saudi cities, contrib-uting to Pakistan's economy through remittances and supporting the Kingdom's

development.

The Forum announced it will provide guidance, busi-ness procedures, and profes-sional training to Pakistanis looking to start businesses in Saudi Arabia. It also said Saudi Arabia is interested in investing in Pakistan and that opportunities exist for Pakistani investors in Sudan. Interested investors were urged to contact PIF for assistance.

As part of the Inde-pendence Day events, PIF announced a three-day cricket tournament. The Pakistani Consulate's cricket team is expected to partici-pate, with young investor Ali Khurshid overseeing liaison.

The meeting was the first formal gathering since new office-bearers were elected 8 months ago. Former Federal Minister Chaudhry Shahbaz Hussain attended as chief guest.

PSIC, SCCI
discuss new small
industrial estates



Commerce Desk

SIALKOT: A delegation of the Punjab Small Indus-tries Corporation (PSIC), led by Regional Director Umar Nawaz, visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) and held a meeting with SCCI Presi-dent Syed Ahtesham Mazhar to discuss initiatives aimed at promoting industrial develop-ment in the region.

The delegation included Deputy Director Hafiz Saleem Arshad and DDO Israr Anjum. During the meeting, both sides deliberated on the establishment of new Small Industrial Estates in and around Sialkot to meet the

growing needs of the indus-trial sector.

The discussions focused on enhancing industrial growth by developing modern infra-structure, expanding indus-trial facilities, and creating a more conducive environment for businesses. Participants also emphasized the impor-tance of strengthening support for the business community through improved planning and the development of new industrial zones. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to continued cooperation in advancing industrial development and facilitating sustainable economic growth in Sialkot and its surrounding areas.

Saqlain Mushtaq Heights
Affectees Demand Refund or
Time-Bound Handover

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Affectees of Saqlain Mushtaq Heights held a press confer-ence in Islamabad demanding imme-diate refunds or a binding completion and handover schedule after nearly a decade of delays.

Buyers said bookings began in late 2016-early 2017 for the 50-kanal project in Bahria Town Phase 8, Rawalpindi. Marketed as 7 towers with 550 apartments, the develop-ment remains unfinished with even grey structure incomplete. Orig-inal delivery was set for June 2020,

with a 2019 letter promising Tower 7 possession by June 30, 2021 and rental compensation for delays.

Affectees said bookings were taken for Towers 4, 5 and 7, but work on 4 and 5 never started. They alleged the project is now being marketed as “Al Muqet Heights” with new bookings,



while original buyers wait. They also rejected claims that Tower 4 was “Not Launched,” citing payment records. They urged Saqlain Mushtaq,

Khalid Awan and management to provide either handover per original terms or refunds at current market value.

Gillani calls for Global Action on Kashmir’s Human Rights Crisis on Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan

Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani Said on Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan the occasion symbolizes the enduring bond between the people of Pakistan and Jammu and Kashmir and reflects the Kashmiri people's steadfast commitment to their internationally recognized right to self-determination.

The Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani stated

that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute remains an internationally recognized issue, and its peaceful and lasting resolution in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people is essential for sustainable peace and stability in South Asia.

He urged the international community to take meaningful notice of the human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu



and Kashmir and support efforts to ensure the realiza-

tion of the Kashmiri people's legitimate rights.

Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani reaffirmed that Pakistan's Parliament has consistently stood with the people of Jammu and Kashmir and will continue to raise their voice at national, regional, and international parliamentary forums.

He reiterated Pakistan's unwavering political, diplomatic, and moral support for the just cause of the Kashmiri people, emphasizing that their sacrifices for freedom, justice, and dignity will never be forgotten.

PPP South Punjab Credits Chairman Senate Gilani for Restoration of Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalpur Airports

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Pakistan Peoples Party South Punjab leaders have credited Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani for the restoration of Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalpur Airports, calling it a major step for the development of Seraiki Waseeb.

