



Daily

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
نہی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا ہے کہ...



Xi congratulates Trump on America's 250th anniversary: spokesperson

On behalf of the Chinese government and the Chinese people, President Xi Jinping has congratulated U. S. President Donald Trump on the 250th anniversary of America's Declaration of Independence...



Lalak Jan's unparalleled courage, unwavering devotion remain a source of pride for nation: Ayaz

NA Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq paid rich tribute to Havaladar Lalak Jan Shaheed (Nishan-e-Haider) on the occasion of his 27th martyrdom anniversary...

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276th Corps Commanders' Conference

RAWALPINDI: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir presiding the 276th Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) at General Headquarters (GHQ) on Monday.



Photo: Online

Field Marshal Asim Munir warns Afghan Taliban Over Indian-Backed Terror Sanctuaries

Naveed Ahmad Khan

RAWALPINDI: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces, presided over the 276th Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) at General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi.

The Forum offered feteiha for the Shuhada of the Armed Forces, Law Enforcement Agencies, and innocent civilians, reaffirming that their sacrifices remain the foundation of Pakistan's security, unity and resilience.

The Forum expressed serious concerns over the continued use of territory under control of Afghan Taliban regime by Indian sponsored terrorist groups including Fitna al Khawarij (FAK) and Fitna al Hindustan (FAH) to orchestrate attacks inside Pakistan.

preventing use of Afghan Taliban controlled territory by Indian Taliban proxies for which Afghan Taliban regime is directly responsible. Pakistan has unequivocal right to defend its people from terrorism and the Armed Forces shall continue Intelligence Based Operations against terrorism emanating from Afghan Taliban controlled territory under the ambit of

Operation Ghazab-lil-Haq. In addition to the kinetic actions, Forum underscored immediate need for putting in place robust governance structures in restive areas which are directed towards public service and welfare as well as to break the nefarious terror-crime nexus thriving under vested political patronage.

Continued on Page 7

DPM/FM Dar reaffirms Pakistan's commitment to UN Charter, international law



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Monday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to continue working towards promoting the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, respect for international law and treaties, and active international cooperation for global peace and prosperity.

He was talking to Maria Fernanda Espinosa, former Foreign Minister of Ecuador and currently candidate for the position of United Nations Secretary-General who called on him here, according to a

press statement issued by the Foreign Office Spokesperson.

Welcoming Ms. Espinosa, DPM/FM expressed Pakistan's full support for strengthening multilateralism, and ensuring the central role of the United Nations in the global affairs.

He expressed the hope that the incoming Secretary General will carry out much needed reforms in the United Nations and will ensure the implementation of long-standing UNSC resolutions, especially for Palestine and Jammu and Kashmir, which remain crucial for lasting peace in the Middle East and South Asia.

PM Shehbaz Directs Embassies to Expand Overseas Job Opportunities for Pakistanis

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed Pakistani embassies abroad to intensify efforts to identify and secure employment opportunities for the country's workforce, reaffirming the government's commitment to expanding overseas jobs for skilled and qualified Pakistanis.

Chairing a review meeting on youth employment, the PM said Pakistan's workforce has immense potential and stressed strengthening inter-



national outreach to connect skilled workers with global labour markets. He instructed

embassies to actively collect and share information on available jobs and required qualifications

in host countries. The PM directed the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis, NAVTTC, and the Prime Minister's Youth Programme to provide vocational skills training, foreign language courses, and internationally recognized certifications to workers, especially youth.

He emphasized aligning Pakistani certifications with international standards and ensuring language training for countries with job opportunities. He also sought a report on NAVTTC institutes' performance and on estab-

lishing "Country of Destination Centers."

The meeting was briefed that over 800,000 youth have registered on the Digital Youth Hub. Opportunities abroad exist in construction, agriculture, tourism, healthcare, IT, engineering, nursing, pharmaceuticals, and other sectors, with training programs already underway.

Embassies will share overseas job information via the Digital Youth Hub portal.

The meeting was attended by Deputy PM Ishaq Dar, Federal Ministers, and senior officials.

Federal Minister Launches E-Appeal Management System for Federal Service Tribunal

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Monday launched the E-Appeal Management System (EAMS) Public Interface Dashboard and video-link facility for e-hearings in the Federal Service Tribunal (FST), calling it a key step in judicial reforms to improve access to justice and transparency.

Developed by the Ministry of Law and Justice's Development Wing under FST Chairman Justice (R) Rooh-ul-Amin Khan, the web-based EAMS has been deployed at all FST benches nationwide. The system provides end-to-end digital management of appeals, from registration to disposal, and gives litigants, lawyers, and officials faster access to case information via an online dashboard. It also introduces video-link facil-

ities connecting Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, and Karachi benches for virtual proceedings. Officials said this will reduce travel-related delays, improve court time utilization, and lower administrative costs.

Addressing the ceremony, Senator Tarar said the government is committed to modernizing the justice sector. He added the digital transformation will enhance service delivery and make the system more citizen-centric.

The event was attended by FST members, law officers, legal fraternity, and government officials. Camp offices joined via video link, with lawyers from Lahore, Karachi, and Peshawar participating remotely.

Director Planning and Development Muhammad Javed said EAMS reflects the tribunal's commitment to IT-driven judicial administration.

Pakistan Railways Posts First Profit in 78 Years with Rs115 Billion Earnings: Hanif Abbasi

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Railways Minister Muhammad Hanif Abbasi announced that Pakistan Railways has achieved a historic financial turnaround, earning Rs115 billion and posting its first profit in the institution's 78-year history due to better governance and reforms in freight and passenger operations.

Addressing a press conference, he said freight operations generated a record Rs41 billion, while outsourcing five passenger trains to the private sector brought Rs3 billion. Encouraged by the results, the government plans to privatize more train services.



Abbasi said seven railway power plants are being rehabilitated for operation by September 30, and 16 more will be procured. A total of 80 power plants will be inducted by March 23 next year. Three new rakes for Awam Express have arrived, and refurbishment of Karakoram and Millat Express will be completed by June 2027.

He highlighted ML-1, ML-2 and ML-3 up-gradation as essential. ML-1 talks with ADB are progressing and will cut Rohri-Karachi travel time by 5 hours. ML-2 will be via PPP, and 8 new branch lines will be built for rural connectivity.

The minister said GP Fund payments of Rs500 million were cleared, railway hospitals will be outsourced under PPP for 2.5 million employees, and digital transformation phase-2 will end by Dec 31.

Targets for next fiscal year: Rs65 billion freight and Rs60 billion passenger revenue. He denied favoritism in contracts and said land auction at Badami Bagh fetched Rs450 million.

Pakistan's rights under Indus Waters Treaty non-negotiable, says Tariq Fazal



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhary on Monday said Pakistan's rights under the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) are historic, legitimate, and non-negotiable.

In a post on his X account, he said, "Water is our lifeline, essential for our people, agriculture, and future generations. Any unilateral attempt to undermine

this internationally recognised agreement is neither as simple nor as acceptable as India may assume." He said international commitments could not be set aside through unilateral decisions or political ambitions.

"Pakistan stands firm and is fully capable of defending its rightful share of water while continuing to uphold the principles of justice, cooperation, and the global vision of 'One Water-One Vision'," he added.

Farooq Haider vows unbreakable Kashmir-Pakistan bond, dismisses rift-makers

Bureau Report

KOHALA/MUZAFFARABAD: Former Azad Kashmir PM and PML-N leader Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan has said that the greatest asset of Kashmiris is the love of the 24 crore people of Pakistan.

He was addressing a "Pakistan Zindabad" rally held by people of Murree at Kohala Bridge.

While assuring people Raja Farooq Haider said that, government and army of Pakistan that our hearts beat with you. He said that no rift could be created in the relationship between Kashmir and Pakistan due to a handful of people.

"I am saying that I am an agent of Pakistan, in Azad Kashmir," he said in a proud manner.

Raja Farooq Haider said that our relationship with Pakistan is one that no one can separate us to each other. He said that the people of Azad Kashmir are offering their lives to defend the country in the Pakistan Army.



He said that youth group belonging to four provinces of Pakistan will sacrifice for our protection. He made it clear that we did not

decide to go with Pakistan because of three rupees of electricity and 1,000 rupees of flour. "We made this decision with the Quaid-e-Azam."

A large number of people of Murree and citizens of Azad Kashmir participated in the rally and chanted slogans in favor of Pakistan and the army.

Azad Kashmir Information Minister Chaudhry Rafiq Nayar Resigns from Cabinet, Quits PPP

Abdul Amjeed Tahir

KOTLI: Azad Kashmir Government Information Minister Chaudhry Rafiq Nayar has resigned from the ministry and decided to leave the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

According to sources, the dispute arose after PPP initially issued the party ticket to Chaudhry Rafiq Nayar, but later withdrew it and awarded it to Waleed Inqlabi.

Following the development, Nayar and his colleagues unanimously supported his nomination, but the party's decision prompted his resignation.

Sources said Nayar retains significant influence, with support from 5 district councillors, 9 union council chairmen, 7 vice chairmen, and a large number of PPP workers in the area.



Hurriyat Conference Pays Tribute to Burhan Wani, Announces July 8 Event in Karachi

KARACHI: The All-Party Hurriyat Conference AJK and Pakistan held a press conference at Karachi Press Club to mark the sacrifice of Shaheed Burhan Muzaffar Wani, calling it a "bright chapter" of the Kashmir freedom movement.

Convenor Ghulam Muhammad Safi said Wani's martyrdom on July 8 created a new spirit of freedom and initiative among Kashmiri youth that "could never be suppressed." Leaders including Ishaq Naib of Karachi Central Muslim League, Dr. Fauzia Hameed MPA Sindh MQM, PPP Sindh GS Rauf Nagori, and Rana Aziz of Muslim Conference attended.

