



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے علی بن عبد اللہ رضی اللہ عنہ نے بیان کیا کہ
ہم سے سفیان نے بیان کیا کہ ہم سے ابو الزناد
نے بیان کیا کہ ان سے اعراب نے اور ان سے
ابو ہریرہ رضی اللہ عنہ نے کہ رسول اللہ صلی
اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کیا امت اس وقت تک
قائم نہیں ہوگی جب تک دو ایسے گروہ آپس
میں جنگ نہ کریں جن کا دعویٰ ایک ہی ہو۔
(مشکوٰۃ: حدیث نمبر 6935)

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PM Shehbaz congratulates Andy Burnham on becoming UK prime minister

PM Shehbaz Sharif congratulated Andy Burnham on assuming office as prime minister of the United Kingdom and expressed Pakistan's desire to further strengthen bilateral trade, investment and cooperation. Burnham formally became British prime minister on July 20 after being appointed by King Charles III to form a new government.



Bilawal vows to form govt in Azad Kashmir after PPP's victory in elections

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has vowed to form the next government in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), saying his party is determined to secure victory in the upcoming elections.

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Singing Ceremony

ISLAMABAD : Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif witnesses the signing of a Protocol on Phyto-Sanitary regulations governing the import of Canola from Canada to Pakistan on Monday.



Photo: PID

PM Shehbaz, Canadian Foreign Minister agree to expand trade and investment cooperation

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening its friendly relations with Canada, emphasizing the need to expand bilateral cooperation in trade, investment, agriculture, renewable energy, vaccine manufacturing, and the automobile and auto parts industry.

The prime minister made

these remarks during a meeting with Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand, who is on an official visit to Pakistan. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain, Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr. Syed Tauqir Shah, and other senior officials attended the meeting.

Prime Minister Shehbaz conveyed his best wishes to

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, recalling their recent telephone conversation and expressing appreciation for Canada's support for Pakistan's efforts to promote regional peace. He also expressed hope to meet his Canadian counterpart in the near future.

Foreign Minister Anita Anand thanked the prime minister for the warm hospitality and conveyed greetings from Prime Minister Carney. She said her visit

reflected Canada's commitment to broadening bilateral relations and exploring new opportunities for cooperation in agriculture, mining, energy, trade, and the automobile sector.

Both sides acknowledged the valuable contribution of the Pakistani-Canadian community in strengthening bilateral ties and agreed to exchange trade and mineral sector delegations to identify new avenues for economic collaboration and

investment.

Following the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif witnessed the signing of a Protocol on Phytosanitary Regulations governing the import of Canadian canola into Pakistan. The agreement was signed by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand, marking another step toward enhancing agricultural cooperation between the two countries.

Field Marshal Asim highlights peace and stability as Canadian Minister appreciates Pakistan's anti-terror efforts



Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: H.E. Anita Anand, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces, at General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security and bilateral relations between Pakistan and Canada were discussed.

Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir highlighted Pakistan's

perspective on global peace and regional stability underscoring the importance of cooperation and collaborative efforts to address common security challenges.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's ongoing efforts and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, as well as its constructive role in promoting peace and stability. Both sides reiterated their resolve to further strengthen bilateral ties and expand engagements in defence and security.

Dar congratulates elected UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has congratulated newly elected British Prime Minister Andy Burnham on assuming office.

In a congratulatory message posted on social media platform X, Ishaq Dar extended his heartfelt greetings to Burnham and expressed Pakistan's desire to work closely with his government and British counterparts.

"Heartiest congratulations to the newly elected British Prime Minister Andy Burnham on assuming the office of Prime Minister," Dar

said in his message.

The deputy prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening the longstanding friendly relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom.

He also expressed the resolve to enhance mutual cooperation between the two countries in various fields, including areas of shared interest, for the benefit of both nations.

Pakistan, Canada Agree to Expand Security and Anti-Trafficking Cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Canada agreed to deepen cooperation on security, trade, migration control and law-enforcement training during a meeting between Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand at the Ministry of Interior.

Anand is on her first official visit to Pakistan since becoming foreign minister. Both sides discussed measures to strengthen bilateral ties and expand collaboration in trade, security and other areas of mutual interest.

Key focus areas included joint efforts to prevent illegal migration, human trafficking and cyber-crime. They also considered proposals for training and exchange programmes for law-enforcement personnel

to improve skills and institutional coordination.

The ministers agreed to finalise and sign a memorandum of understanding to provide a formal framework for expanded cooperation. They also exchanged views on regional security and stability.

Naqvi said Pakistan seeks stronger ties with Canada across all sectors. He highlighted the role of the 300,000-strong Pakistani community in Canada as a bridge between the two countries. Anand said Canada values its relationship with Pakistan and wants a structured framework for cooperation.

Bilateral merchandise trade reached about \$1.2 billion in 2025. Senior officials from both sides, including Minister of State Talal Chaudhry, attended.

Iranian interior minister arrives in Islamabad for key talks

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni arrived in Islamabad on Monday with a high-level delegation to discuss bilateral relations and regional matters.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi received his Iranian counterpart at the airport. Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry presented a bouquet to the visiting dignitary. Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moqadam was also present on the occasion.

Welcoming the Iranian minister, Mohsin Naqvi said, "I welcome my brother on his arrival in Pakistan and hope that Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni has brought good news."

He expressed hope that the visit would further strengthen Pakistan-Iran relations and contribute to progress on regional issues.

The Iranian delegation includes the Governor General of Sistan and Baluchestan, Deputy Interior Minister, Deputy Minister for Urban Development and Transport, Head of the National Iranian Oil Company, Special Representative of the Iranian Agriculture Minister and other senior officials.

During the visit, Eskandar Momeni is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir.

Later, Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held a meeting with his Iranian counterpart. During the meeting, Momeni expressed pleasure at meeting



Naqvi again and described Pakistan-Iran relations as exemplary.

"I have always appreciated the hospitality of the Pakistani government and people," the Iranian interior minister said, expressing hope that his visit would prove fruitful.

Mohsin Naqvi also expressed confidence that the visit would help enhance cooperation and further strengthen the longstanding ties between Pakistan and Iran.

Bugti, British envoy discuss development cooperation in Balochistan



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriott met Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti on Monday and discussed development cooperation, investment opportunities and ways to strengthen bilateral ties.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed matters of mutual interest and explored possible cooperation in education, health, governance and investment in Balochistan.

Bugti briefed the British high commissioner on reforms and development initiatives being implemented by the provincial government.

He said maintaining peace, ensuring sustainable development and improving public welfare were the government's top priorities in Balochistan.

The chief minister said cooperation with international partners was helping create new opportunities for economic development and prosperity in the province.

The meeting also considered possible areas in which the United Kingdom could support provincial development programmes and institutional reforms.

Marriott is serving as the British high commissioner to Pakistan, while Bugti is the current chief minister of Balochistan.

Peaceful Polling for AJK Civil Servants Completed, General Elections Set for July 27

 **Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: The polling phase for civil servants in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly General Elections 2026 has been completed peacefully. Polling was held in all districts except Palindri and Rawalkot.

Chief Election Commissioner Justice (R) Ghulam Mustafa Mughal, along with Senior Member Khawaja Muhammad Ahsan, Member Syed Nazirul Hasan Gilani and Secretary Raja Muhammad Shakeel Khan, visited polling stations in Muzaffarabad including Ali Akbar Awan Yayi School, Soheli Sarkar School, University Campus Chehlabandi and Degree College.

Speaking to media, the CEC said the general elections will be held on July 27 as scheduled and all arrangements are complete. “In any case, the election process will not be allowed to be sabotaged. Full and reasonable security arrangements have been made,”



he said. He added that government employees exercised their right to vote fully today.

Senior Member Ahsan welcomed active voter participation and said security and other arrangements for July 27

are finalized.

Member Gilani said ballot boxes of civil servants will be sealed and handed to returning officers, and counting will be done with general election results. He said ballot papers have reached all

returning officers.

Polling was postponed in Rawalkot and Sidhnuti due to security reasons. A new schedule for Rawalkot and Palindri will be announced in a couple of days.

Souvenir

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate Syedal Khan presents a souvenir to the Ambassador of Palestine to Pakistan during the live screening of the FIFA World Cup Final, an event organized by Prime Minister’s Youth Programme Focal Person Rauf Raja, Rashid Rauf Bande, General Manager of the host hotel, and other guests are also present.



Photo: Online

KKAWF and Turkish Green Crescent Hold Roundtable on Rising Drug Use in Pakistan

 **News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Karim Khan Afri-di Welfare Foundation (KKAWF) in partnership with Serena Hotel hosted a roundtable on “The State of Drug Use in Pakistan: Issues, Challenges and Response”, with visiting dignitaries from the Turkish Green Crescent Society (Yesilay), Istanbul.

KKAWF CEO Cristina von Sperling Afridi said, “Prevention starts with all of us”, noting global drug use hit a record 331 million people in 2024, or 6.2% of people aged 15-64. She warned that increasingly potent synthetic drugs are spreading, with 755 new psychoactive substances identified in 2024, including 118 for the first time.