Addressing the media, PPP South Punjab President and former Governor Punjab Makhdoom Syed Ahmed Mahmood, along with Khawaja Rizwan Alam and Abdul Qadir

Shaheen, said the PPP has always taken practical steps for South Punjab's prosperity. They termed the airport restoration an expression of Gilani's commitment to the region, and also recalled his role in establishing Multan International Airport.

The leaders said Gilani responded to the public demand conveyed by Makhdoom Ahmed Mahmood and turned it into action. They added that PPP has consistently defended the rights of



Seraiki Waseeb, from Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to Bilawal Bhutto

Zardari, who has pledged a separate identity for the region

in the party manifesto.

Makhdoom Ahmed Mahmood said South Punjab faces backwardness, unemployment and poor facilities, and demanded constitutional and administrative rights. He noted that a Senate resolution for a separate Seraiki province was passed during Gilani's premiership but lacked National Assembly support. PPP vowed to continue raising the issue and, if needed, launch a peaceful democratic movement for the region's rights.

Central Park Summer Sports Camp 2026 begins

Tahir Amin Malik.

LAHORE: An Unforgettable Day with Former Pakistan Test Cricketer Amir Nazir.

As part of the Central Park Summer Sports Camp 2026, Central Park Housing Scheme proudly welcomed former Pakistan Test fast bowler Amir Nazir, who spent an inspiring day mentoring our young athletes.

The visit reflected Central Park Housing Scheme's commitment to nurturing talent and promoting a healthy, active lifestyle for the next generation.

Elite Cricket Coaching

Amir Nazir conducted an exclusive cricket masterclass, sharing professional insights on bowling, batting, fielding, match awareness, and game strategy. Camp participants also enjoyed valuable one-on-one interaction during the net sessions.

Motivating Every Young Athlete

He also met with our football campers, encouraging them to remain disciplined, focused, and committed to achieving excellence both on and off the field.

A Day of Inspiration

The event concluded with memorable group photographs featuring campers, coaches, parents, and organizers, marking another proud milestone of the Central Park Summer Sports Camp 2026.

Building More Than Homes... Building Futures

At Central Park Housing Scheme, we believe great communities are built by creating opportunities for learning, sports, wellness, and personal growth.

From world-class sports facilities to family-focused recreational spaces, Central Park Sports Complex continues to provide a platform where young talent can learn, grow, and dream big.

PCB makes eight changes to Pakistan women T20 squad for Sri Lanka series

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Saturday announced 15-member ODI and T20I squads for a three-match each series against Sri Lanka to be played in Hambantota between July 23 and August 4. The ODI squad will be led by captain Fatima Sana while Muneeba Ali will take up captaincy for the T20I series in Sana's absence.

Pakistan made eight changes to the squad which had represented the country at the recently concluded ICC Women's T20 World Cup in England & Wales.

24-year-old Fatima will feature in The Hundred in England following the conclusion of the ODI series. She made history by becoming the first Pakistan women's cricketer to take part in the league. Fatima claimed 11 wickets in five matches at the recently concluded ICC Women's T20 World Cup in England and Wales and also scored 85 runs, including a half-century. She was also named in the Team of the Tournament at the conclusion of the 12-team event.

The Blood of Martyrs Cannot Be Weighed on a Salary Scale

Kiran Asim

In a moment that will stain Pakistan's conscience for years to come, Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman delivered a statement so callous, so morally bankrupt, that it deserves to be recorded not merely as a political gaffe, but as a national disgrace. Commenting on the martyrdom of a Pakistani soldier, the veteran politician reportedly remarked, in essence: "So what if a soldier was martyred? He was drawing a salary from our taxes anyway."

Let that sink in.

A man who has spent decades feeding at the public trough—holding seats in the National Assembly, chairing the Kashmir Committee for nearly ten years, enjoying official protocols, luxurious government residences, foreign trips, security details, and every privilege funded by the same Pakistani taxpayers—had the audacity to diminish the ultimate sacrifice of a soldier guarding our borders.

This is not mere hypocrisy. It is a moral obscenity.

Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, the nation has a question for you: What exactly have you delivered in return for the rivers of public money that have flowed through your hands for over four decades?

