



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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کھڑے نہیں جاتا ہے پھر نہ ہو اور جب تک اللہ اور
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LHC CJ Alia Neelum launches five more digital systems

Important progress for digital governance reforms in Punjab's judiciary as Chief Justice Lahore High Court Justice Alia Neelum on Tuesday launched five more digital systems. New digital systems launched to increase judicial efficiency and transparency. Registrar Lahore High Court and DG Judicial and Case Management attended the ceremony.



IHC judges' two-month vacations begin

Two-month summer vacations in Islamabad High Court (IHC) will begin from tomorrow (Wednesday). Which judges will be available during summer vacations? A schedule has been issued with the approval of the Chief Justice. According to office order, Chief Justice Sarfaraz Dogar will not take leave and will be available during the holidays.

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Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on population welfare at his office in the Federal Capital. CDF & COAS Field Marshal Asim Munir also present.



Photo: Online

PM stresses balance between growing population, resources for country's sustainable development

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Tuesday, stressed that maintaining a balance between population and available resources was essential for sustainable development, saying that rapid population growth was placing increasing pressure on national resources and posing a major challenge to the country's progress.

Chairing a high-level meeting on population welfare, the prime minister said that population planning must be aligned with the national development, economic stability and the improvement of human resources, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He directed the authorities to convene the inaugural meeting of the National Population Council at the earliest and asked that its organizational structure be finalized without delay to facilitate effective policymaking on population issues.

The meeting was attended by Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Defence Minister, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Planning Minister, Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar, Minister of State for Finance and Railways, Bilal Azhar Kayani and senior officials.

Tarar says respect for Indus Waters Treaty essential to regional stability

City Desk

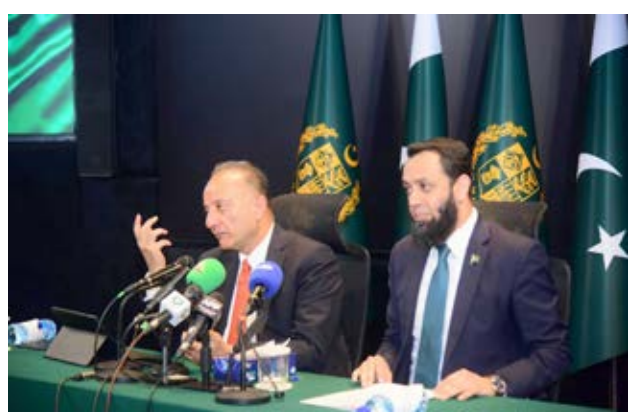
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday said respect for the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) is vital for regional peace and stability, stressing that international agreements cannot be amended, revoked, suspended, or held in abeyance unilaterally.

Addressing the inaugural session of the international seminar "Indus Waters Treaty: An Instrument of Peace and Regional Stability", Tarar said the event concerned the lifeline of Pakistan's 240 million people. He linked Pakistan's identity to the Indus Valley Civilization, saying

the Indus River has sustained one of the world's oldest civilizations for millennia.

"Water is life. For Pakistan, it is not just a resource but a matter of life itself," he said, adding that Pakistanis have an inalienable right to Indus waters. He noted the 1960 Treaty, signed under the World Bank, has endured wars and tensions for six decades by upholding cooperation, "pacta sunt servanda", and peaceful dispute resolution.

Tarar said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif have affirmed that the Treaty cannot be altered unilaterally. He called



India's attempt to hold it in abeyance legally and morally weak, resulting in international embarrassment.

Citing climate change, melting glaciers, and water scarcity, he said the Treaty's protection is more urgent than ever. He

warned that weaponizing water or unilateral changes undermine regional stability and international law, adding that "water will always find a way."

Tarar said Pakistan remains committed to dialogue and implementation, but the leadership is resolved to respond if Pakistan's water is stopped. He urged responsible media to counter disinformation and said the seminar would help generate recommendations to safeguard the Treaty.

Secretary Information Ashfaq Ahmed Khalil said water is the foundation of agriculture and development and "should never be used as a weapon."

Musadik Malik seeks binding Water Treaty, calls Indus crisis a 'Justice Issue'

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Musadik Malik called for a binding international covenant on transboundary water governance, terming it a "crisis of justice" for downstream communities.

Addressing a seminar on the Indus Waters Treaty, he cited farmer Iqbal Solangi, displaced by repeated floods in 2010, 2012, and 2022, to highlight

climate and water vulnerability. Malik said sudden flow changes at Marala showed "someone else controls the tap," endangering Pakistan's 120 million agriculture-dependent people.

He warned that if the IWT, which survived three wars, can be suspended, the post-WWII treaty system is at risk. Malik urged global action with political, economic, and diplomatic consequences, saying the issue affects all downstream nations.

Dar Vows to Defend Pakistan's Indus Waters Treaty Rights 'Through All Legal and Diplomatic Means'



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Tuesday said Pakistan will protect its rights under the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) through all legal and diplomatic avenues, warning that depriving Pakistan of its allocated water share would have serious implications for regional peace and security.

Addressing the International Seminar on the Indus Waters Treaty 2026, Dar said water is foundational to human dignity, food security, and economic stability. He noted the 1960 Treaty, brokered by the World Bank, gave Pakistan the three western rivers with only limited Indian use permitted. Pakistan, he said, restructured its irrigation systems in reliance on the

Treaty's permanence, despite losing flows from the eastern rivers.

Describing water as the lifeline of over 250 million Pakistanis, he said, "We sincerely advise India against sowing the seeds of war." Citing a National Security Committee decision chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he said any diversion, interruption, or reduction of Pakistan's water rights would be treated as an act of war.

"We mean it and we will make sure that our rights are neither prejudiced nor abused," Dar asserted, while reiterating Pakistan's readiness for dialogue if India reciprocates. "Shared waters must never be weaponised. They should remain a bridge between nations," he concluded.

President, PM express grief over deadly roof collapse incident in Lahore

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the collapse of the roof of a tuition center in the Kahna area of Lahore.

In their separate statements, the president and the prime minister expressed profound sorrow over the deaths of children in the tragic incident and prayed for the eternal peace and elevation of the ranks of the departed souls in Jannah.

They also extended their heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the speedy recovery of those injured in the incident.

"The loss of innocent children's precious lives is a matter of profound sorrow for the entire nation. Effective safety measures are essential to prevent such tragedies in the future", the president said.

The prime minister directed the authorities to ensure they receive every possible medical assistance.

14 children killed as tuition centre roof collapses in Lahore

Bureau Report

At least 14 children died after the roof of a tuition centre collapsed in Lahore's Kahna area on Tuesday, with rescue operations nearing completion as authorities took two people, including the building's owner, into custody.

Tehsil Headquarters Hospital (THQ) Kahna released the names and ages of those killed: Abdullah s/o Mustafa

(8), Salman s/o Waseem (8), Auroj d/o Mustafa (9), Mehnoor d/o Farooq (8), Tashbeeh d/o Shehzada (7), Fawad s/o Muhammad Abid (8), Eman Fatima d/o Mustafa (11), Khadija d/o Waseem (12), Auroj d/o Murtaza (6), Artaza (4), Ramsha (6), Ali s/o Farman (6), Arham s/o Hassan Ali (8), Dua d/o Gulfam (7) and Abdullah s/o Asghar (7).

The roof of the tuition centre, built using T-iron girders, had caved in suddenly, trapping a large number of children beneath the debris.

Rescue workers work at the site where children reportedly died after a tuition centre roof collapsed, in Lahore, Pakistan, on June 30, 2026. Screengrab/social media

Rescue 1122 said initial reports had put the number of

trapped children at eight to ten, but it later emerged that around 30 children were present at the centre at the time of the collapse.

THQ Kahna said six injured persons were in stable condition.

Among those undergoing treatment were eight-year-old Abiha, ten-year-old Fariya and 11-year-old Murtaza, while eight-year-old Ayan and seven-year-old Rabia were also reported stable. Thirty-year-old Humaida Reehan was said to be out of danger.

DIG Operations Faisal Kamran reached the site and reviewed the rescue operation, which was being carried out jointly by police, Rescue 1122 and the district administration. Rescue workers work at the site where children reportedly died after a tuition centre roof collapsed, in Lahore, Pakistan, on June 30, 2026. Reuters

Officials said work to clear the debris and shift survivors to safety was underway, while injured children were moved to the THQ Kahna for treatment.