H. E. Ambassador Dr. Mehmet



Gulluoglu, Secretary General of the International Federation of Green

Crescent & VP of Yesilay, said Yesilay is glad to partner with KKAWF and establish its office in Islamabad amid the alarming rise in drug use.

Moderated by Syed Talat Hussain, the discussion focused on best practices to protect children. Speakers cited ANF 2025 data: 17 million youth aged 18-30 are drug users, 53% of university students used drugs in 2022, and drugs affecting 1 in 4 households in Karachi.

Attendees included Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq, Joint Secretary Akhlaque Qureshi of Ministry of Narcotics Control, ANF, DIG Police, NRSP and others. Participants stressed the urgent need for evidence-based prevention in educational institutions and stronger national priority on drug prevention.

DC Attock Chairs Emergency Board Meeting, Orders Full Monsoon Preparedness

 **Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: Deputy Commissioner Attock Dr. Mudassar Ahmad Shah chaired a meeting of the District Emergency Board to review preparedness for the ongoing monsoon season and assess contingency arrangements.

Attendees included DEO Dr. Mian Muhammad Ashfaq, CEO Health Dr. Asad Ismail, Assistant Commissioners and other officials. Departments briefed on precautionary measures and plans to handle emergencies from heavy rains, stating that arrangements for prompt rescue and relief operations were being finalized.



The DC directed immediate cleaning of drains, stormwater channels, and drainage systems across the district to

ensure smooth rainwater flow, with special focus on low-lying areas to prevent urban flooding.

protection of life and property is the top priority and ordered all officers to remain on high alert during the monsoon.

Peaceful polling held for govt employees in Kotli ahead of AJK general elections 2026

 **Bureau Report**

KOTLI: The polling process for government employees of Kotli district continued in a peaceful, orderly and pleasant atmosphere on Monday at special polling centers set up for the Azad Jammu and Kashmir General Elections 2026. Employees from various departments cast their votes with enthusiasm.

District Returning Officer Muhammad Idrees Bhatti, accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Raja Imran Shaheen and SP Adeel Ahmed, visited polling centers in the court premises. They reviewed security, polling arrangements, facilities for voters, and overall election management.

The DRO inspected entry and exit points and directed police to remain alert. He also visited polling booths of all five constituencies, checked issuance of ballots and voter movement, and issued on-spot instructions to address minor shortcomings. He stressed utilizing all resources to ensure the process remains effective, transparent and organized.

Separate booths were set up for male and female employees. Duty magistrates and male/female police personnel were deployed for fool-proof security.

Bhatti expressed satisfaction over arrangements and lauded staff for ensuring free, fair and transparent elections.

Mirpur Election Staff Polling Concludes Peacefully, DRO Urges Public to Vote on July 27



 **Bureau Report**

MIRPUR: District and Sessions Judge / District Returning Officer Mirpur Jahangir Ahmed Jaral said the polling process for election staff in all four constituencies of Mirpur district during the first phase of Election 2026 was completed in a peaceful, transparent and orderly manner.

He told media that around 5,000 election staff voters exercised their right to vote. Security and administrative arrangements at all polling stations were effective and satisfactory, and all arrangements were completed on time per Election Commission instructions.

Polling for LA-1 Dadial election staff was held locally, while polling for the other three constituencies was held at the Kachhari Mirpur compound. The polling continued uninterrupted until the scheduled time in a very peaceful atmosphere.

Jaral appreciated the law enforcement agencies, district administration, election staff and other institutions for their cooperation, which ensured smooth conduct.

He appealed to the people of Mirpur to fully participate in the general elections on July 27, 2026, maintain peace, follow the election code of conduct, and play a positive role to ensure free, fair and transparent elections and strengthen democratic traditions.

Hyderabad Court Rejects Police Remand, Sends Three Youths to Judicial Custody



 **Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi**

HYDERABAD: The Court of Civil Judge and Judicial Magistrate-X, Hyderabad rejected police request for physical remand of three Jamshoro youths and ordered them sent to Central Jail on judicial remand. The court also directed authorities to ensure their medical treatment.

The accused, Ayaz Nohani, Junaid Nohani, and Sajawal Gargez, were arrested by Tando Jam Police in a case linked to an alleged encounter. They told the court they were unlawfully detained for three days, blindfolded and taken to an undisclosed location.

They alleged an ASI demanded money, and after refusal, they were beaten with hammers on knees, given electric shocks, and had water forcibly poured through their noses at Naseem Nagar Police Station and CIA Centre. They also claimed false cases were registered and they were shown as injured in an encounter.

The youths appealed to the IGP Sindh for an impartial investigation. The allegations are unverified and the police version was not immediately available.

Abid Lashari Appointed Polio Chair by Rotary Club Nawabshah

 **Bureau Report**

NAWABSHAH: The Rotary Club Nawabshah has appointed Mr. Abid Lashari, Tamgha-e-Imtiaz and President of the National Disability & Development Forum (NDF) Pakistan, as its Polio Chair in recognition of his work on disability inclusion, child rights, and community development.

As Polio Chair, Mr. Lashari will collaborate with Rotary members, health authorities, and community stakeholders to strengthen awareness campaigns, promote routine immunization, and support national efforts to eradicate polio.

He said, “Every child deserves a healthy future. Two drops of the polio vaccine can protect children from lifelong disability. Together, we can build a polio-free Pakistan,” reaffirming his commitment to mobilizing communities.

Rotary International’s End Polio Now initiative has been key in reducing global polio cases. The Rotary Club expressed confidence that Mr. Lashari’s advocacy experience will boost local efforts. NDF Pakistan also congratulated him and pledged support for immunization and inclusive health.



Islamabad
30° – 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:32 am
Zohr 12:14 pm
Asr 5:11 pm
Maghrib 7:17 pm
Isha 8:56 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

PSCA Smart Cameras, Virtual Patrolling Help Arrest Suspect in Lahore Pharmacy Burglary

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Safe Cities Authority (PSCA) used its smart cameras, virtual patrolling and digital surveillance to help police arrest a suspect involved in the theft of cash, medicines and valuables worth millions from a pharmacy in Bhatta Chowk, Lahore.

According to PSCA, the suspect broke through the wall and glass door of the pharmacy before fleeing. The incident was reported via Punjab Emergency Helpline 15, after which PSCA launched virtual patrolling.

Using Safe City cameras and surveillance tech, the Authority traced the suspect's movement and escape route, determining he had fled using public transport. His last known location and digital evidence were immediately shared with police.

Based on PSCA's information, CCD and Lahore Police conducted an operation and arrested the suspect, recovering the stolen property.

A PSCA spokesperson said the Authority's Command and Control System plays a key role in timely crime detection and smart policing. Under CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif's "Safe Punjab" vision, PSCA in collaboration with Punjab Police is working to protect citizens' lives and property through modern technology.

Punjab CM directs swift flood relief as Lahore Clears Rainwater from Major Roads

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Acting on the directives of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Lahore Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and the Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) administration launched an immediate response operation following heavy rainfall in the provincial capital.

The administration ensured the prompt drainage of rainwater, with major roads and several areas restored to normal traffic flow within a short time. Moriya Pul, Baghicha Camp, Allah Hoo Chowk and High Court Road were cleared and dried soon after the down-pour.

Emergency drainage operations were also carried out at Kachi Kothi, The Mall, Nabha Road and Liberty Chowk. Rainwater was likewise removed from Nakhuda Chowk, Qurtaba Chowk, Qainchi Stop, Sheranwala Gate and other key roads across the city.

Deputy Commissioner Lahore personally supervised the drainage operation on



Ravi Road and in other affected areas to ensure the timely disposal of rainwater and uninterrupted traffic flow.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has launched the Punjab Health Connect Programme, a unique and visionary initiative aimed at enhancing the quality of healthcare services across the province.

Under the programme, leading over-

seas Pakistani and foreign specialist doctors and surgeons will provide free medical treatment in government hospitals across Punjab. The initiative has been launched on the directions of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to strengthen the public healthcare system through international medical collaboration.

Besides offering specialised medical



services, the visiting doctors and surgeons will also train local healthcare professionals in advanced medical techniques and modern clinical practices, contributing to capacity building within the provincial health sector.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that providing healthcare facilities of international standards in Punjab's public hospitals is a firm commitment

of her government. She added that the provincial healthcare system is being transformed in accordance with global standards.

She further said that the Punjab Health Connect Programme will help address the shortage of specialist doctors in government hospitals by bringing international medical expertise and experience to the province.

Qazaq Kuresi

ISLAMABAD: Players in action during the International Qazaq Kuresi Coaching and Athlete Development Course at the Pakistan Sports Complex, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

DC Maham Reviews 39 ADP Projects in Toba Tek Singh

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh Maham Asif Malik chaired a review meeting on ongoing development schemes, aligning with Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision for a developed Punjab.

Officials briefed that 39 projects are in progress under the Annual Development Programme, including 10 new and 29 ongoing schemes. Sectors covered include roads, public buildings, local government, water supply and sanitation, and irrigation. Progress on Beautification Schemes, SAP-7, SAP-8, Punjab Development



Programme, Model Villages, Model Bazaars, and sugarcane-related projects was also reviewed.

DC Maham Asif Malik directed departments to complete projects within set

timelines with strict quality standards. She said providing basic civic facilities is the Punjab Government's top priority and urged close coordination.