Kashmir remains enslaved. Terrorism continues to bleed the country. The economy staggers under mountains of debt. Our education system produces millions of unemployable youth while madrasas under your ideological umbrella have repeatedly been rocked by horrific scandals of child sexual abuse—yet not a single thunderous fatwa, not one decisive public campaign for justice and severe punishment, has come from you. Where were your fiery sermons when innocent children in religious seminaries were being violated by those who wear the same garb as you?

You speak of soldiers and taxes. But have you, or any of your clerical allies, ever announced that you would

man the borders for even one night so our soldiers could rest? Have you ever offered to forgo your privileges and serve the people without the comforts of state security and taxpayer-funded luxury? The answer is a deafening silence.

A soldier does not stand on the Line of Control for a paycheck. He stands there knowing that every step could trigger a landmine, every shadow could hide a terrorist bullet. He kisses his children goodbye, often for the last time, and walks into hell so that the rest of us—including politicians and clerics—can sleep peacefully. His blood is not a salary expense. It is the currency with which Pakistan buys its survival. To reduce that to "he was taking a salary" is to spit on every grave at Yadgar-e-Shuhada.

The Prophet Muhammad warned

us about the Kharijites—those who cloak rebellion and extremism in religious garb. He called them "dogs of Hell." Yet when these modern-day ideological descendants spill Pakistani blood, we see a troubling reluctance from certain religious-political figures to condemn them unequivocally.

Instead, we witness selective outrage aimed at the very institution—the Pakistan Army—that has sacrificed thousands of its sons fighting terrorism.

This is not accidental. It is a pattern.

While Pakistani soldiers hunt terrorists in the mountains and deserts, some "leaders" maintain political and ideological flirtations that raise serious questions about whose side they are truly on. Reports of terrorists finding sympathy, safe havens in ideological circles, and even indirect political patronage are not new. When a

soldier dies, the nation mourns. When terrorists are neutralized, certain voices suddenly discover "human rights" and "dialogue."

Pakistan cannot afford this duplicity any longer.

Every Pakistani who loves this country must draw a line. The blood of our martyrs is not negotiable. It cannot be traded for political alliances, electoral calculations, or twisted religious interpretations. The young men who return home in flag-draped coffins have done more for Pakistan in one tour of duty than many career politicians have done in a lifetime of speeches and photo-ops.

They leave behind widowed wives, orphaned children, and aging parents who will never see their son again. They do not ask for statues or ministries. They only ask that their sacrifice not be mocked by those who have never known the weight of a rifle or the terror of an incoming mortar round.

Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman's statement is not just an insult to one

soldier—it is an insult to the collective conscience of the nation. It reveals a heart that has grown cold to the price of freedom. It exposes a mindset that values political expediency over national dignity.

Pakistan's survival has never depended on eloquent speeches or fiery rhetoric from podiums. It has always depended on the silent, grim determination of its soldiers who stand between us and chaos. They are not "employees." They are the shield of the realm.

To Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman and all those who think like him: the blood of our shuhada is sacred. It will judge you far more harshly than any election or parliamentary debate ever could. The people of Pakistan are watching. History is watching. And the martyrs—may Allah grant them the highest ranks in Jannah—are witnesses.

Their sacrifice demands better from all of us. Especially from those who claim to speak in the name of faith and nation while dishonoring the very men who protect both.

America’s Iran Strategy in Disarray

Continued from Page 4

Escalation risks alienating anti-war elements of his political base, increasing oil prices and dragging the country into another open-ended Middle Eastern conflict.

Congress is reflecting this transformation. In July 2026, 103 House Democrats voted to remove approximately \$3.3 billion in military assistance to

Israel from a spending measure. The amendment failed because almost every Republican and a substantial number of Democrats voted to retain the aid. Nevertheless, it was the first time in modern memory that a majority of House Democrats voting on such an amendment supported eliminating Israel's military funding.

At the same time, Section 219 of the National Defense Authori-

zation Act, which seeks deeper U. S.-Israel integration in artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, biotechnology, data fusion and defense networks, has generated concerns that Israel could gain excessive access to sensitive American technology and greater influence over U. S. defense policy.