Pakistan needs solution-oriented graduates to drive development: Senate Chairman Gillani

Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD/SWABI: Senate Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani said Pakistan needs graduates who can solve problems, create jobs, and accelerate national development. He was addressing the annual convocation of Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology [GIKI] in Topi, Swabi.

Gillani congratulated the graduates, crediting their success to hard work, and paid tribute to parents and teachers. He called GIKI a leading institution in engineering, computing, science, technology, and management, and said it is key to building a knowledge-based economy.

"Countries that prioritize knowledge, science and technology



progress. Pakistan must focus on production, encourage innovation, and make development a top priority," he said, stressing that universities should be judged on research quality, not just graduate numbers. Noting that over 60% of Pakistanis are youth, he said equipping

them with quality education and modern skills is essential. Pakistan, he added, needs more engineers, scientists, and researchers. He reaffirmed his commitment to education, science, and research, citing it as part of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto's vision.

Gillani also praised Pakistan's civil and military leadership for facilitating peace between the US and Iran, saying the effort projects Pakistan as a peace-loving nation and Islam as a religion of peace.

He suggested holding GIKI's next convocation at the Islamabad Convention Center due to space constraints.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, Saleem Saifullah Khan, faculty, students, and parents attended. Gold medals and certificates were awarded to top performers.

Chief Election Commissioner reserves decision on Chaudhry Latif Akbar's appeal

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chief Election Commissioner, Justice (R) Ghulam Mustafa Mughal has reserved decision after hearing the appeal against nomination papers rejection of Returning Officer LA 31 Muzaffarabad 5 Khawra Chaudhry Latif Akbar the ppp nominated candidate. The Chief Election Commissioner will be announced judgement tomorrow July 1.



Renowned lawyer Chaudhry Shaukat Aziz argued on behalf of Chaudhry Latif Akbar while former Advocate General Raja Gul Majid Khan represented the other side.

After completion of detailed arguments of the parties, the Chief Election Commissioner reserved the decision, which will be duly announced tomorrow.

Policy neglect wasting Pakistan's vast renewable energy potential: Altaf Shakoore

News Desk

KARACHI: Pasban Democratic Party Chairman Altaf Shakoore said Pakistan could generate surplus electricity if it fully harnessed solar and wind resources, but policy negligence is wasting this potential.

He noted Pakistan has nearly 300 sunny days a year with 5-7 kWh/m² daily solar irradiation, among the world's best. The Garo-Jhimpir wind corridor alone holds an estimated 50,000 MW potential. Yet only a fraction is developed, while the country spends billions on imported oil, coal and LNG, deepening circular debt and balance-of-payments crises.

Citing Denmark, Portugal and Spain, Shakoore said visionary policy and investor confidence can transform energy systems. Pakistan, with greater natural advantages, lags due to inconsistent policies, regulatory uncertainty and weak transmission infrastructure.

He urged the federal and provincial governments to make renewables an economic priority: set ambitious targets, simplify investment, modernize the grid, expand storage, and promote local manufacturing of panels, batteries and wind components.

"Every delay means costlier power and lost jobs. Pakistan's sunshine and winds should power economic transformation, not be left idle," he concluded.

Sunni Ulema Council announces Bandhi sit-in over alleged blasphemy cases

Anwar Adil Khanzada

NAWABSHAH: Sunni Ulema Council will hold a protest sit-in today in Bandhi over alleged blasphemy incidents in Bandhi and 68 Mori, district leaders said at a press conference at Ismail Masjid, Persian Bagh.



Qari Muhammad Hanif Usmani, Allama Muhammad Amir Farooqi, and others criticized the administration for failing to arrest the accused despite repeated assurances. They announced a 5:00 PM sit-in on Moro Road near Allied Bank Bandhi, with convoys from across the district.

Leaders warned that if arrests are not made, the protest will expand province-wide, and the sit-in could paralyze the district.

Books are the best companions; reading cultivates awareness and positive thinking," says Asma Ismail Butt

Rawalpindi

Renowned writer Allah Ditta Najmi has released his new book, "Khush Bayaniyan," a collection of life experiences, memorable moments from Rawalpindi, and reflections on personalities from diverse schools of thought. The book also acknowledges the literary and artistic contributions of noted author and director Asma Ismail Butt and recalls the golden era of stage drama.



Speaking on the occasion, Asma Ismail Butt described Khush Bayaniyan as a beautifully written collection of memories and observations that every literature enthusiast should read. She thanked Allah Ditta Najmi for preserving cherished memories through his writing. She said that while talented writers and readers still exist, the culture of book reading is declining. Emphasizing the importance of reading newspapers and books, she said it broadens knowledge, develops critical thinking, and promotes a positive outlook. She expressed concern that mobile phones and the internet have distanced many young people from books and urged them to embrace reading, stressing that learning and acquiring knowledge should continue throughout life.

Beat the heat

ISLAMABAD: Youngsters beat the heat by bathing in Rawal Dam spillway nullah in the Federal Capital. On June 30, 2026, Islamabad experienced an intense heatwave with actual temperatures peaking at 39°C to 40°C during the day. Blazing sun and high humidity made the weather extremely hot, with the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) recording a severe "feels-like" (heat index) temperature of 46°C in the capital during the afternoon.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Labour Leaders Call for 'Just' Energy Transition Centred on Workers' Rights and Livelihoods

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Policymakers, trade unionists, academics, and civil society agreed that Pakistan's shift to a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy must be fair, inclusive, and focused on protecting workers.

The call came at the 5th National Labour Conference on "Decent Work and Just Energy Transition", organized by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Pakistan.

Inaugurating the event, Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and HRD Chaudhry Salik Hussain reaffirmed the government's commitment to decent work and stronger labour institutions, saying workers



must not be left behind in the country's economic and environmental transformation. He added that Pakistan's real challenge is implementing existing policies.

FES Pakistan Country Director Felix Kolbitz said climate change, informality, and inequality are linked. He stressed that a successful transition requires social dialogue, strong

labour protections, gender-responsive policies, and worker participation in policymaking.

Sidra Saeed, FES Regional Climate Coordinator, said evidence-based dialogue is needed to align climate action with social justice and employment security. Keynote speaker Badar Alam of PRIED outlined a "Just Transition" for Pakistan, urging climate policies that create decent jobs while safeguarding vulnerable workers.

Participants concluded that Pakistan's green transition must deliver social justice and decent work, not only environmental gains, and urged a comprehensive national framework to ensure no worker is left behind.

International Seminar on Gender-Based Violence in Indian-Occupied Kashmir

Bureau Report

GENEVA: The International Muslim Women Union, in collaboration with the Kashmir Institute of International Relations, is convening a seminar titled "Gender-Based Violence in Context of Conflicts" to examine the intersection of international human rights and humanitarian law with the ongoing situation in Indian-occupied Kashmir. The event addressed the use of sexual

violence as a weapon of war, enforced disappearances, and the resulting trauma faced by women, including those known as half-widows and half-wives.

From the mass rape at Kunan Poshpora in 1991 to incidents in Khutha, Shopian and other areas, survivors and human rights monitors have documented patterns of sexual violence by Indian security forces. Such acts, committed in the context of armed conflict, may constitute

war crimes under the Geneva Conventions and other applicable international standards. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) report on Kashmir (2018-2019) raised serious concerns over sexual violence, lack of accountability, and excessive use of force.

Civil society and survivors' groups urged the international community to support independent investigations, survivor-centered reparations, and implementation of OHCHR recommendations.

Justice delayed is justice denied. Women in Indian-occupied Kashmir, like survivors worldwide, are entitled to truth, accountability, and dignity.

The seminar was moderated by Ms. Paras Zaffar LLM at Geneva University, speakers include Carolyn Handschin-Moser, Director, Office for UN Relations Geneva, Women's Federation for



World Peace Intl ; Ms. Amélie d'Hausen Ph.D. scholar at Geneva University, Ms. Tahreem Bukhari Assistant Advocate Shia Saleem Qurashi. Director CISS Aijk.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:17 am
Zohr 12:11 pm
Asr 5:12 pm
Maghrib 7:22 pm
Isha 9:06 pm

EMERGENCY

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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH 561111
MH 561116
MH 561116
Cantt Hospital 9270907-11
DHQ 5556311-4
RGH 9290301-7
Holy Family 9290322-7
PIMS 9261170-79

Maryam Nawaz unveils Punjab's 'Green Transport Revolution' with 5,000 E-Buses

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz launched the province's largest green transport initiative, announcing plans to scale up electric buses, e-bikes, e-taxis, and electric three-wheelers across Punjab.