She stressed no compro-

mise on quality, and ordered regular monitoring, immediate removal of hurdles, and a coordinated strategy to ensure citizens benefit from improved amenities and sustainable development.

6 killed, over a dozen injured in Flash Floods in Khyber District

Aman Ali Shinwari

KHYBER: Torrential rains and sudden flash floods caused widespread devastation across Khyber District on Monday, leaving 6 people dead and over a dozen injured.

According to Rescue 1122 and local sources, three Afghan nationals drowned near Sultan Khel Market on the Pak-Afghan Highway. The other deceased were identified as Farhan son of Rasim Gul from Jabha Jamrud, Abuzar son of Imran, and Saifullah son of Arafat, both from Sadokhel, Landi Kotal. Bodies were recovered and handed over to families after legal formalities.

Heavy downpours damaged connecting roads in Landi Kotal and nearby areas. Mud houses and boundary walls of more than 10 homes collapsed or were partially destroyed. Rescue teams shifted the injured to nearby hospitals and relief operations are ongoing.

Officials said the recurring tragedy stems from rugged terrain, lack of elevated bridges and culverts, clogged drainage, and unplanned construction along the highway that block water flow.

Local political and social leaders expressed grief and urged the government to build permanent bridges, improve drainage, and provide immediate financial aid to affected families to prevent future losses.

AI Pushes Accountants Toward Real-Time Data, But Integrity Worries Persist

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: A new report, "Enabling finance insight" by ACCA and CA ANZ, shows finance teams are rapidly adopting real-time data and AI to improve business decisions, but trust issues remain widespread.

Over 60% of finance teams increased use of real-time operational data in the past two years, moving beyond retrospective reporting. 60% also report closer collaboration with IT and data teams, breaking traditional silos. Strategic priorities (45%) and regulatory needs (43%) are driving this change.

93% of 1,600 surveyed professionals voiced concerns over AI-generated insights, citing hallucinations, bias, incomplete data, and lack of transparency.

72% have only basic or no GenAI skills, though 41% are upskilling independently. Key challenges include data quality (42%), skills gaps (42%), and integration issues (40%).

Leaders urge urgent training and governance. ACCA's Helen Brand and CA ANZ's Ainslie van Onselen said CFOs must lead responsible AI adoption with critical thinking and ethics.



Daily Fuel Pricing Should Be Introduced After Broad Consultation: Mian Zahid Hussain

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum (PBIF), All Karachi Industrial Alliance (AKIA), Chairman National Business Group Pakistan (NBG), Chairman FPCCI Policy Advisory Board and former Provincial Minister Mian Zahid Hussain has urged the government to introduce the proposed daily petroleum pricing mechanism only after broad-based consultations with all stakeholders.

In a statement issued on Sunday, he said shifting fuel prices from a weekly to a daily basis could be an important economic reform, but it must be backed by a transparent mechanism, clearly defined rules and consensus among oil marketing companies, refineries, petrol pump owners and consumers.

Mian Zahid Hussain said the government

believes daily pricing would reduce political intervention, curb excessive profits and ensure that changes in international oil prices are reflected more quickly in domestic markets. He noted that OGRA plans to publish daily pricing data while the new framework would also include freight equalisation margins, refinery adjustments, stock management and mechanisms for price difference adjustments.

He stressed that petroleum prices have a direct impact on transport, agriculture, industry and household budgets. Referring to the latest revision, he said petrol prices increased by Rs5.44 per litre to Rs316.15, while high-speed diesel rose by Rs31.05 per litre to Rs354.35, warning that the sharp increase in diesel prices would significantly raise transportation costs, agricultural expenses and industrial production costs.

He observed that the Sensitive Price Indi-



cator had already increased by 1.40 percent during the week ending July 16, adding that

the latest diesel hike was expected to push up the prices of vegetables, flour, construction materials and other essential commodities in the coming weeks.

Mian Zahid Hussain acknowledged that the Oil Companies Advisory Council had described daily pricing as a positive step towards deregulation and market-based pricing. However, he said oil marketing companies and refineries had expressed concerns over stock valuation, supply-chain management and timely availability of pricing data, which could create operational and financial challenges if left unresolved.

He also noted that petrol pump owners have opposed the proposal, warning of nationwide protests and possible strikes over concerns about losses on existing fuel stocks and administrative difficulties at nearly 15,000 retail outlets.

He urged OGRA to publish a complete daily price calculation online, including international oil benchmarks, exchange rates, import premiums, ex-refinery prices, freight margins, petroleum levy, carbon levy, OMC margins and dealer commissions to ensure transparency.

Mian Zahid Hussain proposed forming a broad-based committee comprising representatives of the government, OGRA, the State Bank of Pakistan, FPCCI, economic experts, industry stakeholders and consumer groups to oversee the implementation of the daily pricing system. He emphasized that the mechanism should only be introduced after securing stakeholder consensus, ensuring uninterrupted fuel supplies and guaranteeing that reductions in international oil prices are passed on to consumers as quickly as price increases.

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Pakistan’s Constitutional Court Joins TÜRK-AY: A Milestone for Judicial Diplomacy

Pakistan’s admission as an Observer to the Conference of Constitutional Jurisdictions of the Turkic World (TÜRK-AY) is more than a ceremonial achievement; it is a significant step in strengthening the country’s presence within the global constitutional and judicial community. The unanimous decision by the member constitutional courts of Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan reflects growing international recognition of Pakistan’s constitutional jurisprudence and the evolving role of its newly established Federal Constitutional Court.

Judicial diplomacy has become an increasingly important component of international cooperation. Courts today are not only guardians of constitutions within their own jurisdictions but also active participants in the global exchange of legal ideas, constitutional principles, and best practices. In this context, Pakistan’s inclusion in TÜRK-AY provides an opportunity to engage with leading constitutional institutions of the Turkic world while contributing its own legal experience to regional judicial dialogue.

The invitation, conveyed by the Chairman of the Constitutional Court of Azerbaijan and current President of TÜRK-AY, demonstrates confidence in Pakistan’s legal institutions. Such recognition carries both prestige and responsibility. It signals that Pakistan’s constitutional court is viewed as a credible institution capable of participating in discussions on constitutional governance, judicial independence, the rule of law, and the protection of fundamental rights.

For Pakistan, observer status offers practical benefits beyond symbolism. It opens avenues for judicial exchanges, academic collaboration, research partnerships, and professional training. Judges and legal scholars will have greater opportunities to learn from comparative constitutional experiences, particularly in addressing contemporary challenges such as digital governance, human rights, constitutional interpretation, and institutional accountability. These exchanges can contribute to improving Pakistan’s own judicial practices and strengthening public confidence in constitutional institutions.

The development also aligns with Pakistan’s broader efforts to deepen relations with Turkic nations. While cooperation among these countries has traditionally focused on trade, culture, and strategic partnerships, judicial collaboration adds a valuable new dimension to these ties. Shared constitutional values and legal cooperation can complement existing political and economic relationships, fostering greater regional understanding and institutional trust.

However, international recognition must be matched by continued progress at home. The credibility of any constitutional court ultimately depends on its independence, impartiality, consistency, and commitment to delivering timely justice. Participation in international judicial forums should inspire continuous institutional reform and reinforce public confidence in the constitutional system.

Pakistan’s admission to TÜRK-AY is therefore both an honour and an opportunity. It places the Federal Constitutional Court on an important international platform where it can both learn from and contribute to the advancement of constitutional justice. If used effectively, this engagement can strengthen Pakistan’s legal institutions, enhance its international standing, and reaffirm its commitment to constitutionalism, judicial independence, and the rule of law.

Xi Jinping’s Vision and the China-Pakistan Journey of 75 Years-II

Qamar Bashir

One defining feature of President Xi Jinping’s leadership has been his emphasis on discipline, merit and accountability. Soon after taking office in 2012, he launched an anti-corruption campaign targeting both senior “tigers” and junior “flies.” Millions of officials have since been investigated or disciplined, reinforcing the principle that public office is a public trust. This resolve reflects a central warning in Xi Jinping: The Governance of China: “We must uphold the principle that all are equal before discipline, that there are no privileges in observing discipline, and that no one is immune from its enforcement.”

For Xi, effective governance must ultimately improve people’s lives. Development is therefore measured not only by economic growth but also by better public services, education, healthcare, environmental protection and social stability. China’s ability to pursue these goals over decades reflects the policy continuity described throughout The Governance of China. As Xi declared on assuming the country’s leadership, “The people’s wish for a happy life is our mission.”

China’s infrastructure revolution demonstrates this long-term approach. By the end of 2024, its railway system extended 162,000 kilometres, including 48,000 kilometres of high-speed rail—the world’s largest network. China also

had 5.49 million kilometres of roads, including 190,000 kilometres of expressways; 263 transport airports; 129,000 kilometres of navigable waterways; and 22,219 productive port berths. These networks have reduced travel times, lowered logistics costs, integrated inland and coastal markets and supported national modernization. They embody Xi’s instruction in The Governance of China to “promote coordinated development and foster synergy,” turning connectivity into shared economic opportunity.