The Hurriyat leadership condemned Indian measures in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, citing military sieges, extrajudicial killings, arrests, and post-August 5, 2019 actions. They urged the UN, OIC and international human rights bodies to take notice and ensure Kashmiris' right to self-determination as per UN resolutions.

They welcomed recognition of Pakistan as a peaceful country during recent US-Iran tensions and expressed hope for progress on Kashmir.

It was announced that on "July 8, 2026 at 5:00 pm" at Karachi Press Club, the 10th martyrdom day of Shaheed Burhan Wani will be observed. All political, religious parties, students, traders, and civil society were urged to join and express solidarity.

Speakers reaffirmed continued political, diplomatic and moral support for Kashmiris.

Takht Bhai Businessman Alleges Death Threats Over 13-Year-Old Property Dispute in Mardan



Correspondent

TAKHT BHAI: Prominent businessman Malik Ahad Khan Hoti has alleged he and his family are receiving death threats in connection with a property dispute.

Addressing a press conference at Takht Bhai Press Club, he said he legally purchased agricultural land, a house, and commercial markets in Khwaja Ganj Bazaar, Mardan from Nawabzada Taimur Khan in 2012 and 2014 with full payment.

He claimed that on July 4, 2026, an FIR was lodged against him at Chora Police Station alleging illegal occupation. Hoti further alleged Taimur Khan and his son Sikandar Khan are pressuring him to surrender the markets and have threatened to kill him and his sons.

He appealed to the PM, COAS Gen. Syed Asim Munir, CJP, KP CM, IG Police, and DPO Mardan for immediate FIR registration, transparent probe, and security. He said Taimur and Sikandar should be held responsible if any harm occurs. _Claims not independently verified.

Amir Dogar Slams Govt Over Rs1 Petrol Cut, Demands Rs100 Reduction

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: MNA and Chief Whip of the Opposition in National Assembly, former Minister of State Malik Muhammad Amir Dogar, condemned the government for failing to provide relief in petroleum prices, calling a Rs1 cut in petrol price "a mockery and contempt for the people."

Speaking to media, he said inflation has "broken the back of the people," with transport fares and daily expenses soaring.

A one-rupee reduction, he added, will have no positive impact on common citizens or on transport, agriculture and industrial sectors. "This level of anti-nationalism of the government is condemnable. The rulers of Form 47 do not care about the people because they have come by robbing votes," Dogar said.

He demanded an immediate reduction of at least Rs100 per liter in petrol and diesel prices. Citing stability in global oil prices and local refinery margins, he said the government should have given significant relief.

A reduction of one rupee is just like throwing dust in the eyes. The people cannot be satisfied with such superficial measures," he stated, warning that continued indifference will further inflame public anger. He called the current cut "a great injustice and joke" by a "fake and puppet" government, while the world is providing relief.



Polio vaccination

KARACHI: A health worker administers polio vaccine to a child at a neighborhood in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

JKDFP Welcomes India-Pakistan Track-II Talks, Calls Kashmir Inclusion Essential

Abdul Majeed Tahi

SRINAGAR: The Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (JKDFP) has welcomed ongoing Track-II diplomatic engagement between India and Pakistan, calling all sincere efforts to reduce tensions and promote dialogue positive for regional peace and stability.

JKDFP General Secretary Dr. Ghulam Rasool said people of Jammu and Kashmir have consistently advocated dialogue as the only credible means of resolving conflicts. However, he stressed that any process failing to address the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in a serious, meaningful and result-oriented manner cannot deliver sustainable peace in South Asia.

"The Jammu and Kashmir dispute remains the core issue between India



and Pakistan. A durable peace will remain elusive unless this internationally recognized dispute is resolved through peaceful negotiations," he said.

Dr. Rasool reaffirmed JKDFP's support for every genuine peace initiative seeking a just and lasting

resolution. He emphasized that any meaningful process must include the genuine pro-freedom leadership and authentic representatives of Jammu and Kashmir, the principal party to the dispute.

He noted that excluding Kashmiris

would undermine any initiative, and that an inclusive dialogue involving all stakeholders is indispensable. He concluded that a resolution consistent with UN Security Council resolutions and the right to self-determination is essential for lasting peace and stability.

Azad Kashmir Govt Accuses AAC of Violence, Says Rs 15 Billion Loss in a Month

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Kashmir Information Secretary Muhammad Rashid Hanif accused the Awami Action Committee (AAC) of trying to destroy peace through violent actions, saying the state suffered a cumulative loss of Rs 15 billion in the last month.

Addressing a press conference, he said the civil rights movement had been "hijacked by sub-nationalist elements." He alleged AAC is attempting to disrupt elections, deceiving people in speeches and talking about inciting youth against the Pakistan Army. He claimed 79 FIRs are registered against AAC



leaders and members, and that Indian funding is being used against Paki-

stanis in Europe. Hanif cited incidents including

the killing of Sub-Inspector Adnan Qureshi in Islamgarh, an AC vehicle set ablaze in Khoi Ratta, the stabbing of AC Dhirkot Anjad Qadir, hostage-taking of officials including SP Bagh Riaz Mughal, and deaths of 3 policemen and 2 civilians in Dhirkot. He said roads were blocked with cut trees and vendors threatened.

AJK Police Spokesperson DIG Irfan Masood Kashfi added that PAC members stopped ration trucks, harassed citizens, checked IDs, and attacked police personnel. He said 3 youths were martyred in Rawalakot firing and a deadly weapon was recovered. He urged the public to verify news and reject propaganda.



Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings
Fajr 3:21 am
Zohr 12:13 pm
Asr 5:12 pm
Maghrib 7:22 pm
Isha 9:04 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

Provocation concerning Indus River will not be tolerated: Minister Azma

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Information Azma Bukhari said on Monday that India's BJP government had adopted a fascist approach.

According to a press release issued here, she said that India believed that it could openly violate the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and international laws governing water sharing without facing any accountability.

She said, "The Indian government's belief that no one can hold it accountable is a serious misconception." Narendra Modi and his supporters should remember that Pakistan has, in the past, dispelled many of India's misconceptions and possessed the full capability to take every necessary step to safeguard its national interests.

Azma Bukhari stated that the Indus River was the foundation of Pakistan's agriculture, economy and national survival. She said, "Any aggression against Pakistan's water resources or any violation of the Indus Waters Treaty is not only a breach of international law but is also tantamount to challenging Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity." She emphasized that Pakistan would not compromise in any way on its national security, water rights, or the interests of its people.

Any illegal action or provocation concerning the Indus River would not be tolerated, she said and added that Pakistan would continue to raise its voice forcefully at every appropriate international forum to protect its legitimate rights.

CM Maryam Nawaz reaffirms commitment to empowering rural Punjab through education, health and livelihoods

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has reaffirmed her commitment to ensuring the provision of education, healthcare, clean drinking water, modern agriculture and basic infrastructure across rural Punjab.

In her message on the World Rural Development Day, the chief minister paid tribute to the people of rural areas for their vital contribution to national development and agriculture, and pledged to empower villages through education, skills development, health-care and sustainable employment.

She said rural communities

possessed immense potential to strengthen food security, create economic opportunities and support long-term stability, adding that a strong rural economy was indispensable for building a developed Pakistan.

"Investing in rural people means investing in the foundations of more



resilient societies. Villages play a pivotal role in the progress and prosperity of any country," she said.

CM Punjab said villages were the soul of society, whether through agriculture's key contribution to national production or the preservation of centuries-old traditions.

She said the Suthra Punjab Programme was fully operational in rural areas for the first time, similar to urban centres, while electric bus

services were, for the first time in history, reaching the village level.

The chief minister said the Apna Khet, Apna Rozgar Scheme had been launched exclusively for unemployed people living in rural areas.

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz added that under the Sohna Pind Punjab Programme, paved streets were being constructed in villages alongside road rehabilitation, the establishment of children's parks and plantation drives.

Call on

ISLAMABAD: Candidate for the position of United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa, calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Monday.



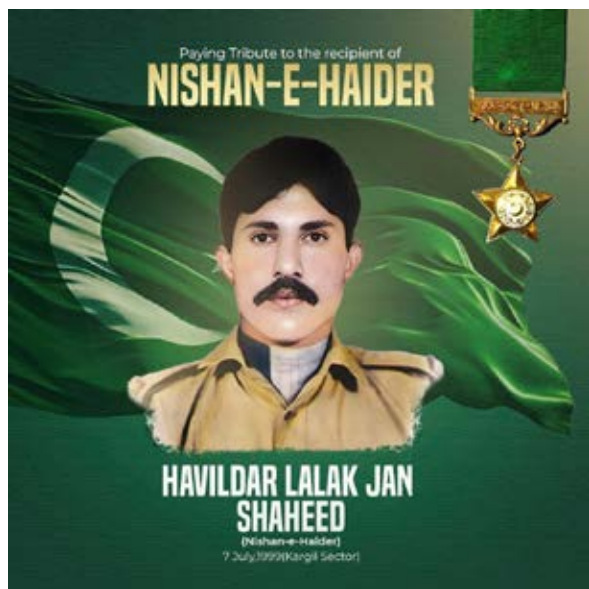
Photo: PID

Honoring a National Hero: Army Chief Leads Tributes to Havildar Lalak Jan Shaheed on Kargil Anniversary

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces; Admiral Naveed Ashraf, NI, NI (M), T Bt, Chief of the Naval Staff; Air Chief Marshal Zabeer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, NI (M), HJ, Chief of the Air Staff; and the Armed Forces of Pakistan solemnly commemorate the martyrdom anniversary of Havildar Lalak Jan Shaheed, Nishan-e-Haider, paying profound tribute to his extraordinary courage, unwavering devotion and supreme sacrifice in the defence of the motherland during the Kargil conflict.