Chairing a Transport Department and Punjab Mass Transit Authority meeting, she was briefed on electric buses, Gujranwala and Faisalabad mass transit projects, e-taxis, Lahore's Super Autonomous Rapid Transit (SRT), e-bikes, a command and control centre, and the Murree Glass Train. The meeting approved simultaneous rollout of e-buses, e-taxis, e-bikes, and electric rickshaws.



The cabinet approved re-launching an interest-free e-bike scheme for students, targeting 100,000 bikes in one year. The government will subsidize Rs70,000 per bike. Male students will pay Rs14,000 down payment and Rs2,100 monthly instalments. Female students will get

the down payment and registration fee covered, paying only Rs2,100 monthly. Government employees are also eligible. In phase one, 1,500 e-buses will run in 91 tehsils across Gujranwala, Gujrat, Rawalpindi, Multan, Sahiwal, Bahawalpur, D. G. Khan, Faisalabad, and Sargodha. Around 400 e-buses are already operational, with 400 more to be converted. The CM ordered 61 e-buses to start in 28 districts before July 10 and immediate service in Jhang, Kabirwala, Bhakkar, Attock, Mandi Bahauddin, Hafizabad, Chiniot, Layyah, Okara, and Sialkot. Another 189 e-buses will

be soft-launched online, while 112 have reached 10 districts for July 25 operations. A further 488 e-buses will arrive from China on July 20. She directed at least 15 e-buses per district and expanded services to Kot Addu, Talagang, Taunsa, Vehari, and Lodhran. On mass transit, the 25-station, 19.5-km Gujranwala project and 21-station, 20.3-km Faisalabad system are progressing fast. For e-taxis, 582 applicants have paid and 206 taxis delivered. The 18-km Lahore SRT depot is slated for completion by July 2026.

Awami Tehreek Protests in Tando Bago over water shortage, inflation



Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Awami Tehreek held a rally and sit-in in Tando Bago on Tuesday against alleged artificial water shortages in Sindh, the proposed 28th Constitutional Amendment, inflation, drug abuse, and violence against women.

The rally moved from Allah Wala Chowk to a sit-in at Badr Chowk. Leaders including Noor Ahmed Katyar and Mehran Dars alleged Sindh was denied its water share during Kharif, causing drought in Badin's tail-end areas and crises for agriculture, people, and livestock. They also condemned rising women's killings, narcotics, inflation, and poor law and order, and opposed the amendment. Protesters demanded water, relief, road repairs, college restoration, better services, and an end to load-shedding.

Commissioner Multan Reviews KPIs, Orders Full Implementation of CM Punjab's Targets

Quratulain Asim

MULTAN: Commissioner Multan Division Aamir Karim Khan chaired a meeting to review progress on KPIs set by the Chief Minister Punjab for district administrations.

Deputy Commissioners briefed on performance, rankings, and progress across indicators. The Commissioner directed 100% implementation of all targets, urging districts to adopt effective strategies focused on ground realities and public relief to improve rankings.

The meeting covered complaint redressal, timely data uploading, field verification, social media monitoring, DIT team identification, and inter-department coordination. DCs reported significant gains from daily complaint resolution and field monitoring.

Khan ordered continuous self-monitoring, prompt corrective action on weak areas, and accurate, timely data. He stressed swift public grievance redressal and stronger departmental coordination.

Africa Day Celebrated

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi along with President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Sardar Tahir Mehmood and Ambassadors of African countries cuts the cake during a ceremony to celebrate African Day at ICCI in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Court Orders Age Test in Faisalabad Child Marriage, Kidnapping Case

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Judicial Magistrate Chaudhry Muhammad Asif ordered age determination for 13-year-old Christian girl Amber Nadeem, allegedly kidnapped on June 12, 2026 by Mohsin Liaquat. FIR 838/26 was registered at Razabad Police Station under PPC 365-B. Police recovered Amber and arrested the suspect after a Voice for Justice petition.

During the June 27 hearing, the suspect's family claimed Amber, 18, had converted and married Liaquat. Amber's lawyers, led by Advocate Malik



Mahmood Hussain Awan, submitted church records showing she is 13, citing the Punjab Child Marriage Restraint Act 2026. Amber told court she was

coached to lie about her age. She was placed in protective custody. Next hearing: June 30.

Auqaf Punjab Orders Dismissal, Demotions, and Rs11.09m Recovery in Urs, Milad Fund Fraud Case

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Auqaf Punjab has imposed major penalties on three former officials for corruption and embezzlement in Urs Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh 2025 and Eid Milad-un-Nabi 2024 funds, Secretary and Chief Administrator Dr. Ehsan Bhutta announced.

Acting on reports from a Special Audit Committee, inquiry officer, and hearing officer, Dr. Bhutta issued final orders under the PEEDA Act 2006. Former Assistant Director of Religious Affairs Hafiz Javed Shaukat was dismissed from service and ordered to repay Rs6.42 million for orchestrating Rs16.31 million in fraudulent disbursements. Charges include unauthorized open-check payments, tax evasion, illegal book-printing advances, and a questionable iPhone purchase.

Former Administrator Sheikh Jamil Ahmed was demoted to a lower post and pay scale for five years with a Rs2.80 million recovery, while former Manager Tahir Maqsood received a three-year demotion and Rs1.87 million recovery. Both were found guilty of a Rs17.86 million scheme involving fabricated urgency rules, tender violations to favor select suppliers, illegal split-of-work, and unverified vouchers.

Dr. Bhutta directed recoveries from departmental dues or through civil/revenue laws. He ordered a reference to the Anti-Corruption Establishment over open-check fraud, a fact-finding inquiry against former Khateeb Mufti Ramzan Sialvi for a dubious Rs2.60 million international travel payout, and an independent probe into the then-Secretary and former DG Religious Affairs.

Kutchery Bazaar Beautification Stalls After Rs. 380 Million Spent

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Two years after launch, the Rs. 380 million Kutchery Bazaar beautification project near the Clock Tower remains incomplete, raising concerns over negligence and possible irregularities.

Citizens report missing iron pipes, a fire hydrant, equipment, and five water coolers from the green belt corridor. They allege a contractor removed sewage pipes and other material in trolleys, with no official response.

Broken garbage bins, an inoperative hydraulic barrier, damaged electric barrier, off decorative lights, and persistent encroachments have left the market traffic-clogged and unsafe at night.

Residents demand Punjab's CM, Commissioner, and DC audit the project, investigate missing assets, and ensure timely completion.

Dr. Abrar Malik Visits Skardu, Stresses Support for Private Education in GB



News Desk

SKARDU: Dr. Abrar Hussain Malik, Central President of the All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association (APPSCA), visited Skardu and met with educationists, academic administrators, and social leaders to discuss strengthening private education, teacher development, curriculum improvement, and facilities in remote regions.

During the visit, Dr. Malik met Hafiz Rehmatullah, Director of Khubaib College Skardu. They discussed challenges facing private institutions in Gilgit-Baltistan, changing educational needs, and creating high-quality learning environments for students.

He also held talks with renowned educationist Professor Ehsanullah on the region's education system, teacher capacity building, curriculum reforms, and greater public-private collaboration.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Malik said institutions in Gilgit-Baltistan are making commendable contributions despite limited resources. He noted that private schools and colleges play a key role in educating millions across Pakistan and supporting national development. He called for a comprehensive strategy to support the private sector and address its challenges.

He added that APPSCA will continue to provide a platform for private institutions, enhance teachers' professional skills, raise educational standards, and help secure a better future for students.

Minority Students Receive Scholarships in Toba Tek Singh Under CM Maryam's Initiative

Zafar Chishty

TOBA TEK SINGH: A cheque distribution ceremony was held at the Deputy Commissioner's Office under the Punjab Human Rights and Minorities Affairs Department, in line with Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision for equal educational opportunities for minorities.

Deputy Commissioner Umar Abbas Mela awarded scholarships to 27 deserving minority students, with parents in attendance. Intermediate students received Rs40,000, Bachelor's students Rs60,000, and Master's students Rs100,000 each.