My visit to Fujian Province in 2012 offered an early glimpse of this transformation. Roads linked industrial parks with ports, universities worked with research centres, and efficient public services coexisted with clean, carefully planned cities. What impressed me most was not any single project, but the integration of transport, industry, education, technology and the environment within a strategy measured in decades. It reflected Xi’s insistence that “strategic issues are fundamental to the success of a political party and a country,” and that long-term goals must be pursued with consistency.

China’s manufacturing sector has similarly advanced from low-cost assembly to sophisticated industrial production. By 2025, manufacturing generated about US\$4.82 trillion in value added—

roughly one-quarter of national GDP—while China produced nearly one-third of global manufacturing output. Its factories now make electric vehicles, batteries, solar panels, high-speed trains, telecommunications equipment, robots, medical devices and aerospace components. In 2026, high-technology manufacturing was growing by more than 13 percent and equipment manufacturing by about 8.7 percent. This ascent up the value chain reflects Xi’s conviction in The Governance of China that “innovation is the primary driving force for development.”

Scientific research supplies the foundation for this industrial upgrading. By 2026, China’s R&D spending had reached about 2.8 percent of GDP and, when adjusted for purchasing power, was estimated at more than US\$1.1 trillion. China led the Nature Index in high-quality research output, while the Chinese Academy of Sciences ranked among the world’s foremost research institutions. Facilities such as the FAST radio telescope, EAST fusion reactor and advanced quantum laboratories illustrate the scale of investment. As Xi states, “Science and technology are our primary productive force, talent is our primary resource, and innovation is our primary driver of growth.”

China’s digital economy makes this

transformation visible in everyday life. Mobile payments allow vendors and rural businesses to participate in modern commerce, while e-commerce, cloud computing, artificial intelligence and automated logistics connect producers with consumers nationwide. In 2026, integrated-circuit production reportedly approached 280 billion units in the first half of the year, while Chinese companies competed in generative AI, robotics, autonomous mobility and smart manufacturing. During my 2024 visit, I saw digital technology woven seamlessly into transport, banking, retail, tourism and public services. This is the practical expression of Xi’s call to “accelerate the building of a digital economy, a digital society and a digital government.”

Environmental protection has become another pillar of China’s development strategy. After decades of industrialization caused serious pollution, ecological conservation moved to the centre of national policy. The Ecological and Environmental Code, adopted in March 2026, consolidated rules on pollution, biodiversity, conservation and climate action. The 15th Five-Year Plan targets a 17 percent reduction in carbon intensity by 2030, alongside continued progress toward peaking emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality before 2060. This policy is rooted in Xi’s best-known ecological principle in The Governance of China: “Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets.”

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Analysis

Qamar Bashir



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

When the Youth Rise

The destiny of nations is not always shaped within the halls of power. Sometimes, it is transformed in the quiet streets of villages, along mud-covered paths, and through the extraordinary determination of ordinary people. History bears witness that when collective consciousness awakens, when love for one’s homeland becomes an act of devotion, and when service to humanity surpasses personal interests, revolutions no longer require slogans or public spectacle; they emerge quietly yet profoundly. Such a silent revolution recently unfolded in the village of Saidpur, Tehsil Shakargarh, District Narowal, proving that sincere intentions can accomplish remarkable achievements even with limited resources.

The true identity of a society is not reflected in its towering buildings but in the values upon which its collective life is built. Unfortunately, in our country, public issues often remain unresolved unless they serve a political interest. Basic necessities such as village roads, access to graveyards, a clean environment, and public welfare rarely receive the attention they deserve. In such circumstances, complaints are abundant, yet those willing to take practical action remain few.

During last year’s monsoon season, the residents of Saidpur endured a painful ordeal. The nearly two-kilometer unpaved road leading to the village graveyard turned into a muddy swamp after every rainfall. People carrying funeral processions struggled to maintain their footing, often slipping and stumbling, while tractor-trolleys would frequently become stuck in the mire. In moments of grief, this additional hardship was enough to break even the strongest hearts. The village elders approached public representatives, submitted requests, and placed their hopes in official promises, but, as

is often the case, they received little more than assurances.

Perhaps it was at this very moment that the youth of Saidpur decided that waiting was no longer an option; it was time to act. Instead of pointing fingers at others, they extended their own hands in service. They abandoned the language of complaints and embraced the language of action. Thus, the Saidpur Welfare Society was established, demonstrating that the true strength of a community lies neither in wealth nor in political authority, but in mutual trust and collective responsibility.

The first to step forward were the young men employed in various public and private institutions. They willingly contributed a portion of their earnings and ignited a flame of community service at the doorstep of their village. That flame soon reached beyond national borders, where overseas residents of Saidpur responded with remarkable generosity. Though living thousands of miles away, their hearts remained deeply connected to the soil of their homeland. They donated hundreds of thousands of rupees, proving that love for one’s homeland is measured not by physical distance but by the depth of one’s commitment.

When sincerity becomes the greatest asset, resources naturally find their way. Every donation entrusted by the community was utilized with complete honesty, transparency, and accountability. Hundreds of tractor-trolleys of soil were transported to level the road, followed by the construction of a proper sloping surface. Today, the same road that once symbolized hardship, neglect, and helplessness has become a living symbol of unity, dignity, and community service. This is perhaps the finest example of a nation standing not on the shoulders of others but on its own determination.

Yet the vision of Saidpur’s youth extended far beyond the construction of a road. They realized that if the path had become easier for people, it was now time to give new life to the land itself. Consequently, they launched an ambitious tree plantation campaign. Thousands of saplings are being planted along both sides of the two-kilometer road so that, in the years to come, these trees will provide shade, produce fresh oxygen, beautify the surroundings, and remind future generations that love for one’s homeland is demonstrated through actions rather than words.

This initiative is especially inspiring in an age when the entire world is confronting environmental pollution, climate change, and rising global temperatures. When the youth of a small village undertake a tree plantation campaign through self-help and voluntary effort, it is no longer merely a local development project; it becomes a symbol of national awareness and environmental responsibility. Indeed, the hands that plant trees do not simply beautify the earth; they safeguard the future.

Another key to this remarkable success lies in the values of honesty and integrity. The money entrusted by the people was treated as a sacred trust. No one sought personal gain, public recognition, or political advantage. The project remained purely an act of public service. These are precisely the qualities that invite the blessings of Almighty Allah. Where there is no dishonesty, blessings naturally follow, and where sincerity prevails, even modest resources yield extraordinary results.

Islam also regards service to humanity as one of the highest forms of worship. Removing an obstacle from a pathway is considered an act of charity; making life easier for others is an act of worship; and planting a tree is regarded as Sadaqah Jariyah (continuous charity). The youth of Saidpur have translated all of these teachings into practical reality. They have demonstrated that faith is not confined to

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The New Era of Maritime Power

Do not imagine that history merely repeats itself; rather, it renews its enduring patterns in ever-changing forms.”

The study of history reveals that the destinies of civilizations are not always determined by the smoke of battlefields alone. More often, they are shaped by the silent currents of the seas, the strategic significance of trade routes, and the hidden power of geography. The geopolitical landscape of the twenty-first century reflects this timeless principle with remarkable clarity. The Atlantic Ocean, which symbolized global supremacy, imperial expansion, and capitalist dominance for more than three centuries, is gradually relinquishing its centrality. In its place, the vast maritime expanse stretching across the Indian and Pacific Oceans is emerging as the principal arena of global politics, economics, and strategic competition. History, it seems, has shifted its geographical axis, and the caravan of power is moving from one oceanic horizon to another.

This region is far more than an immense body of water. It is the lifeline of international trade, the principal artery of global energy supplies, a vast repository of natural resources, and home to the world’s largest concentration of population. Extending from the eastern shores of Africa to the distant islands of the Pacific, this maritime domain has become the grand chessboard upon which major powers are maneuvering their final strategic pieces to preserve or expand their political influence, economic interests, and military superiority. If the history of previous centuries was written through the

conquest of territories, the history of the coming age is likely to be written through ports, straits, and maritime corridors. The decisive contests of the future will depend less upon conventional firepower than upon naval reach, technological innovation, and control of strategic sea lanes.

The ancient Greek historian Thucydides observed that the rise of a new power almost inevitably leads to confrontation with an established one. That principle has acquired renewed relevance across the waters of the Indo-Pacific. On one side, the United States seeks to preserve its long-standing global leadership, alliance network, and security architecture. On the other, China is steadily expanding its influence through industrial strength, economic dynamism, technological advancement, and maritime outreach. According to the realist school of international relations, in the absence of a supreme global authority capable of guaranteeing security, every state must rely upon its own military preparedness, economic resilience, and balance of power for survival. This strategic reality has stimulated a new era of military partnerships, security alliances, and maritime cooperation.

Within this framework, arrangements such as the Quad and AUKUS are far more than diplomatic initiatives; they represent essential components of a broader strategic architecture designed to shape the balance of power across the Indo-Pacific. In response, China has advanced its Belt and Road Initiative, the Maritime Silk Road, and extensive port development projects to transform economic geography into a cornerstone of its foreign policy.