On this day in 1999, Havildar Lalak Jan Shaheed displayed exceptional gallantry and steadfast resolve while defending his



post against relentless enemy attacks. Despite sustaining critical injuries, he refused evacuation and continued to lead by

example, fighting with indomitable determination until he embraced martyrdom in the line of duty.

His immortal sacrifice remains a shining symbol of courage, resilience and selfless service.

The Armed Forces of Pakistan and the nation honour his enduring legacy with profound respect and gratitude. His life and sacrifice continue to inspire present and future generations to uphold the highest ideals of duty, honour and patriotism. The people and Armed Forces reaffirm their unwavering commitment to preserving the sacred trust of the Shuhada-e-Pakistan and defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation with the same spirit of courage, dedication and honour.

Thai-Pak Business Forum Hosts Farewell Reception for Pakistan's Ambassador to Thailand

News Desk

BANGKOK: The Thai-Pak Business Forum (TPBF) hosted a farewell reception in honor of Her Excellency Ms. Rukhsana Afzaal, Ambassador of Pakistan to the Kingdom of Thailand, at the Amari Bangkok Watergate Hotel.

The event was hosted by TPBF Chairman Mr. Ifikhar Ali, President Mr. Malik Shaheen Yousaf Awan, Senior Vice President Mr. Malik Arshad Hayat, General Secretary Mr. Suhail Kausar, and Executive Committee members.

Attendees included H. E. Ms. Lucy Njeri Keruthu, Ambassador of Kenya to Thailand; Mr. Ekarat Mokim, CEO of My Trip Bangkok; former Thai Senator Mr. Siriwat; Mr. Somkit Lala, President of the Thai-Pakistan Friendship Association; business organization presidents; and members of the Pakistani business community. Presidents of TPBF's Pattaya and Phuket chapters, Mr. Nofal Fawad and Mr. Ch. Sarfaraz Ahmed, also attended with their teams.

In her address, Ambassador Afzaal thanked TPBF for the reception and commended its leadership for promoting Pakistan-Thailand bilateral relations, trade, investment, and community welfare. She expressed confidence that TPBF will continue to strengthen friendship and economic cooperation between the two nations.

Guests were served traditional Pakistani cuisine. The Ambassador also spoke to the media on bilateral ties and the Pakistani community's contributions in Thailand.

The evening concluded with tributes to her distinguished diplomatic service.

Dr. Mudassar Ahmed Shah Assumes Charge as Deputy Commissioner Attock

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Newly appointed Deputy Commissioner Attock, Dr. Mudassar Ahmed Shah, has formally assumed charge and commenced his official responsibilities.

Senior government officials and representatives from social, political, business, and public circles of the district welcomed his appointment and extended best wishes for his tenure.

Dr. Shah belongs to the 42nd Common Training Program of the Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS). He is an experienced civil servant who previously served as Additional Secretary (Administration) in the Services & General Administration Department (S&GAD), Government of Punjab.

After assuming charge, he held an introductory meeting with district administration officers and received briefings on department performance, ongoing development projects, public service delivery, law and order, revenue, health, education, sanitation, environment, and other administrative matters.

Reaffirming his commitment, Dr. Shah said he will implement the policies of the Government of Punjab and the vision of the Chief Minister by ensuring quality public services, transparent governance, merit, rule of law, timely completion of development projects, and prompt resolution of public grievances.

He stated that the district administration will prioritize public service with close coordination among all departments to deliver better and more efficient services to the people.

Community members expressed confidence that his leadership will accelerate Attock's development and make governance more people-centric.

NAB Karachi hands over confiscated properties worth Rs348 million to federal govt

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Karachi has handed over four confiscated immovable properties worth Rs348 million to the Directorate General of Estate, Ministry of Housing and Works, following the completion of legal proceedings against former Member of the National Assembly Abdul Aziz Memon and his wife, Farida Aziz Memon, in a corruption case.

According to NAB, the properties were confiscated after the couple was convicted by Accountability Court No. IV, Karachi, for accumulating assets beyond their known sources of income. The court sentenced both convicts to seven years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs1 million each, besides ordering the confiscation of four properties in favour of the Government of Pakistan.

The convicts challenged the verdict before the Sindh High Court and later the Supreme Court of Pakistan, but both appeals were dismissed, making the conviction final.

Following the court's orders, NAB Karachi took possession of the confiscated properties, including a residential house in DHA Karachi and three plots located in KDA Scheme-1A Extension and Hawksbay Scheme-42.

The properties were formally handed over by Director General NAB Karachi Shakeel Ahmed Durrani to Director General Estate Ubaid u Din during a ceremony held at NAB Karachi Headquarters.

DC Chairs Public Prosecution Performance Review Committee Meeting in Toba Tek Singh

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: In light of the directives issued by the Punjab Public Prosecution Department, Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh, Umar Abbas Mela chaired an important meeting of the Public Prosecution Performance Review Committee to review the progress of pending court cases, evaluate the performance of the prosecution department and discuss measures for the effective conduct of prosecutions.



DC Umar Abbas Mela also stressed the need to further strengthen the prosecution system by improving

administrative procedures, ensuring continuous monitoring of cases and addressing bottlenecks without delay so that judicial proceedings continue smoothly and without interruption. The meeting was informed that the Public Prosecution Performance Review Committee will exclusively oversee administrative and procedural matters. Its primary objective is to remove obstacles in the justice system, promote inter-departmental coordination and further enhance the overall performance of the prosecution department.

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Morocco and Egypt Make Us Proud—Pakistan Must Rise

It is the story of Muslim football at the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The first 48-team World Cup has provided an unprecedented platform for nations from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and the strong presence of Muslim-majority countries has become one of the tournament's most heartening features. Their participation demonstrates how dramatically the football map has changed within only a few decades.

Fourteen Muslim-majority nations entered the tournament, representing diverse football traditions and levels of development. Morocco, Egypt, Algeria, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Tunisia came from Africa; Iran, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq, Jordan and Uzbekistan represented Asia and the Middle East; while Türkiye and Bosnia and Herzegovina carried the hopes of their supporters from the European football landscape.

Six Muslim-majority nations went further and reached the Round of 32: Morocco, Egypt, Algeria, Senegal, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Côte d'Ivoire. Some were eliminated after courageous battles, but their collective presence in the knockout phase reflected the steady rise of football across societies that, only a few decades ago, enjoyed limited representation at the highest level.

After a tense 1-1 battle with Australia, the Egyptians held their nerve in the decisive penalty shootout and won 4-2. Their reward is a formidable Round-of-16 confrontation with Argentina. Whatever

the eventual result, Egypt has already demonstrated the psychological strength, organisation and competitive character required to survive knockout football.

Then came Morocco. On July 4, the Atlas Lions defeated co-host Canada 3-0 and marched into the quarterfinals. Four years after becoming the first African and Arab nation to reach a World Cup semi-final, Morocco has again placed itself among football's elite. Its repeated success can no longer be dismissed as a fortunate tournament run or a momentary sporting miracle.

Morocco's rise is the product of planning, investment, scouting, academies, coaching and intelligent integration of players developed in highly competitive football environments. Great teams are not assembled a few months before qualifying matches. They are constructed patiently through systems that discover talent early, monitor its progress and protect its development until gifted children mature into international professionals.

This is perhaps the most important lesson for Pakistan. Talent without a system is frequently wasted, and Pakistan is one of the most painful examples of this reality. A country of more than 240 million people, blessed with enormous youth energy and a powerful overseas community, remains far removed

from the greatest football competition on earth.

The contradiction is particularly striking because footballs manufactured in Sialkot have repeatedly been associated with the world's biggest football tournaments. Pakistani hands can manufacture a ball worthy of the World Cup stage, yet Pakistan has failed to develop a national team capable of consistently approaching that stage. This contradiction should not merely disappoint us; it should embarrass us into action.

Football is played with passion in Lyari, Karachi, Quetta, Chaman, Gilgit-Baltistan, Punjab and countless streets and school grounds across Pakistan. Pakistani children growing up in Europe, North America and the Middle East are also exposed to sophisticated football cultures. The human material exists, but there is no uninterrupted production line capable of discovering, adopting, training and projecting it towards elite competition.

Here lies the uncomfortable truth. Asking Pakistan to establish another national mechanism, create another committee, launch another academy programme and invite coaches from successful football countries may sound impressive, but it is unlikely to produce the required revolution. Pakistan's

sporting history is already littered with institutions, federations, plans, committees and announcements that began with ambition and disappeared into administrative lethargy.

The problem is deeper than coaching. A system vulnerable to political interference, nepotism, personal recommendations, institutional rivalries and painfully slow decision-making cannot be repaired merely by importing a Moroccan or Egyptian coach. Even the finest international expert will eventually become trapped inside a structure that does not identify children transparently, protect merit or maintain a development programme for 15 consecutive years. Pakistan therefore does not need another football institution operating exclusively within Pakistan.

It needs access to a larger, independent and professionally governed international football development mechanism. The 2026 World Cup should inspire the creation of a Muslim Football Development Alliance representing participating Muslim-majority countries and operating beyond the weaknesses of individual national sporting bureaucracies.

The Muslim world has already understood the importance of collective mechanisms in security, finance, trade and diplomacy. Pakistan's strategic importance in security cooperation is often linked to its military capability and nuclear status. Football obviously belongs to an entirely different

Continued on Page 7



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

1,000 Days of War in Gaza: Humanitarian Crisis Deepens Amid Widespread Destruction

The article reflects on the devastating impact of the war in Gaza, marking 1,000 days since Israel's military campaign intensified on October 7, 2023. According to the author, the conflict has caused unprecedented destruction, humanitarian suffering, and widespread displacement, while raising serious concerns about international law and global accountability.