The absence of coherence is now evident across the American leadership. Trump alternates between threats, negotiations,

economic demands and talk of decisive victory. Rubio invokes international law against Iranian tolls while serving an administration that briefly proposed its own 20 percent maritime charge. Vance supports diplomacy and publicly accuses Israeli figures of undermining American policy. Congress is divided over aid, technology sharing and the legality of military action.

These are not minor messaging

differences. They suggest that competing power centers are pursuing different diagnoses of the conflict, different priorities and different endgames.

The latest reported pause in attacks, following diplomatic intervention involving Pakistan and Field Marshal Asim Munir, may offer another opportunity to return to negotiations. But another temporary pause will not be enough. The United States

needs a comprehensive strategy with clearly stated objectives, enforceable obligations, a realistic exit mechanism and a distinction between American and Israeli national interests.

The writing is now on the wall. American society is increasingly skeptical of wars without clear objectives, aid without accountability and alliances that appear to constrain independent policy. Unless Washington restores

coherence, the Iran conflict will deepen public distrust, unsettle markets, weaken diplomatic credibility and create lasting psychological and economic costs at home.

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.

The Middle East Tensions, Rising Inflation and Pakistan’s Universities

Continued from Page 4

Energy conservation is even more grave problem. As the events in the Middle East directly influence the energy prices, it is imperative for the universities to accelerate the investment in solar energy, modern electrical system, and energy efficient lightings.

These programs not only cut down on the cost of operation in the long run but also contribute to Pakistan's sustainable energy journey.

Digital transformation is also a great opportunity. The proliferation of online learning materials, digital libraries, electronic administration, and virtual meetings can help cut down on costs and give insti-

tutions more flexibility. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown the ability to effectively provide many academic and administrative services using technology.

Diversifying financial resources is also a key arena in which universities need to be more flexible. When financial pressures are placed upon the government, institutions are affected by their reliance on government funding. University-industry collaboration can be strengthened through research partnerships with industry, consultancy services, executive training programs, commercialization of research, and via income from alumni donations.

Second, the importance of Universities in the solution of the

country's economic problems. The departments of Economics, Engineering, Agriculture, Business and Information technology should coordinate their efforts to produce evidence-based solutions on how to manage inflation, improve energy efficiency, ensure food security, and boost productivity. Universities must not only study a monetary crisis; they must be a part of the solution to its resolution.

Attention is drawn to the welfare of students. The burdens of rising prices on students from deprived and low-income backgrounds are largely through transportation fares, hostel fees, food prices and education costs. Financial hardship should not interrupt education, and for this

reason the following measures should be in place then: Universities should increase need-based scholarships, set up emergency assistance funds, offer flexible fee payment plans and provide work-study opportunities.

Both faculty and staff need Institutional support. Morale and productivity both suffer when there is a decrease in purchasing power. Although a big salary hike may not always be feasible, if a university can offer subsidized transport, health insurance, professional development possibilities, and other non-monetary benefits, it will help keep talented academics.

The lesson takes a big picture approach. Inflation does not only indicate the economic

performance of an economy; it also gauges the potential of institutional leadership. In times of hardship, nations which keep investing in education build their ability to innovate, be productive and grow for the future. They who ignore universities are likely to erode the very source of future leaders, research and innovations, and entrepreneurs.

With all the conflict and unrest in the Middle East, we are reminded how connected the global economy is. The events occurring thousands of kilometers away can influence the fuel prices of the country, the university budgets and students' education. Pakistan has limited control over the international

geo-political scenario, but it has the ability to build its institutions to deal with external shocks.

The lesson from Finland is a timeless one. In one of its darkest days economically, it did not even consider giving up on higher education and knew that universities needed to play a role in the national recovery. Pakistan is required to do the same in a long-term view. Tackling the protection of universities in times of inflation is not a sign of generosity but of economic resilience and sustainable development.

Pakistan faces several challenges to keep universities as a place of learning, innovation and opportunity as inflationary

pressures are increasing due to ongoing conflict in the Middle East. The capacity and capabilities that they show today will influence not only the future of higher education but also the future of higher education's capacity to meet the challenges of tomorrow's economy. During uncertain times, the biggest investment a nation can make in its future is in the minds of those forming it.