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D-8 holds first-ever Environment Ministers’ meeting ahead of COP31

Istanbul Declaration Calls for Stronger Climate Cooperation Among Member States

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD/ISTANBUL: The Developing-8 (D-8) Organization for Economic Cooperation held its first-ever Ministerial Meeting on Environment in Istanbul, Türkiye, under the theme “Preparing for COP31: Advancing Climate Implementation through International Cooperation.” The landmark meeting, chaired by Türkiye’s Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, Murat Kurum, also President-designate of COP31, brought together environment ministers and senior officials from all nine D-8 member states.

The meeting focused on strengthening climate cooperation and enhancing the role of developing countries in global climate governance ahead of the COP31 Climate Conference, scheduled to take place in Antalya, Türkiye, from



November 9 to 20, 2026.

Addressing the session, D-8 Secretary-General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood described climate change as one of the most pressing development challenges facing member states. He welcomed COP31’s implementation-focused agenda, emphasizing

adaptation, climate finance, loss and damage, technology transfer, and South-South cooperation. He also proposed stronger coordination among D-8 countries before COP31, including the establishment of a joint D-8 Pavilion and side events in Antalya.

The ministers unanimously adopted the Istanbul Declaration, reaffirming support for Türkiye’s COP31 Presidency and calling for a shift from climate commitments to concrete implementation through accessible financing, technology transfer and international cooperation.



Participants also highlighted the importance of engaging the private sector, academia, youth and MSMEs in driving green innovation and climate resilience.

On the sidelines of the

meeting, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood held talks with Minister Murat Kurum on enhancing institutional cooperation, preparations for COP31 and expanding collaboration on environmental governance, sustain-

able urban development and green growth initiatives across D-8 member states. He praised Türkiye’s leadership in launching the organization’s first dedicated ministerial platform on environment and climate change.

ISSI, YFK Mark Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan, Reaffirm Support for Kashmir Cause

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), through its India Study Centre, in collaboration with the Youth Forum for Kashmir (YFK), organized an event titled “Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan: Revisiting History, Shaping the Future” to commemorate Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan and reaffirm support for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon attended as the chief guest, while former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Ambassador Masood Khan was the guest of honour. Ambassador Moin ul Haque, Director General ISSI, Kashmiri leader Shamim Shawl, scholar Saud Sultan, Dr. Khuram Abbas and Ambassador Khalid Mahmood also addressed the gathering.

Speakers highlighted the historical



significance of the 19 July 1947 resolution adopted by the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, describing it as a reflection of the Kashmiri people’s aspiration to accede to

Pakistan. They emphasized Pakistan’s consistent support for a peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in line with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions

and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon reaffirmed Pakistan’s unwavering solidarity with Kashmiris and urged the international community to address alleged human rights violations, demographic changes and restrictions in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Ambassador Masood Khan said the Kashmir issue remains closely linked to Pakistan’s ideological foundations and reiterated that the right to self-determination had been recognized by the United Nations.

Other speakers highlighted historical, geographical, cultural and economic ties between Pakistan and Kashmir, stressing the need for credible research, effective advocacy and digital engagement to counter misinformation. The event concluded with a renewed call for resolving the dispute in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Palestinian Church Affairs Committee Warns Israeli Settlement Expansion Threatens Indigenous Christian Presence

WAFA

RAMALLAH: The Higher Presidential Committee for Church Affairs in Palestine has written to Heads of Churches worldwide, warning that Israel’s continued settlement expansion, land confiscation, and restrictions on Palestinian development are threatening the indigenous Palestinian Christian presence in the Holy Land.

The Committee said these policies are undermining Palestinian families, including Christian families, and putting at risk a Christian witness in the land for more than 2,000 years.

The warning follows a disclosed Israeli Security Cabinet decision approving 34 new settlements across the occupied West Bank, including 6 in Bethlehem Governorate — the birthplace of Jesus Christ. More than NIS 2.3 billion (\$790 million) was allocated to accelerate construction, settler transfer, and infrastructure.

The Committee said the plans aim to expand and connect settlement blocs and further isolate Bethlehem, Beit Jala, and Beit Sahour, including confiscation of agricultural land owned by Christian families.

It stressed the settlement enterprise violates international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention, and is inconsistent with the 2024 ICJ Advisory Opinion.

The Committee urged global Churches to take a principled stand against annexation and faiths accomplis, defend international law, and support a just peace guaranteeing Palestinian rights, freedom and dignity.

Auqaf Punjab Reviews Record Performance, Accelerates Reforms and Development

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Auqaf and Religious Affairs Department reported significant progress in administrative reforms, financial performance and infrastructure during the April–June quarter, with Secretary/Chief Administrator Dr. Ehsan Bhutta reaffirming commitment to transform shrines into centres of transparency, public service and spiritual excellence.

Chairing a review meeting under CM Maryam Nawaz and Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, officials noted interfaith harmony initiatives ahead of Muharram, including Ittehad Bain-ul-Muslimeen visits and conferences promoting tolerance. The formation of the Muttahida Ulema Board and Punjab Quran Board was termed a major step to strengthen religious consultation.

Director Projects Rafiq Noor Wattoo said the department achieved 97% utilisation of its Annual Development Programme, completing 21 of 47 schemes. Phase-II of Bibi Pak Daman Shrine was approved at Rs496 million, and work at Hazrat Baba Farid Ganj Shakar’s shrine is complete. New facilities at Iqbal Hall, Badshahi Mosque are expected to boost religious tourism.

Financially, lease recoveries rose 11.71% and contract receipts grew 8.5%, with significant increases in donations at Data Darbar, Bibi Pak Daman, Baba Farid, Baba Bullay Shah and Shah Daula Gujrat.

Dr. Bhutta pledged to continue reforms and preserve Punjab’s religious heritage.



Media Leaders Call for Stronger Laws to Combat AI-Based Gender Violence

Zain Khan Malghani

LAHORE: Participants at the two-day National Conference, “Rising Together: Strategies for Gender Equality and Diversity in Pakistan’s Unions,” called for urgent and coordinated action to combat violence against women, particularly the growing threat of AI-enabled gender-based violence targeting women journalists. They emphasized that governments, media organizations, unions, digital platforms, and civil society must work together to establish effective legal, institutional, and technological safeguards.

The conference was organized by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and brought together women journalists, labour and union leaders, legal experts, academics, media students, and human rights advocates from across Pakistan.

Speakers stressed that while women have made significant contributions to journalism, they continue to face



workplace discrimination, online harassment, digital abuse, insecure employment, unequal opportunities, and underrepresentation in leadership positions. They highlighted the alarming rise in AI-generated disinformation, deepfake content, image manipulation, and technology-facilitated harassment targeting women journalists, calling for stronger legislation, effective enforcement mechanisms, and greater accountability of digital platforms.

Participants urged policymakers to introduce comprehensive measures to address AI-based gender violence and strengthen legal protections for women working in media. They also called on media organizations to adopt gender-responsive workplace policies and provide safer working environments free from harassment and

discrimination.

The conference was addressed by FES Program Advisor Abdullah Deyo, Haider Mahmood, Professor Dr. Sawera Shami, Professor Dr. Rabia Noor, Aima Mahmood, Farhat Maqsood, Shehr Bano, Lubna Jarrah, Farzana Ali, and Shaima Siddiqui, along with women journalists and representatives of labour and trade unions from across Pakistan.

787th Urs of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya Begins in Multan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The three-day 787th annual Urs of Hazrat Ghous Bahauddin Zakariya Multani Suhrawardi commenced in Multan with the traditional Ghushl (ritual washing) of the shrine, performed by Makhdoom Zain Hussain Qureshi, son of the shrine’s custodian Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Hussain Qureshi.

Speaking at the opening session of the National Zakariya Conference, organized by the Pakistan Zakariya Academy in collaboration with the Auqaf Department, Makhdoom Zain Hussain Qureshi welcomed thousands of pilgrims from across Pakistan and Azad Kashmir. He said his father, despite being in prison for the past three years,

remained in good spirits and continued to pray for the devotees attending the Urs.

He expressed hope that Shah Mahmood Qureshi would soon return and resume serving the people, while praying for peace, prosperity and an end to terrorism in Pakistan. He paid tribute to the sacrifices of Pakistan’s armed forces and prayed for peace in Kashmir and Palestine.

The conference was attended by religious scholars, political figures, custodians of shrines and dignitaries, including Pir Zahoor Hussain Qureshi, Sahibzada Pir Khalid Sultan, Allama Muhammad Farooq Khan Saeedi, Dr. Siddique Khan Qadri, Mufti Muhammad Usman Pasruri, and senior officials of the Auqaf Department.

Speakers highlighted the

teachings of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya, emphasizing peace, tolerance, unity and service to humanity. They urged the younger generation to follow the teachings of the Sufi saints and use social media responsibly to promote Islamic values and spiritual heritage.

The gathering also featured Quran recitation, Naat, Qaseeda Burda Sharif and collective prayers. The opening ceremony concluded with Darood-o-Salam and a special prayer led by Makhdoom Zain Hussain Qureshi.

The second session of the National Zakariya Conference will be held on Tuesday at the shrine, where leading scholars, researchers and Mashaikh will address participants on the life and teachings of Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya Multani.