The article states that the scale of destruction across Gaza is immense, with an estimated 61 million tonnes of rubble left behind. Citing United Nations assessments, it notes that by October 2025, around 81 percent of buildings had been destroyed or damaged. Homes, hospitals, schools, universities, mosques, churches, and much of the road network have reportedly been devastated, leaving millions without adequate shelter or basic services.

Discussing the humanitarian impact, the author cites official figures estimating 73,000 deaths, while arguing that the actual number may be significantly higher because many victims remain trapped beneath the rubble. The article also references research published in The Lancet, which estimated that millions of potential life-years had been lost due to the conflict. It further highlights the severe impact on children, including displacement, injuries, interrupted education, and damage to healthcare facilities providing maternity and neonatal services.

The article emphasizes that approximately 1.8 million of Gaza's 2.1 million residents have been displaced, with many living in temporary tents under extremely difficult conditions. It also discusses food shortages and humanitarian restrictions, referring to reports that famine conditions were declared in 2025 after prolonged limitations on humanitarian aid and essential supplies entering the territory.

Beyond the physical destruction, the author argues that the conflict has inflicted deep psychological trauma on Gaza's population. Repeated cycles of violence, loss of family members, destruction of homes, and prolonged uncertainty have left lasting emotional scars on both children and adults.

The article is also critical of the international response, arguing that global institutions and major powers have failed to prevent further suffering or ensure accountability. It expresses concern over continued military operations, expanding Israeli control in parts of Gaza, and proposals by some Israeli officials regarding future settlements in the territory.

In conclusion, the author warns that, despite periodic cease-fire efforts, the humanitarian crisis remains unresolved. The article argues that without meaningful international action, the conflict is likely to continue, with devastating consequences for civilians. It calls for greater global attention to protecting civilian lives, upholding international humanitarian law, and pursuing a lasting political solution to end the violence and address the underlying causes of the conflict.



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

Balochistan: Pakistan's Geoeconomic Frontier in the Global Critical Minerals Race

Abdul Rauf

For decades, Balochistan has occupied a paradoxical place in Pakistan's national narrative. Despite constituting nearly 44 percent of the country's landmass, it has largely been viewed through the lens of security challenges, political instability, and socio-economic deprivation. Yet beneath its rugged mountains and vast deserts lies one of the world's most promising repositories of strategic minerals. As the global economy shifts towards renewable energy, artificial intelligence (AI), electric mobility, and advanced defence technologies, critical minerals have emerged as the "new oil" of the twenty-first century. In this evolving international political economy, Balochistan is no longer merely Pakistan's largest province by area; it is rapidly becoming its most valuable geoeconomic asset.

The contemporary international system is witnessing a transition from traditional geopolitics to geoeconomics, where states increasingly pursue strategic objectives through trade, technology, investment, infrastructure, and control over critical resources. Economic statecraft has become as consequential as military power. The strategic competition between the United States and China illustrates this transformation, with both powers seeking dominance over semiconductor production, resilient supply chains, and access to the critical minerals that underpin electric vehicles, renewable energy systems, and advanced military technologies. As Susan Strange argued, structural economic power increasingly shapes international influence;

today, that insight is more relevant than ever. Against this backdrop, Pakistan, and particularly Balochistan, occupies a uniquely advantageous position. The province hosts vast reserves of copper, gold, chromite, iron ore, lithium prospects, and rare earth elements, much of which lies within the Tethyan Metallogenic Belt, one of the world's richest mineral formations stretching from Eastern Europe through Türkiye and Iran into Pakistan. What was once regarded simply as geological wealth is now increasingly recognised as geoeconomic capital capable of reshaping Pakistan's position in global value chains.

The clearest manifestation of this potential is the Reko Diq copper-gold project in Chaghi District. Recognised as one of the world's largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits, it contains an estimated 13.1 million tonnes of copper and 17.9 million ounces of gold, with an operational life exceeding three decades. The project is expected to generate billions of dollars in export earnings while creating thousands of direct and indirect employment opportunities. More significantly, Reko Diq has evolved from a mining venture into a strategic geoeconomic project attracting international investment and financial support from institutions such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and export credit agencies from the United States, Canada, and Japan. This broad international engagement reflects the growing strategic importance of critical minerals within emerging global supply chains.

The international political economy increasingly revolves around securing reliable access to such resources. The European Union's Crit-

ical Raw Materials Act, the U. S.-led Minerals Security Partnership, and other critical mineral agreements demonstrate that access to strategic minerals has become central to economic security and diplomatic engagement. According to the International Energy Agency, global demand for critical minerals is expected to rise sharply as countries accelerate the transition to low-carbon technologies. Consequently, resource-rich regions such as Balochistan are assuming unprecedented strategic significance.

However, natural resource abundance alone does not guarantee prosperity. The experience of Nigeria's oil sector and the Democratic Republic of Congo's cobalt industry illustrates the dangers of the "resource curse," where immense mineral wealth coexists with weak institutions, corruption, and underdevelopment. Pakistan must therefore avoid reducing its mineral wealth to a source of raw commodity exports. Instead, it should pursue a long-term strategy centred on domestic value addition through refining facilities, mineral processing industries, metallurgy research, engineering education, and downstream manufacturing. Such an approach would create skilled employment, strengthen technological capabilities, diversify exports, and maximise the economic benefits of resource extraction.

International experience offers valuable lessons. Chile transformed copper into the backbone of its economy through institutional stability and technological investment. Australia became a trusted supplier of lithium and rare earth elements by combining private investment with transparent regulation, while Indonesia successfully promoted

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The silent victim of regional conflict: Pakistan tourism sector

Shahbaz Hussain

On February 28, the escalation of tensions and conflict between the United States, Israel, and Iran marked another significant challenge for the world, especially for developing countries, including Pakistan. Pakistan has a heavily import-dependent economy, particularly in its energy sector. Almost 85% to 90% of its energy requirements are met through imports, mainly from the Gulf region. Any disruption in regional supply chains creates immense challenges for Pakistan's energy sector and puts additional pressure on its already fragile economy.

From the textile industry to the energy sector, and from energy production to infrastructure development, every area of the economy is heavily affected. However, it is worth mentioning that scholars and policymakers are not giving enough attention to another important sector: tourism. Tourism is one of the key sectors supporting Pakistan's fragile economy and improving the country's soft image internationally.

Despite the northern regions, including Skardu, Gilgit, and Hunza, being listed among CNN's 25 most beautiful places to visit in the world, escalating regional tensions have reduced the sector's growth potential. These areas are already facing severe impacts of climate change, including floods, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), and landslides. Such challenges have prevented the tourism industry from reaching its full potential compared to many other countries. The current geopolitical tensions further

intensify these vulnerabilities.

The tourism sector makes a significant contribution to Pakistan's economy. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), tourism contributed 5.9% to Pakistan's GDP in 2022 and supported approximately 4.2 million jobs, while visitor spending reached nearly \$16 billion. Furthermore, recent reports suggest that Pakistan's travel and tourism industry generated more than \$4 billion in revenue in 2025. The industry is projected to grow at an annual rate of 6.75% from 2025 to 2029 and may reach a market volume of approximately \$5.53 billion by 2029.

Pakistan's northern areas provide immense opportunities due to their breathtaking landscapes and adventure tourism potential. Tourism in Pakistan consists of both domestic and international visitors, with more than 7 million tourists travelling across the country last year. In Gilgit-Baltistan alone, approximately 1.5 to 2 million domestic tourists visit annually, along with around 20,000 foreign travelers last year.

However, the escalation of conflict and disruptions in regional supply chains create serious challenges for both domestic and international tourism. Rising fuel prices discourage thousands of domestic tourists from travelling to Gilgit-Baltistan. Similarly, food and other essential commodities are already more expensive in the northern regions because of their remote geographical location. The inflationary pressures caused by regional instability further increase the prices of food, transportation, and accommodation. As a result, many local tourists are forced to think twice before planning a visit to these areas.

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PAEC Chairman Inaugurates 51st International Nathiagali Summer College

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), Dr. Raja Ali Raza Anwar, on Monday inaugurated the 51st International Nathiagali Summer College (INSC) on Physics and Contemporary Needs, reaffirming PAEC's commitment to scientific excellence, innovation and international collaboration.

Organized by PAEC from July 6 to 18, the prestigious Summer College continues a tradition established in 1976, inspired by Nobel Laureate Professor Abdus Salam's vision of bringing together scientists from developed and developing countries for meaningful exchange of knowledge and ideas. Over the past five decades, INSC has evolved into a globally respected platform for advanced education, knowledge exchange and capacity building.

Addressing the inaugural session, Chairman PAEC said the International Nathiagali Summer College remains one of PAEC's flagship initiatives, reflecting the Commission's continued focus on research, institution-building and international scientific partnerships.

The College has hosted hundreds of world-renowned scientists, including nine Nobel

Laureates, and has trained thousands of young researchers from Pakistan and more than 75 countries. It has made significant contributions to Pakistan's research ecosystem, particularly in high-energy physics, CERN collaborations, nuclear and accelerator sciences, laser technology, plasma physics and advanced materials research.

The Chairman said the College has continuously evolved with global scientific advancements by embracing emerging disciplines such as artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, advanced manufacturing and data-driven science. He added that its carefully designed programme bridges fundamental science with emerging technologies and applied research, enabling participants to explore practical solutions in energy, healthcare, agriculture and sustainable development.

The 51st INSC focuses on five multidisciplinary themes covering some of the world's fastest-growing technological frontiers: Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning; Advanced Manufacturing Techniques; Nuclear Techniques in Agriculture and Biotechnology; Nuclear Techniques in Health and Environment; and Advances in Plasma Science and



Fusion Technology.