DC Mela said the government is ensuring financial barriers do not hinder talented minority youth.

Recipients and parents thanked CM Maryam Nawaz, the department, and district administration for supporting minority students' education.



PSCA's 'Mera Pyara' Team Reunites 182 Missing Persons with Families in Karachi Operation

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Mera Pyara Team of Punjab Safe Cities Authority's Virtual Center for Child Safety has reunited 182 missing, abandoned, and special persons with their families following an operation at Edhi Homes Karachi.

According to a PSCA spokesperson, on June 7, 2026, the team documented nearly 800 individuals by conducting interviews and collecting photographs, biometric data, and other details, which were entered into the Mera Pyara System.

Identification was carried out using biometric verification, facial recognition, artificial intelligence, and manual tracing. Identities of around 428 individuals were established, including 152 biometric matches and 30 cases resolved through manual tracing. After three weeks of work, families of 182 individuals were traced and reunions completed following legal verification. The search for the remaining individuals continues. The spokesperson said the reunions brought relief to families separated for years. To date, the Mera Pyara Program has reunited over 77,000 missing, abandoned children and special persons across Pakistan, with work on pending cases accelerating.

The public is urged to share information on missing, abandoned children, or special persons via Punjab Emergency Helpline 15, press 3, or at 0309-0000015 for immediate action.

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How Pakistan Became Israel's Primary Target-I

The geopolitical sands of Southwest Asia have shifted dramatically in recent months. In a stunning reversal of roles, Pakistan—once viewed as a struggling state battling internal insurgencies and economic instability—has emerged as a pivotal power broker on the world stage. Through its successful mediation between the United States and Iran and its efforts to avert a global economic crisis, Islamabad has positioned itself as a formidable voice in international diplomacy. This diplomatic ascendancy, however, has come at a considerable cost. By challenging the established order and offering a counterbalance to Israeli power in the region, Pakistan has inadvertently painted a target on its own back. The result is a new and dangerous proxy war being fought on Pakistani soil, leveraging the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan and the Balochistan Liberation Army as tools to bleed the nation from within.

The calculus of power in the Middle East has been fundamentally upended. As the only nuclear-armed Muslim state with a growing arsenal, Pakistan is increasingly viewed by regional actors as a necessary counterweight to Israel's unbridled military might and expansionist ambitions. The narrative in Islamabad and across many Middle Eastern capitals is that Israel, guided by a maximalist ideology and backed by its own nuclear capabilities, seeks to redraw the map of the region.

The perceived Greater Israel project, aiming to control territory from the Nile to the Euphrates, necessitates the destruction or fracture of all regional power structures. Under this worldview, Israel's strategy is to create chaos, foster fractured governments, and use nuclear blackmail to cow its adversaries.

In this context, Pakistan's nuclear umbrella is seen as the ultimate deterrent against Israeli aggression. By providing a potential shield for nations like Turkey, Egypt, and Iran, Pakistan has become a primary obstacle to Israel's regional ambitions. This is the crux of the new animosity. Israel has recognized that it cannot neutralize Iran, Turkey, or other regional rivals without first neutralizing the threat from Pakistan.

The diplomatic achievements of Pakistan—including its instrumental role in stopping the wars in Lebanon and Gaza—have made it a major thorn in the eye of Israel. What Pakistan achieved diplomatically is perhaps greater in value and impact than what Iran achieved through its military confrontations with the United States and Israel.

This remarkable ascent has transformed Pakistan from a peripheral player into a central actor in the Middle Eastern power equation, and with that transformation has come the inevitable attention

of adversaries who view its rise as a direct threat to their interests.

To counter this emerging threat, Israel is purportedly pivoting to a strategy of asymmetric warfare, exploiting Pakistan's internal vulnerabilities through a classic playbook: find, fund, and arm proxy actors to destabilize a state from within, avoiding a direct and costly conventional confrontation.

The first prong of this strategy involves the TTP. Pakistan has long differentiated between the good Taliban in Afghanistan and the bad Taliban at home, but this distinction has become dangerously moot. The Afghan Taliban, now in power in Kabul, has provided safe havens, training camps, and logistical support to the TTP, allowing them to operate with near impunity across the porous border.

Now Israel in collaboration with India and elements within the Afghan government, is providing arms, ammunition, financial incentives, and operational guidance to the TTP. This financing and advanced training are intended to motivate TTP operatives to intensify their attacks on Pakistan's military and civilian power centers, creating a constant state of insecurity that weakens the state from within.

The second, equally dangerous prong

involves the separatist movements in Balochistan. The Balochistan Liberation Army and other ethnic insurgent groups are waging a war for independence, and while these movements have deep-rooted local grievances, they have become receptive to external manipulation.

The exiled Baloch leaders have expressed a willingness to align with Israel, viewing it as a potential guarantor of their independence. This creates a perverse alliance of convenience. India's Research and Analysis Wing has a well-documented history of fomenting unrest in Balochistan to destabilize Pakistan, with the arrest of Indian naval officer Kulbhushan Jadhav in 2016 serving as a key example.

Now, Israel is reportedly deepening this cooperation, offering advanced intelligence, satellite reconnaissance, and perhaps even technological assistance to these separatist groups. In return, the BLA and its affiliates are promising to act as Israel and India's stooges in a post-conflict scenario, leveraging whatever remains of a fractured Pakistan. The goal is to cripple the Pakistani state, potentially allowing external actors to seize control of the strategic Gwadar port and neutralize Pakistan's nuclear assets.

Beyond the proxy war, there is an immediate and visceral threat that Pakistan must contend with: Israel's technological prowess in targeted assassinations. Israel has a documented history of using

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Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Changsha International Green Intelligent Construction and Building Industrialization Expo

The 2026 Changsha International Green Intelligent Construction and Building Industrialization Expo, opened in Changsha, transforming the Changsha International Convention and Exhibition Center into a global showcase for next-generation building technologies.

With over 45,000 square meters of exhibition space, the three-day event has drawn industry leaders, policymakers, and business delegations from 29 countries and regions, under the theme "Technology Empowers Intelligent Construction; Innovation Leads to a Better Life".

For Pakistani visitors, the expo represents more than a technological spectacle, it is a strategic sourcing ground for scalable, cost-effective solutions to meet the country's growing infrastructure and housing needs. At the forefront of the overseas delegation is Abdul Basit, Head of Business Development at Fecto Group of Industries, one of Pakistan's oldest industrial houses established in 1952 with flagship operations in cement, sugar, tractors and mining CEN reported.

"Chinese technology is always helpful for Pakistan. Pakistan has a demand for high-quality building materials and intelligent construction technologies, and China offers leading solutions," Basit shared. "We are looking for a good partner who can come as a joint venture partner so we can jointly expand the cement factory."

Basit also revealed that Fecto Group held mining licenses in Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan and was actively seeking Chinese companies to cooperate on these untapped resources. This marked his first visit to Hunan province—a strategic choice as the region was home to several of the world's top 50 construction machinery manufacturers, many of which were showcasing their full industrial value chains with a focus on intelligent and eco-friendly equipment.

The expo was organized around three core pillars: intelligent equipment, "good housing" construction and urban renewal. Key innovations on display range from intelligent site safety equipment and automated cement leveling robots to low-carbon urban renewal technologies and smart living systems, providing a panoramic view of both domestic and international construction advances.

Among the most sought-after technologies is SANY's systematic green demolition and recycling service, which provides integrated solutions for controlled blast and eco-friendly material recovery. Hu Zhuling, President of Pakistan-Hunan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, noted that this particular innovation has attracted strong interest from the Pakistani side. "Pakistan has demand in this area, especially as the country accelerates its infrastructure modernization and urban redevelopment projects," she noted.



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

More Than Numbers: What the Budget 2026-27 Means for Pakistan

Hadia Ahmad

The government of Pakistan presented its budget for session 2026-2027 on June 12th. This Federal budget is the roadmap for the economy of the country for the next budget year. It represents the path for allocation of public resources to achieve the best possible result in the current scenario according to the understanding of the government and officials. Finance Minister M. Aurangzeb presented the budget in National Assembly of Pakistan. This budget has been designed in challenging environment with limited resources, debt burden, IMF requirements, and growing public demands for economic and social welfare. This budget shows that its main goal is to maintain macroeconomic stability while also managing microeconomic activity for sustainable growth.