 Bull & Bears

PSX 100-Share

Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
175,927.73	175,802.78
Day's High	Day's Low
176,129.35	173,636.45
Index Value	Change
20,513,676,868	+ 124.95
Percentage	Time
+0.07%	20 Jul, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,524.76	- 75.61
Percentage	Time
-0.71%	20 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT + 1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
51,925.76	- 220.66
Percentage	Time
-0.42%	20 Jul, 1:32 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	194.94	198.26
Bahrain Dinar	741.15	751.85
Canadian Dollar	197.75	201.68
China Yuan	38.05	38.80
Danish Krone	42.58	43.27
Euro	320.47	323.42
Hong Kong Dollar	35.25	36.26
Indian Rupee	2.75	3.20
Japanese Yen	1.7115	1.8101
Kuwaiti Dinar	890.05	900.90
Malaysian Ringgit	66.95	68
NewZealand \$	161.34	164.75
Norwegians Krone	28.05	28.35
Omani Riyal	725.85	735.70
Qatari Riyal	75.45	76.46
Saudi Riyal	74.67	75.33
Singapore Dollar	214.57	218.85
Swedish Korona	28.27	28.92
Swiss Franc	343.65	348.30
Thai Bhat	8.50	8.85
U.A.E Dirham	76.37	77.07
UK Pound Sterling	377.29	380.17
US Dollar	279	279.20

Gold price jumps
Rs2,400 per tola in
local market



 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Gold prices in Pakistan surged sharply on Saturday, pushing the price of the precious metal to a new high after a significant decline a day earlier.

According to the All Pakistan Safa Gems and Jewellers Association, the price of gold per tola increased by Rs2,400, taking it to Rs424,236.

The price of 10 grams of gold also rose by Rs2,057 to Rs363,713.

In the international market, gold prices gained \$24 per ounce to reach \$4,018.

The rebound came just a day after gold prices had posted a sharp decline in both the global and local markets.

On Friday, the price of gold per tola fell by Rs3,600 to Rs421,836, while the price of 10 grams dropped by Rs3,086 to Rs361,656.

Sarsabz launches ‘Dil Se Dekho Sarsabz Pakistan’ campaign ahead of Independence Day

 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sarsabz, the flagship brand of Fatima Fertilizer, has launched its nationwide digital campaign, “Dil Se Dekho Sarsabz Pakistan,” ahead of Pakistan’s Independence Day, encouraging citizens to celebrate the country’s diversity, culture and heritage by sharing authentic stories from their hometowns.

The campaign aims to highlight Pakistan’s rich traditions, breathtaking landscapes, vibrant communities and resilient spirit through short videos created by participants. Citizens from across the country are invited to showcase the unique identity of their cities, towns and villages, reflecting the shared values that unite the nation.

To participate, entrants are required to upload a short video on their public social media accounts using the official Sarsabz

Pakistan Challenge audio, include the hashtag #DilSeSarsabz, and tag the official Sarsabz social media pages.

The campaign offers exciting grand prizes for outstanding entries, while weekly winners will also receive special rewards. Participants are encouraged to feature Pakistan’s culture, cuisine, traditions, landmarks, natural beauty, local communities and hidden gems in their videos.

Speaking about the initiative, Director Marketing & Sales, Fatima Fertilizer, Ms. Rabel Sadozai, said Pakistan is a nation filled with inspiring stories waiting to be shared. She said the campaign aims to encourage people to celebrate the places they proudly call home while showcasing the country’s beauty, diversity and resilience.

She noted that every city, town and village has a unique identity, and the campaign provides a platform for Pakistanis to share



those stories with the nation. She invited citizens from every corner of the country to participate in the campaign and celebrate a Pakistan that thrives through the strength, pride and spirit of its people.

The campaign will continue until August 14, with organizers encouraging widespread participation to mark Independence Day by showcasing the true essence of Pakistan through the eyes of its people.

Iconic

ISLAMABAD: A night view of iconic eagle (Shaheen) sculpture at the Shaheen Chowk Underpass in features a majestic eagle perched atop a globe, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Zubair Tufail says Pakistan-China trade, investment ties reaching new heights

 Bureau Report

KARACHI: United Business Group (UBG) President Zubair Tufail said the 75-year Pakistan-China friendship has evolved into a strong economic partnership, with China now Pakistan’s largest trading partner and investor.

In a statement on the 105th anniversary of the Communist Party of China, Tufail noted bilateral trade stands at approximately US\$24 billion. Pakistan’s exports to China are around US\$3.5 billion, while imports exceed US\$20 billion. He said with modern technology, value addition, and better market access, Pakistani exports to China could double in coming years.

Under CPEC, he said over US\$25 billion in direct investment has been



made, supporting energy, highways, ports, SEZs and industry. The projects

have created jobs for more than 75,000 Pakistanis and added over 8,000 MW to the national grid.

Tufail urged acceleration of CPEC Phase 2 focusing on SEZs, industrial cooperation, agriculture tech, IT, mining, e-commerce, and green energy. He said Gwadar Port can become a major regional trade and logistics hub.

He highlighted investment opportunities for Chinese firms in textile, engineering, auto parts, electronics, renewable energy, agriculture machinery, and food processing, and called for more B2B cooperation, joint ventures, and technology transfer.

Tufail also praised Feng Deheng, Acting Consul General of China in Karachi, for promoting trade and people-to-people ties.

easypaisa launches Islamic Takaful Savings to expand Shariah-Compliant Banking

 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: easypaisa Digital Bank has introduced an Islamic Takaful Savings solution within its app in collaboration with EFU Life, making Shariah-compliant saving and protection fully digital.

The product enables users to earn halal returns of up to 8% while benefiting from built-in Takaful protection, combining savings and financial security. Customers can start saving directly through the app and also get a chance to win a free Umrah trip.

As Pakistan’s first digital bank with over 60 million registered users, easypaisa said the move advances financial inclusion and strengthens the country’s insurtech ecosystem.

Jahanzeb Khan, President & CEO easypaisa, noted it meets growing demand for Islamic digital banking. EFU Life CEO Mohammed Ali Ahmed said the partnership expands access to Shariah-compliant protection.

easypaisa reaffirmed alignment with the State Bank’s vision to serve unbanked and underbanked Pakistanis.

HCCI Presents First Achievement Award to Saleem Khan Tanoli

 Commerce Desk

PESHAWAR: Mr. Saleem Khan Tanoli, Chairman of Fakt Group of Companies, CEO of Apex Polymers (Pvt) Ltd., President of Hazara Business Forum and Director of Pakistan Japan Business Forum, received the prestigious Haripur Chamber of Commerce & Industry (HCCI) First Achievement Award.

The award was presented by Honorable Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi, at a ceremony held at Governor House Peshawar.

HCCI recognized Mr. Tanoli for his outstanding leadership, extensive industry experience, and contributions to Pakistan’s manufacturing sector through Apex Polymers. The Chamber noted his focus on innovation, industrial excellence, and modern manufacturing practices, which have strengthened



the country’s industrial base and supported sustainable economic growth.

Under his leadership, Apex Polymers has become a respected name in Pakistan’s polymer industry for delivering high-quality products and maintaining international standards. Receiving the award, Mr. Tanoli thanked HCCI and the Governor, stating the honor reinforces his commitment to advancing Pakistan’s industrial sector through innovation, entrepreneurship, investment, and sustainable practices.

The Road to EIGHTEEN Just Got Better

Direct Entry and Exit from M-1/M-2 Link Road Now Open

 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: EIGHTEEN, Pakistan’s premier lifestyle destination, has inaugurated its direct entry and exit connection from the M-1/M-2 Link Road, marking a significant infrastructure milestone that enhances accessibility, connectivity and convenience for residents, visitors and the wider community.

The newly operational access will significantly enhance accessibility to EIGHTEEN, providing a more convenient

and efficient access point for residents, visitors and guests. This important infrastructure milestone further supports the continued development of EIGHTEEN as one of Pakistan’s leading integrated lifestyle destinations.

EIGHTEEN extends its sincere appreciation to the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) for its continued support in facilitating strategic investments and fostering an enabling environment for international investors. EIGHTEEN

also expresses its sincere gratitude to the National Highway Authority (NHA), the statutory regulator responsible for Pakistan’s national highway network, for approving direct entry and exit from the M-1/M-2 Link Road, and for its technical expertise, professionalism and guidance throughout the approval process.

Commenting on this latest positive development, Dr. Mohamed Mansour, Chief Executive Officer of EIGHTEEN, said, “The approval of the

direct entry and exit from the M-1/M-2 Link Road marks a defining milestone in EIGHTEEN’s development journey and reflects the constructive collaboration between EIGHTEEN and the relevant government authorities. We are deeply grateful to the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) for its invaluable support, to the National Highway Authority (NHA) for approving the Entry and Exit and for its technical expertise and professionalism throughout the approval process, Ministry of

Communications for its support and to the Government of Pakistan, under the leadership of the Honorable Prime Minister, for fostering an environment that encourages investment, strengthens investor confidence and facilitates foreign direct investment. Such initiatives play an important role in creating the confidence required for landmark developments like EIGHTEEN and further reinforce Pakistan’s attractiveness as a destination for long-term international investment.