Highlighting PAEC's broader contribution to Pakistan's socio-economic development, the Chairman said the Commission has consistently harnessed the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology to improve the quality of life of the people.

PAEC's six nuclear power plants generate more than 3,500 megawatts of clean, reliable and affordable electricity, strengthening Pakistan's energy security while contributing to environmental sustainability. The Commission's network of 21 Atomic Energy Cancer Hospitals and diagnostic centres provides comprehensive cancer care to nearly 80 per cent of the country's cancer patients, while PAEC's agriculture centres continue to develop improved crop varieties, strengthen pest management and promote climate-re-

silient farming to enhance national food security.

Concluding his address, Dr. Raja Ali Raza Anwar reaffirmed PAEC's commitment to scientific excellence, international collaboration and the continued success of the International Nathiagali Summer College. He encouraged young scientists to embrace innovation, think beyond conventional boundaries and contribute meaningfully to humanity through science and technology.

Earlier, Scientific Secretary INSC Dr. Rahat Ullah welcomed the participants and briefed the audience about INSC 2026. He said this year's edition has brought together 45 distinguished scientists from 20 countries across Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Oceania and the Middle East, along with leading Pakistani researchers, industry experts and young scientists.

At the end of the inaugural ceremony, Chairman PAEC Dr. Raja Ali Raza Anwar presented commemorative shields to the foreign faculty members and participants of the 51st International Nathiagali Summer College, while Member (Science), Dr. Shakeel Abbas Rofi, presented a commemorative shield to the Chairman PAEC.



D-8 Secretary-General Pays Tribute to Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in Tehran

Spokesman Report

TEHRAN: The Secretary-General of the Developing-8 (D-8) Organization visited Tehran to attend the official Farewell and Tribute Ceremony organized for foreign dignitaries in honor of the late Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Eminence Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

During the solemn ceremony, the D-8 Secretary-General paid his final respects and conveyed heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family of the late

Supreme Leader, as well as to the leadership, Government, and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In his message, the Secretary-General expressed sympathy with the Iranian nation during this period of mourning and acknowledged the significance of the occasion. He prayed for the eternal peace of Ayatollah Khamenei's soul and wished the people of Iran strength, patience, and comfort in the face of their loss.

The D-8 Secretary-General also expressed hope that Iran would continue to enjoy lasting peace, stability, and prosper-

ity. He concluded his message with a prayer for unity and resilience for the Iranian people, saying, "May His Eminence's noble soul rest in eternal peace, and may the people of Iran find abiding solace, strength, and enduring peace. Ameen."

The ceremony brought together senior officials and foreign dignitaries from several countries to pay tribute to the late Iranian leader and express solidarity with the Government and people of Iran during their time of national mourning.

FMR Art Space Opens in Islamabad with "The First Layer" Showcasing Emerging Pakistani Artists

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: FMR Art Space proudly announces the opening of its inaugural exhibition, "The First Layer: The Beginning of Becoming," curated by acclaimed miniature artist and curator Farrah Mehmood Rana (Pride of Performance). Marking the launch of this new creative space, the exhibition brings together the work of emerging, young, and mid-career artists — graduates of the National College of Arts (NCA), Beaconhouse National University (BNU), and COMSATS University Islamabad — in a landmark celebration of Pakistan's evolving contemporary art landscape.

Featuring twenty artists including, Anna Hashmi, Areej Zubair, Dagmer Rauwald, Farida Fatima, Hafsa Iram, Khan Labeeb, Muhammad Junaid, Samreen Asghar, Samreen Rehman, Sidra Ashraf, Shameen Amjad, Dr. Tabassum Shaheen, Ufaq Tabassum,



Widyan Tarar, Zarin Gul, Zainab Mudassar, and up to fifty artworks across a diverse range of mediums and practices, the exhibition offers a rare, panoramic view into the creative trajec-



tories of a new generation of Pakistani artists alongside more established voices. Among the participating artists are a striking cohort of freshly graduated COMSATS talents, whose inclu-

sion reflects Farrah Mehmood Rana's commitment to nurturing and providing a platform for emerging practices. Farrah Mehmood Rana has a strong academic career as well as a commitment for promoting art and culture which lead her to establishing FMR studio space and gallery for holding and promoting art and culture related activities.

The opening reception will be graced by distinguished chief guests Jan Gerald Krausser, Head of Communications, Culture Affairs and Protocol at the German Embassy, and Mrs. Mher Princess — both noted collectors of art in their own right. Their presence underscores the growing international interest in Pakistani contemporary art practice, and signals the promise of deeper cultural exchange between German and Pakistani art communities. FMR Art Space views this as the beginning of exciting collaborative opportunities, paving the way for Pakistani and German artists to engage in a dialogue, exchange, and joint creative ventures in the years ahead.

With its debut exhibition, FMR Art Space positions itself as a vital new addition to Islamabad's cultural landscape — a dedicated home for artistic dialogue, experimentation, and a continuous flourishing of contemporary art in Pakistan.

Photos by Sultan Bashir

Funeral Procession of the Great late Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei

The final journey of Iran's leader spans across Tehran, Najaf, Karbala and Mashhad. In the wake of these tragic events, a nation mourns the loss of its leader with profound dignity.

Accompanied by the healing solace of Islamic verses, this final passage to his resting place near Imam Reza serves as a journey of spiritual healing for both his family and the country. The holy month of Muharram holds a deep, sacred significance in Islam, recalling the most tragic oppression in human history. Laying the leader to rest during this month sends a powerful message to the world, though mortals pass away, the righteous virtues and

attributes of a true leader endure forever. The immense love of his people was mirrored in the massive crowds that gathered a testament to his profound impact on the nation. His final words will remain forever engraved in history and his burial stands as a momentous tribute to his sacrifices for human dignity and freedom.

May this serve as a reminder that honesty and piety outlive the passage of time, as the world-witnesses truth prevailing. In these solemn circumstances, the true meaning of global unity, peace and humanity has been redefined, leaving oppressors with a permanent seal of dishonor. We hold onto the hope of unity, peace and humanity for all.



Syeda Fizza Shah

OIC-COMSTECH programmes reach 54 countries, train 5,000 scientists in a year

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Over the past year, the OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) has significantly expanded its global outreach, delivering scientific and educational programs to 54 countries. The organization trained 5,000 scientists and researchers, awarded 759 scholarships and fellowships, and undertook 174 projects and initiatives. Key achievements include 52 research grants, 68 training programs, and a network expanded to over 80 universities and research institutions. Beneficiaries hailed from diverse nations including Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Iran, Morocco, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Palestine, Yemen,



and several African states. The scholarships supported higher education and specialized training, while training programs focused on advanced scientific equipment, biotechnology, health sciences, vaccine technology, IT, and

member states. Coordinator General Prof Dr M. Iqbal Choudhary emphasized priorities in strengthening scientific capacity, creating opportunities for youth, and fostering cross-border academic connections.

emerging fields. Research grants specifically targeted young and women scientists, and researchers in developing countries with limited funding access. COMSATS activities spanned 17 initiatives in health and biological sciences, 15 in education, 13 in research, 11 in environment, climate change, and water, nine in IT, and nine in development. Other areas included agriculture, food security, biotechnology, engineering, energy, and science diplomacy. The expanded university network facilitates joint research, training, and academic linkages across OIC

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
187,454.69	185,372.20
Day's High	Day's Low
187,546.36	185,910.38
Index Value	Change
38,144,132,851	+2082.49
Percentage	Time
+1.12%	6 Jul, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,651.77	-27.26
Percentage	Time
-0.26%	6 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
52,909.67	+9.60
Percentage	Time
+0.018%	6 Jul, 1:34 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
69,737.69	-6.38
Percentage	Time
-0.0092%	6 Jul, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	193.42	196.80
Bahrain Dinar	738.65	748.75
Canadian Dollar	196.64	200.20
China Yuan	38.10	38.85
Danish Krone	42.56	43.25
Euro	318.63	322.02
Hong Kong Dollar	35.07	36.06
Indian Rupee	2.78	3.05
Japanese Yen	1.7072	1.8054
Kuwaiti Dinar	887.15	897.95
Malaysian Ringgit	67	67.85
New Zealand \$	156.69	159.75
Norwegians Krone	27.97	28.27
Omani Riyal	723.45	733.58
Qatari Riyal	75.20	76.15
Saudi Riyal	74.40	75.05
Singapore Dollar	214.11	217.16
Swedish Korona	28.2	28.85
Swiss Franc	344.40	349.21
Thai Bhat	8.55	8.70
U.A.E Dirham	76.05	76.80
UK Pound Sterling	371.99	375.52
US Dollar	278.95	279.15

Cashless Pakistan Initiative Achieves Major Milestones in First Year

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan's Cashless Pakistan Initiative has recorded significant progress during its first year, with digital transactions, merchant adoption, and financial inclusion showing remarkable growth, according to a review meeting chaired by Minister of State for Railways and Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani.

Launched in June 2025 under the Prime Minister's supervision, the initiative aims to promote public convenience, transparency, and economic documentation through digital payments. During the review, officials reported that annual digital transactions increased from 6.9 billion to 11.3 billion, while the number of active merchants accepting digital payments grew fourfold—from 500,000 to over 2 million—supported by the Government's Raast QR Code initiative. Digital banking users also surpassed 135 million nationwide.

The meeting also highlighted improvements in financial inclusion, which rose to 69



percent, alongside a narrowing gender gap through targeted financial access programs. Progress was reviewed on digitizing public sector services, with 25 key federal and provincial institutions identified for complete inte-

gration with the Raast payment system by December 2026. Approximately 75 percent of government-to-person (G2P) payments are now being processed digitally across centralized and self-accounting entities.