The writer is Professor of Economics, School of Economics, Chairperson Department of Sports Sciences, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan. She can be reached at azrabatool@bzu.edu.pk, azrabatool@yahoo.com

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Mr. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, held a meeting with a high-level delegation of Shandong Hi-Speed Group (SDHS) in Marriott on Saturday.



Photo: PID

BOI, Shandong Hi-Speed Group discuss expanding Chinese Investment in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Board of Investment (BOI), Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, met a high-level delegation of China's Shandong Hi-Speed Group (SDHS), led by Chairman Xu Xiang, on the sidelines of the Pakistan-China B2B Investment Conference on Pharmaceuticals, Healthcare and Biotechnology in Islamabad.

The minister welcomed the delegation and highlighted the longstanding strategic partnership between Pakistan and China, emphasizing the growing opportunities for bilateral economic cooperation. He also acknowledged the role of the Tabani Group in strengthening business ties between the two countries.

The SDHS delegation briefed the minister on the company's global operations, noting that the state-owned enterprise manages assets worth over RMB 1 trillion and operates in more than 100 countries. The group has extensive investments in transportation, infrastructure, energy, logistics and industrial development under the Belt and Road Initiative.

The delegation also shared details of its ongoing projects in Pakistan, including collaboration with OGDC in the oil and gas sector, and expressed strong interest in investing in Pakistan's infrastructure, transport, logistics and connectivity projects.

Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh described the current period

as an ideal time for investment in Pakistan, citing the country's young population, improving business climate and strategic location connecting China with Central Asia. He encouraged joint ventures between Pakistani and Chinese companies, calling them a sustainable model for long-term economic growth.

The minister assured the delegation that the BOI, in collaboration with the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), would provide full support and facilitation to foreign investors. The delegation also invited the minister to visit China to further strengthen bilateral cooperation and explore SDHS's ongoing development projects.

DPM/FM underscores Govt's commitment to strengthening cooperative federalism, coordination

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Saturday, reiterated that the Government's collective commitment remained focused on strengthening cooperative federalism, promoting

effective intergovernmental coordination, and advancing decisions that serve the national interest.

The DPM/FM chaired a meeting of the Pre-Council of Common Interests (CCI) Committee which was constituted by the Prime Minister/Chairman CCI. The committee held a prepara-



tory meeting at the Deputy Prime Minister's Office ahead of the 53rd meeting of the

CCI.

The meeting was attended by the Ministers for Planning and Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC), SAPM Tariq Bajwa, the Secretaries of the Cabinet Division, Council of Common Interests, Planning, Petroleum, Water Resources, Power, Health, Overseas Pakistanis &

Human Resource Development (OP&HRD), and other relevant stakeholders, DPM Office said in a press release.

After detailed deliberations, the committee recommended to the Prime Minister/Chairman, CCI, that the next meeting of the Council be held in August this year.

Pakistan Invites Chinese Investment in Pharma Sector, Targets WHO ML3 Accreditation by 2027



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Syed Mustafa Kamal has said Pakistan offers significant investment opportunities in the pharmaceutical sector and urged Chinese companies to build partnerships with Pakistani firms through the B2B Investment Platform.

Addressing the "Pakistan-China B2B Investment Conference 2026", he noted Pakistan's strategic location and investor-friendly environment make it attractive for investors. He stressed that the pharmaceutical industry is directly linked to public health and will remain a priority sector.

Kamal said investment in Pakistan's pharma industry would provide access to

domestic, regional, and international markets. He expressed confidence that DRAP will achieve WHO Maturity Level 3 (ML3) accreditation by April 2027 after meeting regulatory benchmarks. This, he added, will strengthen Pakistan's regulatory system and enable pharma exports to 100+ additional international markets.

Referring to MoUs and agreements signed at the conference, the minister said the government's priority is effective implementation. He assured local and Chinese investors of full facilitation, including cutting red tape.