Gillani Praises Chess as a Tool for Global Unity and Peace on World Chess Day

Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, in his message on the occasion of World Chess Day, has said that chess is a timeless and intellectual game that promotes high values like critical thinking, discipline, patience, tolerance and mutual respect, while also strengthening peace, inclusion and mutual understanding between different



nations and societies.
Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza

Gillani said that chess is a means of connecting people with each other, transcending all boundaries of age, gender, language and social status, which is why it plays an effective role in education, mental and intellectual development of youth and promotion of social harmony. He added that the core values of chess are fully compatible with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, especially quality education,

gender equality and the establishment of peaceful societies.

The Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani Reiterated the commitment that every possible encouragement will be given to the promotion of sports and intellectual and educational activities to empower the younger generation, strengthen national unity, and build a more inclusive, developed, and peaceful Pakistan.

Pakistan, Kazakhstan Join Hands to Promote Qazaq Kuresi

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan took a major step towards promoting the traditional sport of Qazaq Kuresi as the Pakistan Qazaq Kuresi Federation (PQKF), in collaboration with the Qazaq Kuresi Association of Kazakhstan, launched the International Qazaq Kuresi Coaching and Athlete Development Programme at the Pakistan Sports Complex, Islamabad.

The seven-day programme was inaugurated by Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin. The opening ceremony was attended by Colonel Nabeel Ahmed Rana, Deputy Director of the Army Fitness and Sports Directorate, Major Naveed Afzal, Secretary General of the Pakistan Qazaq Kuresi Federation, Kazakh expert coaches Damir Budanbekov and Nurzhan Kondybayev, along with athletes, coaches and officials.

Addressing the ceremony, Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin said Kazakhstan is keen to further expand sports cooperation with Pakistan. He noted that the establishment of the Dostyk Sports Centre reflects the shared commitment of both countries to promoting sports diplomacy and strengthening bilateral relations through sports. He expressed hope that Pakistani athletes would qualify for and excel at future Olympic Games, bringing pride to the nation on the international stage.

Speaking on the occasion, Major Naveed Afzal said the initiative reflects the growing friendship and sports cooperation between Pakistan and Kazakhstan. He reaffirmed that the Pakistan Qazaq Kuresi Federation is fully committed to promoting the sport across the country by providing every possible facility, world-class training opportunities and international exposure to emerging players, coaches and officials.

He said the collaboration with Kazakhstan would play a vital role in improving technical standards, developing local talent and creating new opportunities for Pakistani athletes



to compete at the international level. He added that the partnership would

further strengthen sports ties between the two friendly countries and pave the

way for long-term cooperation in athlete and coach development.

PM congratulates Spain on FIFA World Cup victory, commends host nations

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday congratulated Spain on its well-deserved victory in the FIFA World Cup 2026, praising the team for displaying exceptional skill, unity, discipline, and teamwork throughout the tournament.



The prime minister, in a post on X, extended his heartfelt felicitations to the the US President Donald Trump and the people of the United States on the exceptional arrangements and successful hosting of the historic tournament.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also expressed his appreciation to the governments and peoples of Mexico and Canada for their excellent partnership in hosting the FIFA World Cup with distinction.

He commended FIFA President Gianni Infantino and the entire FIFA team for their efforts in organizing the mega event, saying that it would undoubtedly strengthen football's stature as a truly global sport.

The prime minister highlighted that the FIFA World Cup has once again demonstrated that sport was a universal language that transcended borders and inspired humanity.

He expressed the hope that the same spirit of friendship and unity would continue long after the final whistle.

Pakistani women mountaineers summit Khusar Gang Peak in historic achievement



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Eight Pakistani women mountaineers have successfully climbed Khusar Gang Peak, reaching the 6,040-metre summit in a landmark achievement for women's mountaineering in Pakistan.

The expedition was organised by the Alpine Club of Pakistan as part of its second Women's Khusar Gang Expedition. Participants from Gilgit-Baltistan, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Islamabad completed the climb, setting a new milestone for female mountaineers in the country.

The expedition was led by Bibi Afzoon, while experienced high-altitude guides Ali Muhammad Sadpara, Sadiq Hussain Sadpara and Ilyas Hushe provided technical support throughout the ascent. Rope-fixing duties on the mountain were carried out by Qaid Shigri.

Congratulating the successful climbers, Alpine Club of Pakistan Secretary General Ayaz Shigri said the achievement demonstrated the determination, resilience and professional capabilities of Pakistani women in adventure sports.

He described the successful summit as an important step forward for the promotion of women's mountaineering in Pakistan and said the Alpine Club would continue creating opportunities for female climbers to participate in national and international expeditions.

The successful ascent of Khusar Gang adds to Pakistan's growing reputation as a destination for mountaineering and highlights the increasing participation of women in high-altitude climbing and outdoor sports.

Officials expressed hope that the achievement would encourage more young women across the country to pursue mountaineering and other adventure activities while representing Pakistan on the international stage.

The New Era of Maritime Power

Continued from Page 4

These initiatives reinforce a fundamental truth of the modern age: high-ways of influence are no longer confined to land; the seas themselves determine the destiny of nations.

India, meanwhile, seeks to establish itself as the preeminent maritime power in the Indian Ocean through expanding naval capabilities, regional diplomacy, and strategic partnerships. Japan, Australia, and other regional actors are similarly attempting to balance their economic interests with evolving security concerns. Together, these developments indicate that the international system is gradually transitioning from a unipolar order toward an increasingly dynamic multipolar structure in which the distribution of power, the nature of alliances, and the pursuit of national interests are undergoing profound transformation.

Within this evolving strategic environment, Pakistan occupies a uniquely significant geopolitical position. Serving

as a bridge between Central Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, and the Arabian Sea, it possesses considerable strategic potential. Gwadar Port and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) enhance this geographical advantage by connecting maritime and overland trade routes. If supported by coherent economic policies, industrial modernization, and a comprehensive maritime strategy, Pakistan could emerge not merely as a transit corridor but as a regional hub for commerce, energy, and investment. Such a transformation, however, depends upon sustained political stability, institutional continuity, economic reform, and long-term strategic planning.

The future demands that national security be viewed through a broader lens. Military strength alone is no longer sufficient. Geo-economics, the blue economy, maritime research, port development, technological innovation, and balanced diplomacy must become integral components of national strategy. History consistently

favors those nations that successfully convert geographical advantages into economic prosperity and strategic influence. Otherwise, even the most favorable location remains an unrealized opportunity.

As the Qur'anic principle reminds us: "And these days We alternate among the people." The centers of power continually shift, strategic routes acquire new significance, and the rise and decline of nations remain inseparable from these transformations. If Pakistan responds to this changing global environment with wisdom, moderation, and strategic foresight grounding its national vision in geo-economics, scientific advancement, and maritime capability it can emerge in the coming multipolar order not as a passive observer, but as a respected, influential, and decisive regional power.

(The author is a Ph. D. scholar, columnist, and currently serves as the General Secretary of the Pakistan Federal Union of Columnists and Creators (Sindh).

When the Youth Rise

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rituals of worship alone, but also encompasses social welfare, environmental stewardship, and compassionate service to humanity.

At a time when today's youth are often criticized for aimlessness, despair, and indifference, the young men of Saidpur have emerged as a beacon of hope. They have shown that when youthful energy is directed toward constructive purposes, it becomes a source of pride not only for parents but also for the entire nation.

Behind this remarkable achievement stand the sincere and dedicated members of the Saidpur Welfare Society, who deserve special recognition. They regarded this initiative not merely as a social project but as an act of worship. In particular, Hafiz Faisal, Chaudhry Mahmood, Chaudhry Ejaz, Chaudhry Khaliq, Chaudhry Aftab Sanwal, Chaudhry Abid, Chaudhry Shakeel, and Chaudhry Yasir demon-

strated exceptional sincerity, honesty, dedication, and perseverance in planning, supervising, and successfully completing this noble mission. Their efforts serve as an inspiring example for others.

They have proven that when one's intention is to seek the pleasure of Allah, to serve humanity, and to honor one's homeland, even limited resources can produce extraordinary accomplishments.

Such individuals are not merely an asset to a single village but to society as a whole. Their legacy teaches future generations that nations are built not through speeches but through character, integrity, sincerity, and selfless service. By constructing this road, the members of the Saidpur Welfare Society have done far more than improve infrastructure they have established a powerful model of collective consciousness, mutual trust, and civic responsibility for the entire region.

The need of the hour is to replicate the Saidpur model across every village and neighborhood in Pakistan. If the youth of every community assume responsibility for their streets, graveyards, schools, mosques, parks, and environment, perhaps we will no longer need to knock on the doors of rulers for every minor issue.

Nations are not built by slogans; they are built by character. And character flourishes wherever sincerity, integrity, selfless service, and love for one's homeland walk hand in hand. The youth of Saidpur have not merely constructed a road—they have opened a pathway of hope. That pathway reminds us that Pakistan's future is still alive, because within its soil there remain young men and women who rise above personal interests to dedicate their lives to their community, their homeland, and the welfare of humanity.