The meeting was attended by Senior representatives of the State Bank of Pakistan, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Controller General of Accounts (CGA), MOITT, NADRA, Raast Payments Pakistan, including Mr. Ammar Naqvi, Special Secretary MoITT; Mr. Sohail Javaad, Executive Director DFS Group, SBP; Mr. Ahsan Saeed, Chief Executive Officer, Raast Payments Pakistan; Mr. Muhammad Imaduddin, Director SBP; Mr. Rehman Qamar, CPO NADRA; Mr. Zafar Masud, Chairman Pakistan Banking Association; Mr. Atif Aslam Bajwa, President and CEO of Bank Alfalah; Mr. Jahanzaib Khan, President and CEO EasyPaisa Digital Bank; Mr. Aamir Ibrahim, Chief Executive Officer, Jazz; Mr. Waqas ul Hasan, Chief Executive Officer Karandaaz Pakistan; Mr. Sharjeel Murtaza, Chief Digital Officer, Karandaaz Pakistan; Mr. Taimoor Ali, Group Head Digital Financial Services Karandaaz Pakistan; Dr. Shazia (Prime Minister's Office) and Mr. Abbas Ali & Mr. Adeel Shirazi along with their team from EY.

Humid weather

RAWALPINDI: Labourers are sitting in under construction building window taking rest alongside a road during humid weather, in the city.



Photo: Online

PSX Launches Public Consultation on Pakistan's First Sustainability Index

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) has launched a public consultation on its proposed PSX Sustainability Index (PSI), marking a significant step toward advancing sustainable finance in Pakistan. A concept paper released by the exchange outlines the framework for the country's first sustainability benchmark, designed to measure the performance of listed companies based on financially relevant Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors.

PSX Chief Executive Officer Farrukh Sabzwari said ESG considerations are becoming increasingly important in global capital markets, influencing company valuations, investment decisions, and long-term risk assessment. He described the proposed index as a transparent and internationally comparable benchmark that will recognize companies committed to sustainable business practices.

The PSI will use a materiality-adjusted scoring methodology across environmental,



social, and governance pillars, with sector-specific weightings to ensure companies are assessed according to the sustainability risks and opportunities most relevant to their industries. According to PSX, the index will benefit listed companies seeking responsible investment, institutional investors developing ESG-focused products, and investors looking for exposure to businesses with sustainable growth models. To ensure the index reflects Pakistan's corporate landscape and evolving sustainability practices, PSX has invited stakeholders to submit feedback on the concept paper by July 17, 2026, before finalizing the benchmark.

Hotel One Expands Presence with the Launch of Hotel One Riverside Kaghan

Commerce Desk

Hotel One is delighted to welcome guests to Hotel One Riverside Kaghan. Now Open marking a new milestone in our presence across Pakistan. With 25+ properties in 17+ cities, Hotel One continues to deliver comfortable, accessible, and value-driven stays for travelers nationwide. The hotel's thoughtfully appointed rooms including Deluxe King, Deluxe Twin, Executive King, Executive twin categories feature high-speed Wi-Fi, Smart LED TVs, minibars, and in-room dining. Guests can begin their mornings with a complimentary breakfast while enjoying the picturesque surroundings, and savor delicious meals at the on-site restaurant

designed for both casual and refined dining. Speaking on the opening, Mr. Bastien Blanc, CEO of PC Hospitality, shared "The opening of Hotel One Riverside Kaghan showcases the perfect balance of scenic beauty and standardized, reliable hospitality. We aim to provide guests with a dependable stay experience that combines comfort, convenience and value. Speaking on the opening, Mr. Farrukh Shahzad, Owner Hotel One River Side Kaghan, shared: "Hotel One Riverside Kaghan redefines hospitality in one of Pakistan's most iconic destinations. Framed by the breathtaking Kaghan Valley, it blends comfort, consistency, and thoughtful service into a truly memorable stay." We are proud to



partner with PC Hospitality in bringing Hotel One Riverside Kaghan to life, set against the breathtaking landscapes of Kaghan Valley.

This milestone reflects our shared vision of delivering quality, consistency, and memorable hospitality.

Aun Ali Syed Elected President of AOBA Islamabad/Rawalpindi Chapter

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Aun Ali Syed, Vice President of FPCCI KP Region, has been elected President of the Abbotonians Old Boys Association (AOBA) Islamabad/Rawalpindi Chapter for the 2026-2028 term.

In his address, Syed thanked members for their trust, calling the win a collective success based on unity, integrity, and service. He pledged to lead with transparency and dedication.

His vision includes boosting alumni engagement, strengthening professional networking, supporting educational and welfare initiatives, and preserving Abbottabad



Public School's legacy. He will work with the newly elected team: VP Adv. Munir Usmani, Gen. Secretary Muhammad Kamil Qudus, Joint Secretary Maaz Naeem, and Finance Secretary Syed Shujaat Ali. Syed reaffirmed commitment to an inclusive, progressive AOBA serving all Abbotonians

PACRA Upgrades easypaisa Digital Bank to 'AA-' in Second Consecutive Upgrade

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Pakistan Credit Rating Agency Limited (PACRA) has upgraded easypaisa digital bank's long-term credit rating from A+ to AA-, marking the bank's second consecutive upgrade in two years and endorsing its transition into Pakistan's first fully licensed Digital Retail Bank (DRB).

PACRA cited easypaisa's strong balance sheet, disciplined risk management, and scale of its digital ecosystem as key factors. Since receiving its commercial DRB license in January 2025, the bank has shown strong momentum with rising transaction volumes, customer engagement, and a widely used mobile app. Strategic backing from shareholders Telenor and

Ant Group was also noted as a rating strength.

CEO Jahanzeb Khan said the upgrade reflects the bank's vision to build an inclusive, digitally empowered financial ecosystem. CFO Amin Sukhiani added that growth in deposits, profitability, and capital adequacy reinforces the model's robustness.

In 2025, easypaisa processed 4.6 billion transactions worth PKR 16 trillion. Monthly active users reached 22 million, branchless banking deposits grew to PKR 122.8 billion, and PAT rose 5x to PKR 17.04 billion. Equity stood at PKR 30.9 billion with CAR at 20.4%. Total assets grew to PKR 184.8 billion.

With 60 million registered users and 300,000 merchants, easypaisa continues to drive financial inclusion in Pakistan.

SECP Launches Fast-Track Desk to Help Steel Sector Convert AOPs into Companies



ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has announced special facilitation measures to support the conversion of Associations of Persons (AOPs) in the steel sector into companies.

On directions from Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani, SECP Chairman Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu has set up a dedicated facilitation desk to ensure smooth and timely processing of conversion and incorporation applications.

Through the Finance Act, 2026, amendments to the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001, make company incorporation mandatory for steel businesses to avail certain tax incentives. Unincorporated steel mills, including AOPs, will face higher tax rates compared to SECP-registered companies that benefit from preferential treatment.

Following the amendments, the Pakistan Association of Large Steel Producers (PALSP) sought SECP's guidance for the conversion.

SECP said company incorporation is fully digital and can be completed in four steps: user registration, name reservation, submission of digitally signed application, and fee payment. A company can be incorporated within four hours with complete documentation.

SECP incorporates over 3,500 companies monthly. For assistance, contact Ms. Saira Jamsaid at 051-9195405 or saila.jamsaid@secp.gov.pk.

An awareness webinar with FBR will be held on July 8, 2026 to guide businesses on the conversion process.

PIA Will Become a Profitable Company in the Very First Year After Privatization: Arif Habib

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Chairman of the Arif Habib Group and renowned businessman Arif Habib has said that Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) will become a profitable enterprise in its very first year under private management. He added that the airline currently has 18 operational aircraft, and the fleet will gradually be expanded to 60 aircraft.

Speaking to the media for the first time after taking over the management control of PIA, Arif Habib said that PIA possesses an excellent engineering facility in Karachi, which will receive significant investment to enhance its capabilities. He also stated that recruitment for senior management positions is underway and will be completed



within the next one to one-and-a-half months. Under the terms of the privatization agreement, no employee will be laid off during the first year.

Arif Habib emphasized that PIA has never suffered an operating loss and possesses tremendous growth potential. He expressed confidence that the airline would post profits in its very first year following privatization.

He noted that PIA currently owns 30 aircraft, of which 18 are operational. Four to five aircraft in the existing fleet can be restored and returned to service in the near future. Initially, these aircraft will be rehabilitated, while five wide-body aircraft will also be added to the fleet. Over the next five years, the fleet size is planned to increase to 60 aircraft.

Zone-IV Stun Top-Ranked Zone-VI in Regional Inter-District U-19 One-Day Tournament

Brilliant Century 109 by Ali Sher
Deadly Bowling by Sahil 5/28 and Asadullah Khan 4/23

KARACHI: In the ongoing Regional Inter-District Under-19 One-Day Cricket League Tournament (Karachi Region), Zone-IV pulled off a major upset by defeating No.1 ranked Zone-VI by 4 wickets on Monday. Zone-VII and Zone-III also registered convincing victories in their respective matches.



The day's highlights included a brilliant century by Ali Sher 109, and outstanding bowling spells by Sahil 5/28 and Asadullah Khan 4/23.

The Tournament is being organized by Pakistan Cricket Board.

Scores in Brief:
At KCCA Stadium: Zone-IV beat Zone-VI by 4 wickets
Batting first, Zone-VI were bowled out for 133 in 34.1 overs. Huzaifa Ahsan top-scored with 59 off 6 fours, while Abdul Sami contributed 20.