He concluded by thanking Chinese delegates and expressing hope the two-day event will deepen Pakistan-China cooperation in pharmaceuticals and open new avenues for trade and investment.



”ہم پاکستانی ہیں پاکستان ہمارا ہے“

تحریک آزادی کشمیر دراصل تحریک تکمیل پاکستان ہے،

جب تک پوری ریاست جموں و کشمیر بھارتی تسلط سے آزاد ہو کر مملکت

خداداد پاکستان کا حصہ نہیں بن جاتی کشمیریوں کی جدوجہد جاری رہے گی

Pakistan's IT industry achieve historic success as exports touch record high of \$4.6 billion



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Information Technology industry has achieved historic export success during fiscal year as the sector's exports have reached record high of \$4.6 billion.

According to the data released by the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecom, the IT exports recorded a 21 percent increase compared to last year, whereas the trade surplus reached 85 percent.

The IT sector has become the fastest growing export sector of the country due to the special focus of the Prime Minister, the government's patronage and the industry-friendly policies that played a major role in this success.

The IT ministry said the government provided training in modern IT skills to more than 100,000 youth during the last year.

The ministry organized participation in more than 20 international exhibitions around the world. It provided an opportunity to over 250 Pakistani IT companies and startups to introduce their products and services to the global market.

The representatives of the IT industry were also made part of the Prime Minister's delegation during his foreign visits.

Barrister Danyal Predicts PML-N Clean Sweep on AJK Refugee Seats from Rawalpindi

City Desk

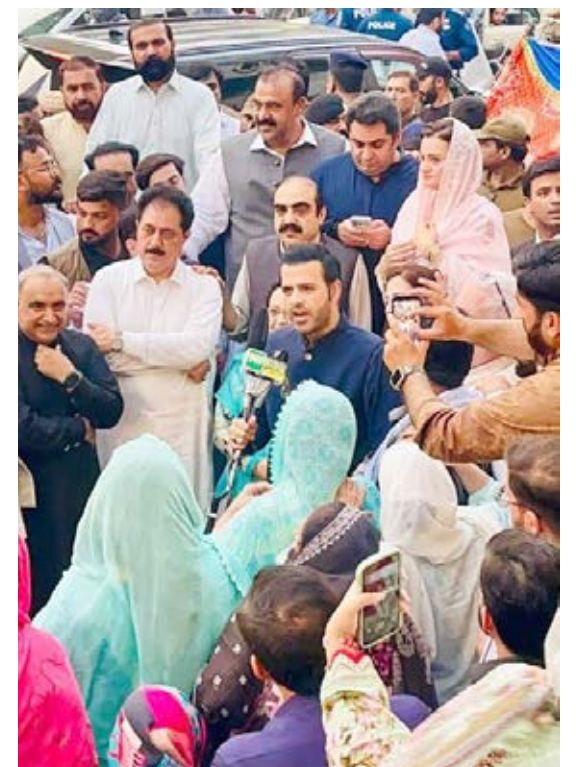
RAWALPIND: Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhry has expressed confidence that PML-N will win all three Jammu and Kashmir refugee seats from Rawalpindi in the upcoming Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Legislative Assembly elections.

He was addressing a public gathering at the inauguration of the election office of candidate Ahmed Raza Qadri in Rawalpindi.

Barrister Danyal said the Kashmiri people are deeply patriotic with an unbreakable bond of love and sacrifice with Pakistan, which forms the foundation of Pakistan-AJK relations.

He highlighted that successive PML-N governments carried out landmark development projects across AJK, upgrading roads, basic infrastructure, education, and healthcare.

He added that PML-N has always prioritized practical performance and public service over hollow



slogans, and will continue working to fulfill the socio-economic aspirations of AJK's people.

The event was attended by Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb,

Aurangzeb MNA, former Rawalpindi Mayor Sardar Naseem Khan, MPAs Raja Muhammad Hanif, Ziaullah Shah, Malik Iftikhar, Zeb-un-Nisa Awan, and a large number of party workers.



محکمہ اطلاعات آزاد حکومت ریاست جموں و کشمیر

9N/07/2026