The total federal budget stands at approx. 18.77 trillion rupees, which reflects increase over the budget of previous year. The government has set a target of 4% for GDP growth. Projection of Inflation is done around 8.2% which indicates that government expects to stable the price at greater rate as compared to double-digit inflation witnessed y nation in previous challenging years. The budget also targets fiscal deficit of approx. 3.6% of GDP and surplus of 2% of GDP. This indicates commitment and expectation of government to fiscal consolidation and compliance with the requirements of IMF. The intention of these targets is to improve the confidence of investors and support long-term economic activity.

One of the most important pillars of the budget is revenue generation for every country. The target of Rs 15.26 trillion has been assigned to Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for tax

collection. For achieving this goal, government has planned to broaden the tax base, increase the monitoring of transactions, and improve compliance among taxpayers and the public. Government has intelligently paid focused on increasing the efficiency of tax collection mechanisms and reducing tax evasion instead of just increasing and introducing new taxes for the people which is a good move. Profits from enterprises or companies owned by state itself are expected to contribute significantly in the income of the government. Improvement in fiscal sustainability and reduction in dependence on debts can be done through implementing these designed measures.

Most of the government spending is being consumed by current expenditures. The single largest expenditure for the state and the government is the debt servicing which accounts for more than Rs 8 trillion. This shows significant both domestic and external debt obligations of Pakistan and made policymakers to look into this major challenge for the economic stability of Pakistan. A large share of the resources and the income of the state get spent in interest payments. Due to this, funds for development and welfare projects are cut and limited to make the amount for debt servicing. This happens because the focus of the government is on reduction of pressures related to debt and saving the country from going default.

In the FY2026-27 budget, defence expenditure has taken notable attention from both government officials and the public. Approx. Rs 3 trillion is being allocated for defence purposes y the government which represents notable increase from previous fiscal year. This reflects the security concerns for the state which is potentially due to evolving regional geopolitical dynamics, and the hostile activities of India. The strategic environment of South Asia is the reason which makes the defence a major

priority within federal spending.

Spending on development is also one of the major parts of the budget even though it is constrained by fiscal pressures, debt servicing, and hostile geopolitical environment. Approx. Rs 1 trillion has been allocated by The Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). Projects related to transportation, energy, water, infrastructure, education, health, and connectivity will be financed under PSDP. Investments are made in the projects to improve the economy, system efficiency and reduce unemployment. However, experts and analysts have raised the point that these allocations for development sector are relatively very low as compared to the huge infrastructure and social sector requirements.

Several initiatives have been introduced in the budget to stimulate the economic activity of the country. The major sector which contributes to the economy and job market of the country is agriculture. The government expects to benefit this major contributor of the economy from measures which are designed to improve the productivity, and access to modern technology. This sector is projected to grow at approx. 4.5% which will be possible due to efforts made by the government. These were done to encourage the manufacturing, exports, and investments in this industrial sector. The government has also focused to support small and medium-sized enterprises and export-oriented businesses in the budget.

Policy makers are deeply concerned about performance of external sector. Approx. \$32.9 billion from exports and around \$70 billion in imports are projected by the government. Overseas Pakistanis are expected to send over \$42 billion in remittances. These remittances play vital role in supporting foreign exchange reserves of Pakistan. The current account deficit

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Language Builds Bridges in Pakistan-Malaysia Relations

When Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif touched down in Putrajaya this past October, the cameras focused on trade figures, the \$200 million halal meat quota, the digital economy pledges, six accords in a single afternoon. But one small moment got far less attention than it deserved, the launch of an Urdu translation of a book by Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. It made no headlines in the business pages, yet it points to the instrument that has quietly underwritten Pakistan-Malaysia relations since 1957: language and cultural affinity, not just diplomatic communiqués.

We often measure our foreign relationships in dollars and MoUs, states sign agreements, exchange visits, balance trade deficits, and call it a "mutual relationship." But real relationships between nations, like real relationships between people, are not built on paperwork. They're built on familiarity, on people understanding each other's words, customs, and ways of life well enough to trust one another even when governments change. This is what diplomats call cultural and language diplomacy, and it is exactly the kind of soft power Pakistan has historically underused, even though we are sitting on a huge natural advantage with Malaysia.

Now, think about it from a Pakistani point of view. Malaysia is a Muslim-majority country, like us. Our languages already share roots, Urdu and Bahasa Malaysia both borrow heavily from Arabic and Persian, so words don't feel foreign to either side. Millions of Pakistani and Malaysians have crossed paths during Hajj and Umrah for generations. Hundreds of Pakistani students are pursuing higher education

in Malaysia, while a large number of Pakistani nationals are working, running businesses, and contributing to the country's economy. This is not a relationship that needs to be invented from scratch. It already exists in everyday life, it just hasn't been built upon properly at the official level. The Malaysian High Commissioner in Islamabad, Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, has been holding outreach sessions with Pakistani journalists, encouraging them to play an active role in strengthening this relationship rather than merely reporting on it from a distance. Definitely this is a smart move and Pakistani media houses should take seriously.

Education is another place where this is already paying off, even if most Pakistanis don't realize it. Pakistan is now the third-largest source of international students in Malaysia, with over 3,800 students currently studying there. A Pakistani student who spends three or four years studying in Kuala Lumpur doesn't just bring home a degree, they bring home friendships, a second language, and a lasting goodwill toward Malaysia that no government statement could ever produce on its own. The new education MoU signed during the October visit is a step in the right direction, but it needs real follow-through: more scholarships, easier visas, and stronger university partnerships.

I would like to share with the Malaysian Ambassador an excellent example of how language and culture can act as a bridge between two nations. Türkiye's Yunus Emre Institute, in partnership with Allama Iqbal Open University, has been successfully running a summer camp in Pakistan for the past three years where children learn the Turkish language alongside archery and traditional Turkish games. It is

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Chaudhry Tabraiz Aura Elected President of Pakistan Press Club London

News Report

LONDON: Chaudhry Tabraiz Aura has been elected President of the Pakistan Press Club London after securing the support of a large majority of journalists in the club's elections.

Following his victory, Chaudhry Tabraiz Aura expressed heartfelt gratitude to the journalist community for their trust, support, and confidence. He described the result as a collective success, crediting everyone who voted for him and supported his team's vision.

He pledged to serve the journalist



community with honesty, dedica-

tion, and commitment, promising to strengthen unity, protect the dignity of journalists, and work for the continued development of the Pakistan Press Club London.

According to the newly elected president, his panel won 11 out of 13 seats in the elections. While celebrating the overall success, he also expressed disappointment over losing two key positions, claiming that his colleagues had not received fair treatment. Despite these concerns, he reaffirmed his commitment to respecting democratic values and continuing to work positively in the best



interests of the journalist community.

Chaudhry Tabraiz Aura also thanked voters, fellow journalists, members of the Pakistani community, and every member of his panel for their unwavering support. He called on all members to work together to make the Pakistan Press Club London a stronger, more active, and respected institution.

In an emotional conclusion to his message, he dedicated his victory to his parents, praying for good health and a long life for his father, Chaudhry Muhammad Ashraf Aura, and asking God to grant his late mother the highest place in Paradise.

Chaudhry Tabraiz Aura, a renowned journalist in Europe, also works as Bureau Chief for Europe at Daily The Spokesman.

With extensive experience in international reporting and analysis, Tabraiz is widely recognized for his coverage of diaspora affairs, Pakistan-Europe relations, and strategic developments.

The entire team of Daily The Spokesman, including Naveed Ahmad Khan, Editor of Daily The Spokesman, congratulates Chaudhry Tabraiz on his success and prays for his continued success.



UNAOC Head Urges Global Cooperation to Counter Rising Islamophobia and Polarization

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at ISSI hosted UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, H. E. Miguel Angel Moratinos, for a public talk on dialogue, Islamophobia, and multilateral cooperation.

Dr. Neelum Nigar said UNAOC's focus on intercultural and inter-faith dialogue aligns with Pakistan's commitment to coexistence and religious respect. Ambassador Khalid Mahmood noted rising polarization, hate speech, and Islamophobia, citing anti-Muslim rhet-

oric, attacks on places of worship, and cases like India and Gaza. He recalled Pakistan's role in securing the UN International Day to Combat Islamophobia and welcomed the UN Special Envoy's appointment, stressing that no religion should be linked to terrorism.