For Zone-IV, Amanullah claimed 3/24, Muhammad Masham Hussain Siddiqui 2/20, Saad Manan 2/28, and Huzaifa Bin Sajid 2/35.

In reply, Zone-IV chased down the target in 43 overs, finishing at 136/6. Aun Abbas led with 59 off 7 fours, supported by Rana Areeb Aftab 25 and Amanullah 17.

Saad Sakhawat took 3/33 and Jawad Ahmed 2/26 for Zone-VI.

At UBL Sports Complex: Zone-VII beat Zone-I by 131 runs
Zone-VII posted 263 all out in 47.5 overs, powered by Ali Sher's magnificent 109 off 15 fours. Shamroz Khan added 34 and Talah Irfan Sheikh 28.

Syed Muhammad Ali Jaffri 2/46 and Areeb Buksh 2/51 were the main wicket-takers for Zone-I.

Zone-I were bundled out for 132 in 33 overs. Muhammad Usman Khan 30, Muhammad Fasih 25, and Muhammad Hunza Malik 23 were the top scorers.

Sahil started with the ball for Zone-VII, picking up 5/28. Shahid Habib 2/12 and Shamroz Khan 2/32 also chipped in.

At Eid Gah Ground, Korangi: Zone-III beat Zone-V by 9 wickets.

Zone-V managed only 104 all out in 31.5 overs. Rayyan Chauhan and Ahmed Shahzad scored 23 each.

Asadullah Khan ran through the lineup with 4/23, while Muhammad Ali 3/18 and Anas Baloch 2/26 supported well.

Zone-III comfortably chased the target in 20.3 overs, reaching 105/1. Haider Ali scored 47 off 6 fours and Amanullah remained unbeaten on 39 off 4 fours.

“Post Budget 2026-27 Seminar at IBA Karachi”

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: IBA hosted a Seminar on the Federal Budget 2026-27, bringing together leading economists, policymakers, and public finance experts to discuss the budget's implications for Pakistan's economy, fiscal reforms, taxation, trade, and investment.

The session commenced with a welcome note by Dr. Lubna Naz, Director, Center for Business & Economic Research (CBER) at IBA, who emphasized the importance of sustained policy dialogue and collaboration between academia and policymakers. Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi, delivered the welcome address, highlighting the institution's role in fostering informed discussions on critical national economic issues and encouraging greater student engagement in public policy debates.



The discussion was moderated by Ammar Habib, Assistant Professor of Practice, SBS and featured an esteemed panel comprising Khurram Schehzad, Advisor to the Finance Minister, Govern-

ment of Pakistan; Dr. Ali Salman, CEO - Policy Research Institute of Market Economy (PRIME); Dr. Ali Hasanain, Associate Professor, Economics, LUMS; Dr. Zehra Farooq, Staff Officer to Member IR Operations, FBR, and

Dr. Aadir Nakhoda, Assistant Professor, SESS.

During the discussion, Khurram Shahzad shared the government's perspective on fiscal stability, investment promotion, industrial policy, and reforms aimed at supporting sustainable economic growth. Dr. Salman highlighted the government's tariff reforms and their role in promoting export-oriented industrial growth. Dr. Hasanain stressed the need for coherent trade and industrial policies, stronger institutions, and measures to address Pakistan's anti-export bias. Dr. Zehra discussed revenue mobilization, tax reforms, enforcement measures, and digital transformation initiatives undertaken by the Federal Board of Revenue. Dr. Nakhoda examined the simplified tariff structures, export competitiveness, and greater integration into global value chains.

The silent victim of regional conflict: Pakistan tourism sector

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At the international level, regional conflict can severely disrupt aviation and air travel, particularly across the Middle East. In addition, countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia have issued “Do Not Travel” or “Reconsider Travel” advisories during this period of regional instability. Although these advisories may not directly target Pakistan, they can negatively affect the country's tourism industry because a significant number of foreign tourists originate from these countries. Such warnings may create negative perceptions about safety in the broader region, discouraging interna-

tional travelers from visiting Pakistan and reducing the inflow of foreign tourists.

While the economic impacts of regional conflict on Pakistan's energy and industrial sectors are widely discussed, the consequences for tourism deserve equal attention. Any decline in tourist arrivals due to geopolitical tensions, rising fuel prices, inflation, or international travel advisories could result in significant economic losses. A reduction in tourism would directly affect hotels, restaurants, transport services, local businesses, and thousands of workers who depend on this sector for their livelihoods. Furthermore, decreased tourist spending

would reduce foreign exchange earnings and slow economic growth, particularly in northern regions such as Gilgit-Baltistan, Hunza, and Skardu, where tourism serves as a major source of income. If these challenges persist throughout 2026, Pakistan may lose a valuable opportunity to strengthen its economy and improve its global image. Therefore, the government must take effective measures to ensure regional stability, improve infrastructure, enhance security, and promote tourism in order to protect this vital sector from future economic and geopolitical shocks.

The writer is Student at National defence university Islamabad

Field Marshal Asim Munir Warns Afghan Taliban Over Indian-Backed Terror Sanctuaries

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The Forum noted that post-comprehensive defeat inflicted in Mark-e-Haq, there is increased reliance on an evolving pattern of externally supported hybrid warfare and disinformation campaigns to cause unrest. The Forum condemned all such forms of state supported financing, facilitation or sponsorship of proxies and underscored that any attempts to use hybrid means to destabilize Pakistan would continue to be countered with strategic clarity and firm resolve.

Reviewing the evolving regional landscape, the Forum appreciated Pakistan's constructive role in promoting dialogue, de-escalation and regional stability. It reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to peaceful conflict resolution, respect for

international law and enhanced regional cooperation to address shared security challenges.

The Forum, taking note of Indian rhetoric surrounding the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), reaffirmed the guidance given in National Security Committee (NSC) directive of 24 April 2025. The Forum expressed resolute commitment to undertake all measures necessary to ensure availability of Pakistan's rightful share of water as per the directives of the Government and inspirations of the people of Pakistan.

The Forum rejected and strongly condemned the ongoing human rights violations and unilateral demographic engineering in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK), declaring that Kashmir remains the jugular vein

of Pakistan. Reaffirming Pakistan's unyielding diplomatic, political and moral support to Kashmir cause, the Forum emphasized that true regional stability hinges entirely on granting the Kashmiri people their inalienable right to self-determination in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions.

In his concluding remarks, the COAS & CDF directed commanders to follow up expeditiously on the multi-domain transformation plan in line with evolving character of war. He also called upon the commanders to maintain highest standards of vigilance, operational readiness and professional excellence emphasizing integrated responses to conventional, sub-conventional and hybrid threats while safeguarding Pakistan's sovereignty and national interests at all cost.

Balochistan: Pakistan's Goeconomic Frontier in the Global Critical Minerals Race

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domestic processing by restricting raw nickel exports. These examples demonstrate that sustainable resource governance depends less on geological fortune than on sound institutions, policy continuity, and strategic vision.

Equally important is ensuring that the people of Balochistan become genuine stakeholders in this transformation. Transparent revenue-sharing mechanisms, environmental safeguards, community participation,

and sustained investment in education, healthcare, water infrastructure, and vocational training are essential for inclusive development. Responsible governance is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity for maintaining political stability and investor confidence, particularly as international investors increasingly evaluate projects through Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) standards.

Beyond its mineral wealth, Balochistan's geography significantly

enhances its goeconomic value. Bordering Iran and Afghanistan while providing direct access to the Arabian Sea through Gwadar Port, the province connects South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Combined with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), this strategic location positions Balochistan as both a logistics hub and a future supplier of critical minerals to global markets. Few developing countries possess such a combination of geological abundance and strategic connectivity.

Henry Farrell and Abraham Newman describe the contemporary global order as one of “weaponized interdependence,” in which states leverage their positions within global economic networks to advance strategic interests. In this environment, control over critical minerals has become an important source of national power. Balochistan, therefore, is no longer Pakistan's peripheral frontier but an increasingly central pillar of its goeconomic future.

Ultimately, the twenty-first century

marks a transition from the geopolitics of oil to the goeconomics of critical minerals. Nations that successfully integrate strategic resources into advanced industrial and technological value chains will enjoy greater economic resilience and geopolitical influence. For Pakistan, Balochistan represents a historic opportunity to redefine its place in the emerging global political economy. If managed with transparency, institutional strength, technological innovation, and inclusive development, the prov-

ince can become the foundation of Pakistan's economic renaissance. If mismanaged, it risks becoming another example of unrealized potential. The future of Balochistan and indeed Pakistan's goeconomic trajectory will ultimately depend not on the resources beneath its soil, but on the quality of the institutions, policy approaches, and leadership built above it.

The writer is a student of BS International Relations at National Defence University, Islamabad

Morocco and Egypt Make Us Proud—Pakistan Must Rise

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field, but the institutional principle of pooling complementary strengths remains relevant. Countries possessing different assets can achieve collectively what weaker members cannot accomplish alone.

A Muslim Football Development Alliance should therefore have its own constitution, independent secretariat, professional management, scouting directorate, technical board and transparent funding system. It should not be controlled by the football federation of Pakistan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia or any other single member. Its loyalty must be to

football development, measurable performance and the children selected purely on talent.

Most importantly, the alliance must go to the talent rather than wait for talent to navigate broken national systems. Its international scouting teams should travel to Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Central Asia, Africa and other Muslim-majority societies where millions of children play football but professional development pathways remain weak or nonexistent.

The scouts should visit schools, streets, village grounds, local clubs and community tournaments. In Pakistan, they should

go to Lyari, Chaman, Quetta, Gilgit-Baltistan, Karachi, Punjab and every region where football is played with passion. A child should not require a political recommendation, family connection, federation official or influential telephone call to be seen. The football field must introduce the child.