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Xi Jinping's Vision and the China-Pakistan Journey of 75 Years-II

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China is now the world's largest renewable-energy investor and leading manufacturer of solar panels, wind turbines, electric vehicles and batteries. By May 2026, its installed generating capacity had reached 4.01 terawatts, with renewables accounting for about 61 percent. Solar capacity exceeded 1,240 gigawatts and wind approached 660 gigawatts, supported by ultra-high-voltage transmission, smart grids and expanding battery storage. Electric

buses, metro networks and new-energy vehicles have also transformed urban transport. During my 2024 visit, I was impressed by the cleaner air, widespread electric vehicles and integration of green spaces into cities. These achievements answer Xi's call to "accelerate the formation of green development models and green ways of life."

China's ecological commitment extends beyond energy. Afforestation, desertification control, river and wetland restoration, water conservation, soil rehabilitation and industrial pollution control

have become integral to modernization. China nevertheless remains the world's largest carbon emitter and still depends heavily on coal, making the transition incomplete. Yet its scale of renewable deployment and ecological restoration shows how planning, investment and technology can reconcile growth with sustainability. In Xi's words, "Protecting the environment is protecting productivity, and improving the environment is boosting productivity."

China's experience also

demonstrates the strategic value of investing in people. By 2026, it operated the world's largest education system, with about 470,000 institutions, 286 million students and 18.7 million full-time teachers. More than 48.5 million students attended over 3,160 higher-education institutions, while vocational colleges supplied much of the skilled workforce required by industry. Universities have increasingly introduced programmes in AI, robotics, intelligent manufacturing

and advanced materials. This emphasis follows Xi's directive: "We must give high priority to the development of education, build China's self-reliance and strength in science and technology, and rely on talent to pioneer and propel development."

For developing countries—especially Pakistan—China offers practical lessons. Sustainable progress requires more than money or isolated projects: it demands visionary leadership, institutional continuity, quality education, vocational skills,

technological innovation and disciplined execution. Pakistan's youthful population can become an economic asset only if equipped with relevant skills and opportunities, while national priorities must survive changes of government and be judged by measurable outcomes. This is the essence of the people-centred modernization presented in The Governance of China: "Development is for the people, by the people, and its fruits are shared by the people." China's experience shows that when leadership, institutions and human

capability move toward a common national purpose, transformation on an extraordinary scale becomes possible.

(To be continued in Part III: The Belt and Road Initiative, CPEC, China's Global Vision, and the Future of the China-Pakistan Partnership.)

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.

Review Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad : Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on the implementation of transformation plan Of Pakistan Railways (20 July, 2026).



Photo: PID

PM calls for timely completion of Railways key projects

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Monday, directed authorities to complete Pakistan Railways’ development projects within the stipulated timelines and according to the highest quality standards, emphasizing a modern railway network is essential for the economic growth, trade, and regional connectivity.

Chairing a meeting to review progress on the Pakistan Railways transformation plan, the prime minister said Pakistan Railways is the country’s most cost-effective mode of transport for passengers and freight. He said upgrading the railway infrastructure would strengthen Pakistan’s role as a regional trade and logistics hub.

He directed officials to submit proposals for the

upgradation of the Rohri–Multan section of the Main Line-1 (ML-1) railway project, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Railways Minister Hanif Abbasi, Minister for Information Technology Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privat-

ization Muhammad Ali, Minister of State for Finance and Railways Bilal Azhar Kayani and senior government officials.

The relevant officials briefed the meeting on progress related to the ML-1 and ML-3 upgrade projects, Thar Coal railway connectivity project and other ongoing initiatives.

The meeting was informed that the detailed engineering design for the Karachi–Rohri

section of ML-1 has been completed. The upgradation of the Rohri–Nokundi section of ML-3 would be undertaken through the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) and bridge financing.

It was apprised that 60% of the work on the 112-kilometre railway line connecting Thar coalfields to Chhor railway station had been completed, with the project expected to be finished by December 2026.

Judicial Commission Recommends New Judges for Sindh and IHC, Confirms Four Peshawar High Court Judges



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) has recommended the appointment of additional judges to the Sindh High Court (SHC) and Islamabad High Court (IHC), confirmed four additional judges as permanent judges of the Peshawar High Court (PHC), and approved key tenure extensions during its meeting held at the Supreme

Court on Monday.

Chaired by the Chief Justice of Pakistan, the commission reviewed appointments, confirmations, and extensions relating to the SHC, IHC, and PHC.

For the Sindh High Court, the commission approved a six-month extension in the tenure of Justice Khalid Hussain Shahani as an additional judge. However, it did not recommend the confir-

mation of Justice Syed Fiaz-ul-Hassan Shah as a permanent judge. The commission also extended the tenure of the SHC’s Constitutional Benches by three months.

To fill vacant positions in the SHC, the JCP recommended the appointment of Muhammad Humayon Khan (Advocate), Suresh Kumar (District and Sessions Judge), and Dr. Shah Nawaz Memon (Advocate) as additional judges. Two remaining

vacancies could not be filled after no candidate secured the required majority.

For the Islamabad High Court, the commission recommended the appointment of Ayyaz Shaukat (Advocate), Shahrukh Arjumand (District and Sessions Judge), and Umair Majeed Malik (Advocate) as additional judges.

The commission also confirmed four additional judges of the Peshawar High

Court as permanent judges: Justice Farah Jamshed, Justice Inaam Ullah Khan, Justice Sabit Ullah Khan, and Justice Aurangzeb.

The Judicial Commission of Pakistan evaluates nominees based on professional competence, integrity, antecedents, and overall suitability before making recommendations for appointments to the superior judiciary under the constitutional process.

KP Assembly approves law regulating Kalash marriages

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly has approved the Kalash Marriage Bill, 2026, providing a formal legal framework for the solemnisation and registration of marriages within the province’s Kalash community.

The legislation requires marriage to be based on the free and mutual consent of both parties.

Under the bill, both individuals must be mentally capable of consenting to marriage and at least 18 years old. Marriages involving relationships prohibited under the law will not be permitted.

The legislation also bars marriages between first cousins within the Kalash



community.

Registration of every Kalash marriage will be mandatory through a designated local registrar. The measure is intended

to give legal recognition to marriages conducted according to Kalash customs and address difficulties arising from the absence of formal documentation.

The law applies to members of the Kalash faith and establishes rules for the solemnisation and registration of their marriages while recognising relevant community traditions.

According to the bill, inheritance and property rights following the death of a husband will be determined in accordance with the traditional Kalash system, subject to the provisions of the law.

The legislation also provides penalties and fines for violations, supplying false information and failing to register a marriage.

The bill was originally introduced in the provincial assembly in April and referred to the relevant committee for detailed consideration and consultation before its final passage.

Pakistan, Canada vow to deepen cooperation in trade, investment



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar with visiting Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand at the Foreign Office in Islamabad. — Picture courtesy X

Pakistan and Canada on Monday agreed to deepen bilateral cooperation in trade, investment, agriculture and other key sectors as Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar held delegation-level talks with Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand during her visit to Islamabad.

Addressing a joint press conference after the meeting, Dar described Anand’s visit as a “significant milestone” in Pakistan-Canada

relations, saying it would provide fresh momentum to bilateral cooperation.

He said Pakistan believed in active diplomacy and noted that both countries possessed considerable potential to further strengthen their ties.

Dar said Pakistan and Canada shared historic relations, adding that the vibrant Pakistani diaspora in Canada remained a valuable asset and an important pillar of the bilateral relationship.

The two sides emphasised the need to build stronger partnerships in agriculture, agri-food, manufacturing and other sectors, saying there were broad opportunities to expand cooperation.

Pakistan, Iran discuss regional situation and ways to enhance bilateral cooperation



News Desk

TEHRAN: Pakistan’s Ambassador to Iran Imran Ahmed Siddiqui met Iranian Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araqchi at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran, where they discussed regional developments and bilateral relations between the two countries.

According to diplomatic sources, the meeting focused on the latest regional situation and matters of mutual interest. Both sides reviewed the current state of Pakistan-Iran

relations and exchanged views on further strengthening cooperation.

The ambassador and the Iranian foreign minister also discussed possibilities for expanding collaboration between the two countries in various fields.

The meeting comes as Pakistan and Iran continue efforts to enhance bilateral engagement through greater cooperation in trade, economy, security and regional affairs. Both countries have reiterated their commitment to maintaining close and constructive relations.

Senate Panel seeks FIA action over alleged irregularities in Employees’ Housing Society

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A Senate subcommittee on interior on Monday expressed dissatisfaction with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) over delays in its inquiry into alleged irregularities in the Senate Employees Cooperative Housing Society and directed the agency to submit a progress report at its next meeting.

Subcommittee convener Senator Saifullah Abro said the panel had ordered an inquiry three months ago, but no meaningful progress had been reported. He noted the society was created for Senate employees who deposited money for plots, yet many received no benefit even after about two decades.

“If someone has turned the society into a personal fiefdom, this cannot be allowed,” Abro said, stressing the need to protect employees’ interests.

The committee questioned FIA officials on action against Sher Ali, total land held by the society, and options for affected employees. Members also raised concerns that a private individual, not a Senate employee, was allegedly controlling the society.

FIA officials said audits had been conducted on court orders and a case was registered against the society’s management. They assured data would be provided.

Abro directed the FIA to take further action and submit a detailed report at the next meeting.