In his keynote, Moratinos said the world faces fragmentation, eroding multilateral trust, climate change, conflict, inequality, and AI-driven challenges. He argued dialogue, trust in multilateralism, and intercultural understanding are now strategic necessities, not aspirations. While recognizing AI's potential, he urged

ethical, cooperative governance.

He said transnational issues cannot be solved unilaterally, and the 21st century's test is political will to cooperate. Warning against portraying diversity as division, he said inclusive, plural societies are more resilient and that UNAOC's mandate is to counter extremism through dialogue.

Praising Pakistan's diplomacy, peacekeeping, and civilizational heritage, Moratinos said it can bridge regions and advance inclusive diplomacy. He concluded that multilateralism must be renewed, with dialogue as the key tool for trust and peace.

Don't Cut Down the Capital's Cool



Analysis

Munaza Kazmi

Islamabad was built to be different. Surrounded by the Margalla Hills and laid out with tree-lined sectors, it was Pakistan's "City of Forests." Walk through F-6 or E-7 in spring and you still see it — jacaranda blooms, pine shade, birdsong. But that green is thinning, and the city is paying for it.

Tree loss in Islamabad isn't from one big event. It's death by a thousand cuts. Housing schemes and farmhouses eat into scrub forest on the outskirts. Roads get wider, parking lots get bigger, and mature roadside

trees are the first to go. Inside the Margalla Hills National Park, illegal cutting and encroachment fragment the canopy. In foothill villages, trees still fall for fuel and land clearing.

The Pakistan Meteorological Department and CDA studies both pointed out, Islamabad is getting hotter, faster than many other cities.

It's a matter of concern for not only the departments but for every resident, let me tell you how. First, heat. A single mature tree can cool its surroundings by 5°C to 8°C. Remove hundreds per sector and you get hotter footpaths, higher electricity bills, and more heat stroke cases in May and June.

Second, water. The Margallas recharge groundwater and protect the Rawal Lake catchment. When trees go, rain runs off instead of soaking in. That means more erosion, more silt in Rawal Lake, and more pressure on our taps.

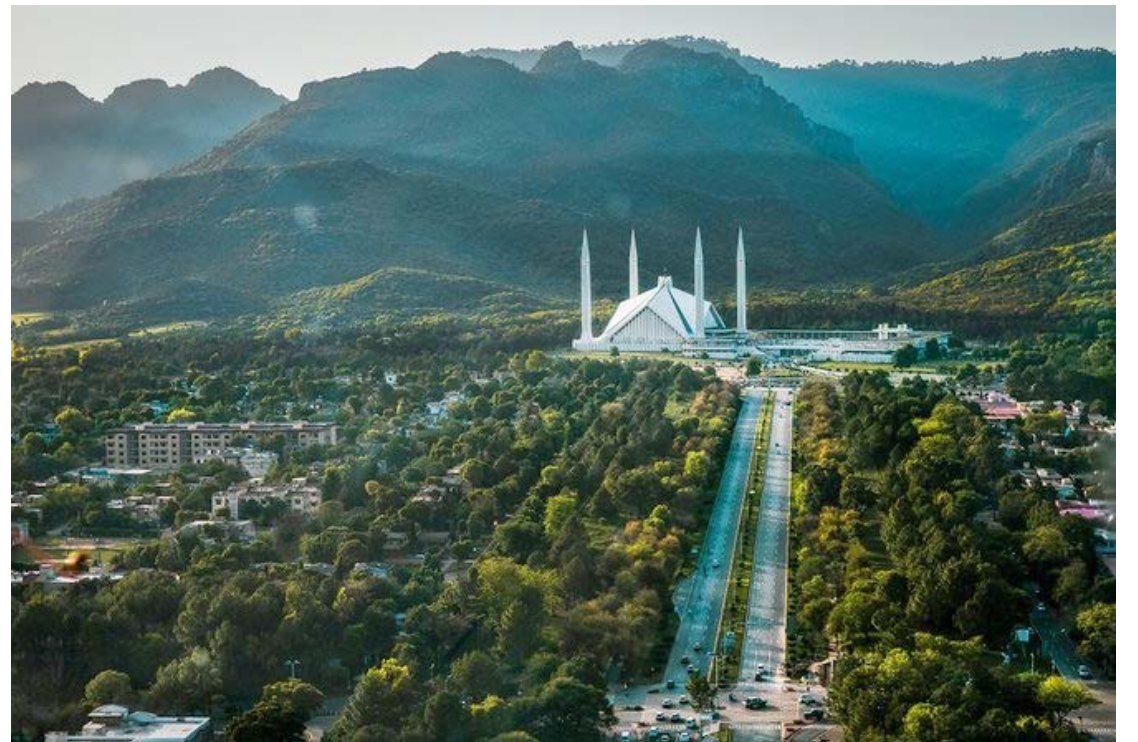
Third, air and wildlife. Trees filter dust and smog. The Margallas also shelter leopards, deer, monkeys, and

hundreds of bird species. Lose the forest, and we lose both clean air and the ecosystem that keeps it.

Before this turns into most alarming Islamabad must Protect what's left: Enforce the Margalla boundary without exceptions. Use satellite monitoring and citizen reporting to stop new encroachment and illegal felling. Mandatory tree replacement: Treat a 30-year-old tree like infrastructure. If a project removes one, it must relocate or plant five native saplings on-site.

Planting the right plant in the right place: Shift to native species — chir pine, phulai, kahu, jaman, local oaks. Use Miyawaki micro-forests in schools, hospitals, and empty plots for fast shade. Plan green into the city: Mandate 20%+ tree cover and functional parks in all new housing schemes. No housing plan should be approved without a certified green map.

Islamabad still has an advantage most capitals lost long ago: mountains



at its edge and room for trees on every street. If we keep cutting, we trade that

for heat, dust, and water stress. If we protect and replant, the capital

can stay what it was meant to be — cool, green, and liveable.

Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad Hosts Tourism Promotion Event to Boost Pakistan-Ethiopia Ties

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in Islamabad hosted a tourism promotion event to spotlight Ethiopia as a travel destination and strengthen bilateral engagement with Pakistan. Geographic Reference

The event brought together diplomats, travel agents, media representatives, and digital influencers.

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, Advisor and Coordinator to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Tourism, attended as Chief Guest. Hamid Asghar Khan, Additional Secretary (Africa) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was the Guest of Honor. Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps H. E. Mr. Atadjan Movlamov and Managing Director (MD) of the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) is Mr. Aftab Ur Rehman Rana also present on the occasion.

Historic and Cultural Bonds

Welcoming the guests, H. E. Dr. Oumer Hussien Oba, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan, highlighted the historic "Habesha" connection rooted in the First Hijra, when early Muslims found refuge in Ethiopia. He said the Al-Nejashi Mosque and the legacy of Hazrat Bilal Habeshi remain a source of spiritual affinity and brotherhood for Pakistanis.

Ethiopia's Tourism Pitch

Ambassador Oba presented Ethiopia as the "Land of Origins" and Africa's fastest-growing tourism destination. He cited new world-class resorts and parks developed under Prime Minister H. E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed's leadership. He added that Addis Ababa, Africa's third-largest diplomatic hub and headquarter-

ters of the African Union, hosted over 150 international summits last year.

He also pointed to Ethiopian Airlines' direct Karachi-Addis Ababa flights as a key advantage for Pakistani travelers.

Pakistan's Response

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan welcomed the Embassy's initiative to build people-to-people ties and lauded Ethiopian Airlines for bridging the connectivity gap with Africa. He announced a reciprocal influencer exchange: Pakistani content creators will visit Ethiopia soon, while Ethiopian and African influencers will receive complimentary tourism packages to Pakistan.

Hamid Asghar Khan thanked Ethiopia for starting direct flight operations to Pakistan, calling them the most critical link between the two countries. Recalling his visit to Ethiopia, he praised the country's energy produc-



tion, rapid urban development, tourism

landscapes, and progress in aviation.