Once exceptional talent is identified, the alliance should effectively adopt the player's football development. This does not mean separating children recklessly from their families or cultures. It means assuming professional responsibility for their sporting journey by providing scholarships, nutri-

tion, education support, medical care, sports science, qualified coaching and regular international exposure.

Every selected child should have a digital development record that follows him throughout the programme. At ten, technical control, balance and football intelligence should be measured. At twelve, physical development and positional potential should be assessed. At fourteen, advanced tactical training should intensify, and by sixteen the strongest prospects should regularly compete against international opposition.

At eighteen, the best players should already be connected with

professional clubs, elite academies or competitive leagues. The alliance must maintain responsibility for the pathway rather than simply organise a trial, distribute certificates, take photographs and disappear. A gifted child discovered at nine may require ten years of uninterrupted attention before becoming capable of representing a national team.

The objective should never be to create one combined Muslim football team. Every player must ultimately represent his own country under international football regulations and national eligibility requirements. The alliance's purpose would be to develop human talent for

national teams that currently lack the institutional ability to identify and nurture their best children.

Football is also a gigantic economic industry encompassing broadcasting, sponsorship, stadiums, academies, merchandising, tourism, sports medicine, data analytics and professional leagues. The Muslim world possesses money, youth, passion and successful football models, but it lacks a common mechanism capable of systematically transferring those strengths to countries where talent is abundant but development structures are weak.

Pakistan's World Cup dream

is not impossible. Its talent has simply been left undiscovered, unprotected and underdeveloped for too long. Morocco has shown what a system can achieve, while the wider Muslim world possesses the money, knowledge and infrastructure to build something greater together. Pakistan already makes the ball. Now, together, the Muslim world must help Pakistan make the players who can conquer it.

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.

Visit

CHOLPON-ATA: President Asif Ali Zardari being received by President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Japarov upon his arrival at Issyk-Kul International Airport.



Photo: PID

President Zardari arrives in Kyrgyzstan for official visit to boost bilateral relations

Spokesman Report

ISSYK-KUL, KYRGYZSTAN: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday arrived at Issyk-Kul International Airport for an official visit to the Kyrgyz Republic, where he was warmly received by Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov.

Upon his arrival, President Zardari was presented with a guard of honour at the airport, marking the beginning of his high-level visit aimed at strengthening bilateral ties between the two countries, a Presidency's news release said.

The visit is of particular significance as President Zardari becomes the first Pakistani head of state to visit Kyrgyzstan since the historic visit of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in 1995.

The trip is being viewed as an important step in continuing high-level engagement between Islamabad and Bishkek.

During the visit, President Zardari and President Japarov are expected to hold comprehensive discussions on all aspects of bilateral relations and review cooperation across a wide range of sectors.

The two leaders will explore opportunities to enhance collaboration in trade, investment, energy, mining, agriculture, education, healthcare, tourism, the digital economy and people-to-people exchanges.

Regional connectivity and measures to further strengthen the longstanding brotherly relations between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan will also feature prominently in the discussions.

Bilawal vows no compromise on Indus Waters Treaty



Saif ur Rehman

GILGIT: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has declared that Pakistan will not compromise on the Indus Waters Treaty, warning that the country is prepared to fight if necessary. He accused India of attempting to use the treaty as a political weapon.

Addressing the main oath-taking ceremony in Gilgit, Bilawal paid tribute to the sacrifices of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, describing them as patriotic Pakistanis. He said the region's residents continue to remember former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto for his contributions.

He said the people of Gilgit-Baltistan won their freedom from Dogra rule through struggle and sacrifice, earning a distinguished place in history.

Bilawal pledged to create better opportunities for young people, saying the public mandate in Gilgit-Baltistan carries a great responsibility for his party. He added that addressing the region's challenges remains a top priority and described its youth as talented and skilled.

Finance Minister Kicks Off Pre-Budget Consultations with Pakistan Business Council

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb held a meeting with business leaders at the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) to discuss Pakistan's economic outlook, reform agenda and the government's economic priorities.

The Finance Minister appreciated the Pakistan Business Council for bringing together leading representatives of Pakistan's business community on a single platform. He acknowledged PBC's continued role in promoting constructive dialogue between the government and the private sector on key economic and policy issues.

Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb observed that the global economy had demonstrated greater resilience than anticipated, noting that countries which remained committed to structural



reforms had been better positioned to sustain economic stability and growth. He emphasized that Pakistan must continue pursuing its reform agenda to strengthen macroeconomic stability, improve competitiveness, and

support sustainable economic growth. Highlighting government's approach to budget preparation, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said the meeting marked the beginning of consultations for the next

federal budget rather than a post-budget review. He noted that the government had initiated the budget preparation process significantly earlier this year, enabling a more structured and consultative approach to fiscal planning.

The Finance Minister also emphasized that the Federal Budget 2026-27 had introduced significant taxation and financing measures aimed at supporting exports, improving exporters' access to finance, and reinforcing government's commitment to an export-led and sustainable growth model.

He underscored the importance of policy predictability and reaffirmed the government's commitment to implementing a Medium-Term Tax Strategy. He noted that a stable and consistent tax policy framework remained essential for strengthening business confidence, encouraging investment, and supporting long-term economic planning.

The Finance Minister reaffirmed government's commitment to advancing structural reforms, ensuring policy consistency and fostering a conducive environment for investment and sustainable economic growth.

Former Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser Calls on Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani



Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: Former Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser called on Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani at Parliament House on Monday. He was accompanied by Senator Dilawar Khan.

During the meeting, the two leaders discussed a range of issues, with particular focus on matters relating to the tobacco industry in District Swabi.

Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani assured the delegation that the matters highlighted during

the meeting would be referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Finance for consideration. He noted that the region is renowned for producing high-quality tobacco and emphasized that every possible effort would be made to address the challenges being faced by tobacco growers and to safeguard their economic interests.

The delegation thanked the Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani for his support, cooperation, and commitment to addressing the concerns of the farming community.

Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad airports added to privatisation plan under new roadmap

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has included Pakistan's three largest international airports in its newly unveiled five-year privatisation programme. According to the new privatisation plan, Jinnah International Airport, Islamabad International Airport, and Allama Iqbal International Airport have been added to the list of state-owned assets to be privatised within the first year.

The new roadmap identifies 25 state-owned entities for privatisation in three phases over the next five years.

Under the first phase, spanning one year, 11 entities have been selected for privatisation.

The second phase, covering one to



three years, includes 13 entities, while the final phase, extending from three to five years, involves the privatisation of one remaining entity.

The second phase includes the privatisation of Utility Stores Corporation, along with several power distribution companies, including Lahore Elec-

tric Supply Company, Multan Electric Power Company, Hyderabad Electric Supply Company, Sukkur Electric Power Company, Peshawar Electric Supply Company and Hazara Electric Supply Company.

The second phase also covers the proposed privatisation of Jamshoro Power Company Limited, Central Power Generation Company Limited, Northern Power Generation Company Limited, Lakhra Power Generation Company Limited, State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan and Pakistan Reinsurance Company Limited.

Under the final phase of the five-year programme, the government plans to complete the privatisation of State Life Insurance Company and Postal Life Insurance Company Limited.

Supreme Court orders fair market compensation for land acquired for public use

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has ruled that while the state can acquire private land for public purposes, affected landowners must receive full, fair, and market-based compensation.

In a 20-page judgment authored by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar in the

Swabi land compensation case, the apex court held that compensation cannot be determined solely on government-notified rates. Authorities must also consider the land's prevailing market value, potential future use, and development prospects.

The court further ruled that delays in acquisition must be factored in. Any increase in land prices and impact of

inflation during the delay period should be reflected in compensation.

Emphasizing "complete financial justice," the judgment said compensation must follow the principle of "gold for gold, not copper," ensuring owners receive equivalent value for what they lose.

The case involved land acquired for a canal project in Swabi. Landowners

challenged the government package as below actual value. The Reference Court enhanced compensation, upheld by Peshawar High Court. The KP government challenged it in the Supreme Court, which dismissed all appeals.

The court reiterated that fair compensation is a constitutional right whenever the state acquires private property for public interest.

State's writ will prevail, no force can intimidate Balochistan: CM Bugti



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti has declared that every attempt to frighten the people of Balochistan or weaken the state through terrorism will be decisively defeated.

Speaking to media representatives after visiting victims of the Hanna Uruk terrorist attack at a local hospital, he praised the extraordinary bravery, professionalism, and resilience of police, law enforcement agencies, and security forces in confronting terrorist threats.

Sarfraz Bugti emphasized that cowardly acts of terror cannot shake the resolve of the state. He assured that the government will provide complete support to the families of martyrs and ensure the best medical treatment for the injured. He stressed that counter-terrorism operations will continue until their logical conclusion, with the writ of the state upheld at all costs.

Paying tribute to the martyrs, the Chief Minister said that while no

financial compensation can replace the loss of human life, the government will not abandon their families. He announced that financial assistance is being distributed and pledged that the government will bear the full cost of education, scholarships, and living expenses for the children of martyrs up to the age of sixteen.

Sarfraz Bugti highlighted the courage of Balochistan Police, noting that one officer had been injured for the fourth time in recent months while fighting terrorists — a testament to the force's dedication and sacrifice. He expressed pride in the police, praising their enhanced capacity and professional performance under the Inspector General's leadership.

He commended all law enforcement agencies for playing their constitutional and legal roles effectively against terrorism. Bugti explained that terrorists often strike soft targets briefly, harm innocent civilians, and flee after recording propaganda videos, but stressed that the state will never allow such malicious designs to succeed.

Reaffirming his government's commitment, the Chief Minister declared that indiscriminate action against terrorists, their facilitators, and anti-state elements will be intensified.