Photo by Sultan Bashir



Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
180,301.70	178,414.79
Day's High	Day's Low
180,150.41	179,020.10
Index Value	Change
29,230,316,321	+1886.91
Percentage	Time
+1.06%	30 Jun, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
10,497.12	+12.90
Percentage	Time
+0.12%	30 Jun, 4:40 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
52,372.99	+190.25
Percentage	Time
+0.36%	30 Jun, 1:35 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
70,062.32	+594.21
Percentage	Time
+0.86%	30 Jun, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

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

Shift to Alternative Crops Essential for Food Security and Sustainability: Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

MULTAN: Chairman SM Group of Industries, Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali Anjum, has called for moving beyond wheat and prioritizing alternative food crops to strengthen food security, agricultural sustainability, and public health.

Speaking to the media, he said crops like maize, rice, sorghum, pearl millet, oats, barley, and rye are not only nutritious but also better suited to areas with poor soil, erratic rainfall, or harsh climates. Alternative crops, he explained, can yield well with less water and require fewer chemical fertilizers and pesticides, making them ideal for Pakistan's arid and semi-arid regions.

"Rapid population growth, climate change, water scarcity, and declining soil fertility demand new approaches in agriculture," he said. Grains account for more than half of global dietary energy, with wheat, rice, and maize as staples. Barley, millet, sorghum, oats, and rye have historically



anchored food systems across Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Anjum noted that crop diversification can raise farmers' incomes, improve soil health, optimize water use, and build resilience against climate shocks. He also emphasized the nutritional value of these grains, rich in fiber, minerals, protein, and essential nutrients needed to combat malnutrition.

He highlighted triticale, a wheat-rye hybrid, as a promising option for Pakistan. The crop performs well under low-water, rain-fed, and less-fertile conditions, and is high in protein, lysine, fiber, and minerals. Already widely grown in Poland, Germany, and France for food and livestock feed, triticale has shown encouraging results in Pakistan's research centers and rain-fed areas.

Anjum urged joint action by government, researchers, and farmers to support research, promotion, and cultivation of alternative crops. "Diversifying our food basket is critical to ensuring safe, diverse, and sustainable food for future generations," he concluded.

MoU signing ceremony

Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary, President & CEO, Mobilink Bank, and Waqas ul Hassan, CEO Karandaaz Pakistan sign an MoU for two-year 'AgriFin for Her' project in Islamabad, which aims to onboard 50,000 women farmers into the formal financial system through access to digital financial services, tailored saving product, and financial and digital literacy programs.



Emirates Wins 'Best Airline Worldwide' for 13th Straight Year at BTME 2026

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Emirates secured the industry's top honour at the 2026 Business Traveller Middle East (BTME) Awards, winning Best Airline Worldwide for the 13th consecutive year. The airline also claimed Best First Class and Best Airport Lounge in the Middle East for its First Class Lounge at Dubai International Airport.

The BTME Awards, voted by Business Traveller Middle East readers, recognize excellence in business travel. Emirates' Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer Adnan Kazim accepted the awards.

The wins reflect Emirates' focus on customer experience on board and on the ground. Its fleet retrofit is underway with 219 A380s and 777s being fully refurbished, while new A350 deliveries are expanding the latest cabin products across nearly 140 destinations. Refurbished aircraft and A350s now serve 70+ global routes, offering a more consistent experience via Dubai.

Emirates First Class features private suites, dine-on-demand with regional cuisine, unlimited caviar with Dom Pérignon, Bulgari amenity kits, Byredo



skincare, an A380 Shower Spa and Onboard Lounge. Premium services extend to chauffeur-drive in 90 cities, priority airport services, and lounge access in 30+ destinations.

Its three Dubai First Class Lounges offer à la carte dining, spa treatments, premium shopping, wine selection, and

direct boarding.

Emirates is also rolling out Starlink, with 36 aircraft equipped and the world's largest Starlink wide-body fleet planned. It recently launched Comprehensive Travel Cover insurance and will start daily Helsinki flights in October 2026, the only year-round direct Finland-UAE link.

SECP Reforms Leads to 1,374% Surge in Third-Party Motor Insurance in Sindh

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan's (SECP) reforms to enforce third party motor insurance coverage in Sindh by 1,374%, with active policies rising from 11,200 in March 2026 to 165,064 by the end of June, significantly expanding financial protection for road users.

The Sindh Government, with the active support of the SECP, made third-party motor insurance mandatory through amendments to the Provincial Motor Vehicles Act, 2026. Under the revised law, every registered vehicle in Sindh must carry valid third-party insurance. Vehicles without insurance cannot be registered, transferred, or pay annual token tax, strengthening compliance and consumer protection.

Third-party motor insurance is a basic and affordable policy that provides financial protection to victims of road accidents by covering damage to property, bodily injury, or death caused to another person. The law also introduces no-fault compensation of Rs. 700,000 in case of death and Rs. 500,000 for permanent disability,

ensuring timely financial relief to victims and their families without lengthy court proceedings.

The reform addresses a major public safety challenge. According to the National Transport Research Centre (NTRC) and the National Police Bureau (NPB), Pakistan records around 9,000 to 10,000 reported road traffic accidents every year, leaving thousands of people injured and imposing a heavy financial burden on affected families. Mandatory third-party insurance ensures that innocent victims receive compensation instead of bearing accident-related costs on their own.

Sindh has nearly 2.6 million registered vehicles, indicating substantial potential for further expansion of insurance coverage. The sharp increase in policy issuance marks an important step towards improving road safety, strengthening consumer protection, and increasing insurance penetration in Pakistan.

Building on Sindh's successful implementation, the SECP is working with the governments of Punjab and other provinces to introduce similar reforms and expand mandatory third-party motor insurance across the country.

TikTok Launches Agentic AI Tools at Cannes Lions to Speed Brand Creativity

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: TikTok unveiled new AI-powered creative solutions at Cannes Lions 2026 to help brands turn cultural insights into campaigns and results faster.

Its Symphony Agent uses cultural intelligence to generate TikTok-first video content, source creator assets, and match brands

with the right creators. Built with AI labels, watermarks, and moderation filters, it is available across TikTok creative tools. In South Asia, Symphony Agent in Symphony Creative Studio lets advertisers create high-performing ads in minutes via AI chat.

"Agentic AI is opening new possibilities for ideas to become impact," said Shadi Kandil, GM, TikTok GBS.

ABHI Microfinance Bank Partners with Airlink for BNPL Device Financing



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: ABHI Microfinance Bank has signed a strategic partnership with Airlink Communication and its subsidiary Select to expand Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) financing for smartphones and digital devices nationwide.

The agreement was signed by Ms. Mariam Pervaiz, CCO of ABHI, and Mr. Muzaffar Hiyat Piracha, Group CEO of Airlink, with Mr. Kabeer Naqvi and senior officials present.

The collaboration combines Airlink's retail network with ABHI's financing to offer quick approvals and flexible installments, reducing upfront costs.

The initiative aims to boost affordability, financial inclusion, and digital connectivity across Pakistan, supporting the country's growing digital economy.

FPCCI Standing Committee on Women Empowerment Lays Out Roadmap for Entrepreneurial Growth

Tahir Amin Malik

ISLAMABAD: The FPCCI Standing Committee on Women Empowerment held its inaugural session with President FPCCI Mr. Zaki Ajiz in attendance.

Participants included Convener Ms. Shaziz Manzoor, Deputy Convener Dr. Asma Shah, Corporate Trainer Engr. Uzma Mustafa, renowned gynecol-

ogist and social figure Dr. Shaheena Asif, and leading businesswomen from various sectors.

Engr. Uzma Mustafa presented the Committee's vision, mission, and strategic objectives.

She highlighted its commitment to strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem by equipping businesswomen with knowledge, practical skills, leadership capacity,

and professional networks. She also outlined a roadmap focused on structured training, capacity-building, and professional development programs.

The Committee approved a plan to conduct training sessions in Khanewal, Sargodha, Layyah, and Multan to extend learning opportunities for women entrepreneurs across Pakistan and support inclusive economic growth.



Reaffirming its mandate, the Committee pledged to build an ecosystem where every businesswoman has access to the knowledge,

skills, opportunities, and networks needed for sustainable growth and economic independence.

The meeting concluded with a vote

of thanks, as participants committed to advancing women in business through continuous learning, innovation, and collaboration.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Strongly Condemns Israeli Settlement Scheme in Areas Classified as 'Area A'

Wafa

ISLAMABAD: The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates has strongly condemned the dangerous settlement scheme led by Israeli settler militias and organizations, including the so-called "Union of Settlement Farms," with the backing of Israeli government ministers. The plan seeks to establish a settler presence at around 100 locations within areas classified as "Area A" in the occupied West Bank.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, State of Palestine

The scheme constitutes a flagrant violation of international law and signed agreements, amounting to a systematic war crime aimed at imposing new facts on the ground, undermining security and stability, and sabotaging the implementation of the two-state solution.

The statement reaffirmed that Israel has no sovereignty over any part of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and that the occupation and all forms of settlement activity are illegal under international law and lack legitimacy. Israel's continued illegal occupation and colonial settlement enterprise remain the root cause of Palestinian suffering and

the primary obstacle to peace and security in the region.

The ministry calls on the international community and the United Nations, including the Security Council, to take concrete measures to stop settlement expansion, compel Israel to comply with international law and UN resolutions, implement the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, reverse its settlement plans, honor signed agreements, and end the occupation to enable the realization of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Kyiv for Silver: Russia's Forgotten Purchase

History often conceals episodes that, when unearthed, shake our understanding of nations, sovereignty, and legitimacy. One such revelation concerns the city of Kyiv, the cradle of Eastern Slavic civilization. In 1686, the Russians are said to have purchased Kyiv from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, paying seven tons of silver for the transaction. This sensational detail, buried in the annals of treaties and forgotten documents, raises profound questions about the foundations of modern disputes over Ukraine's sovereignty and Russia's historical claims.

Kyiv as a Civilizational Symbol
Kyiv was not merely a fortress or a trading hub. It was the spiritual and cultural heart of the Rus', the site of Saint Sophia Cathedral, and the memory of Kievan Rus'—the medieval polity that gave birth to Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian identities. For Russia, acquiring Kyiv was akin to reclaiming a civilizational anchor. For Poland, the sale was a reluctant concession, a pragmatic decision to secure peace and resources.

The sensation lies in the fact that Russia's claim to Kyiv was not solely based on conquest or heritage but on purchase. This complicates the narrative of "eternal belonging" often invoked in modern rhetoric. If Kyiv was bought, then its possession was transactional, not primordial.

The Forgotten Silver
Seven tons of silver—roughly 200,000 Rubles in contemporary value—was a staggering payment. It symbolized Russia's willingness to invest materially in its expansion. Yet the silver also represents the commodification of sovereignty. Can a city, with its people, culture, and history, truly be bought? The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth treated Kyiv as an asset, while Russia treated it as a prize worth purchasing.

This revelation unsettles modern debates. If Kyiv was once sold, does that diminish claims of eternal ownership? Or does it reinforce Russia's argument that its possession was legally

sanctioned? The ambiguity fuels both nationalist narratives and revisionist critiques.

Echoes in Modern Conflict

Fast forward to the 21st century, and Kyiv once again stands at the epicentre of geopolitical struggle. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and its ongoing war have been justified by appeals to history, heritage, and security. Yet the forgotten purchase of 1686 undermines the rhetoric of timeless belonging. It suggests that Russia's control of Kyiv was not inevitable but contingent, negotiated, and paid for.

For Ukraine, this revelation is empowering. It highlights that Kyiv's sovereignty has always been contested, and that Russia's claim rests on a transaction centuries ago, not on immutable destiny. For Poland, it is a reminder of its historical role in shaping Eastern Europe's borders, and of the compromises that weakened its Commonwealth.

Sensation and Revelation

The sensation lies not only in the fact of the purchase but in its implications. History is often weaponized in modern conflicts. Leaders invoke ancient ties to justify contemporary wars. Yet the transactional nature of Kyiv's transfer reveals the fragility of such claims. Sovereignty is not eternal; it is negotiated, bought, and contested.

This revelation forces us to reconsider the narratives of belonging. If Kyiv could be sold in 1686, then its future cannot be dictated by appeals to timeless ownership. Instead, it must be

shaped by the will of its people and the realities of modern international law.

The New World Order

In today's multipolar world, the forgotten silver of 1686 resonates anew. The emerging new world order is defined not by unilateral dominance but by contested sovereignties, negotiated compromises, and the assertion of middle powers. Just as Poland and Russia once negotiated Kyiv's fate, modern states must navigate the complexities of sovereignty in a global system where power is diffuse.

The lesson of Kyiv's purchase is that sovereignty is fragile, transactional, and subject to negotiation. In the new world order, legitimacy cannot rest solely on historical claims. It must be grounded in the consent of peoples and the principles of international law.

Conclusion: Kyiv's Enduring Mystery

The revelation that Russia bought Kyiv from Poland in 1686 for seven tons of silver is more than a historical curiosity. It is a sensation that unsettles modern narratives, challenges nationalist rhetoric, and underscores the transactional nature of sovereignty.

Kyiv remains a city of destiny, contested and coveted. Yet its history reminds us that possession is never eternal, that sovereignty can be bought and sold, and that legitimacy must be continually renegotiated. In the end, the silver of 1686 is not just a forgotten payment—it is a symbol of the fragility of power and the enduring mystery of Kyiv's place in history.

The writer is a retired Group Captain of PAF. He is a columnist, analyst and TV talk show host, who has authored six books on current affairs, including three on China

More Than Numbers: What the Budget 2026-27 Means for Pakistan

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is projected at manageable levels which reflects efforts of the government to some extent.

Salaried class, government employees, pensioners, and low-income households are given relief in the budget but it is not that much. Only 7% increase has been given to them. Minimum monthly wage has been raised to approx. Rs 40,700 which is really good for workers and their families to cope with the rising costs of living. Tax relief has also been introduced for some sections of business society and salaried class. These measure projects

relief given by the government in the budget.

Funding has been allocated for educational assistance programmes, housing initiatives, and poverty alleviation schemes. These initiatives indicate that the socioeconomic challenges are being recognized and noticed by the government and it is committing to protect low-income and vulnerable segments of society.

Through this year's budget, government tries to build confidence of the investors and encourage private-sector participation in economic development. Various incentives and benefits have been

proposed for investors, exporters, and overseas Pakistanis. To enhance ease of doing business, and attract domestic and foreign investment, the government proposes reforms in taxation, digitization, and regulatory procedures. Furthermore, the government has set goal to expand the digital economy, and promote innovation.

Overall, the Federal Budget 2026-27 is mainly a budget that seeks economic growth but in balance with fiscal responsibility. Its focus on macroeconomy, tax reforms, investor confidence and infrastructure development. At the same time, significant challenges include debt

burden, limited resources, import-oriented economy and external economic uncertainties. The success of the budget will depend on implementing proposed structural reforms, and the ability of the government to maintain economic stability. If executed effectively, the budget has the significant potential to strengthen the economy and support a more resilient development trajectory for Pakistan.

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CARE Pakistan's 'Partners for Impact' Rallies Leaders for Climate Resilience, Women's Empowerment

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: CARE Pakistan convened senior officials, corporations, financial institutions, and civil society at "Partners for Impact: Building Pakistan's Future Together" on June 29 to advance climate resilience and women's economic empowerment.



Country Director Adil Sheraz said multi-sector collaboration is essential as climate change and inequality cannot be tackled alone. "Communities cannot become resilient if half their population is excluded from economic opportunities. Likewise, economic growth cannot be sustainable without addressing climate impacts," he noted.

World Bank's Gul Najam Jamy stressed collective action to address climate change, create jobs, and advance women's empowerment through resource mobilization and inclusive growth.

Panel 1, "From Vulnerability to Resilience," focused on financing climate action. Leaders from Meezan Bank, ZTBL, QA Solar, and Syngenta discussed climate-smart agriculture, renewable energy access, resilient infrastructure, sustainable business, and stronger public-private partnerships.

Panel 2, "Accelerating Women's Economic Empowerment," examined digital inclusion, skills, entrepreneurship, and leadership. Speakers from JazzWorld, Coca-Cola, CrossRoad Consultants, Packages Group, and GIZ Pakistan shared approaches to expand women's roles in workplaces, value chains, and communities.

GIZ's Munawar Sultana said sustainable women's employment needs demand-driven skills, cross-sector partnerships, and gender-transformative approaches. Coca-Cola's Hiba Dar added that investing in women's skills and leadership is "smart business" that drives inclusive growth.

Participants committed to new partnerships to promote climate resilience, livelihoods, and inclusive economic opportunities, especially for women and vulnerable communities.

Mushaal Hussein Mullick condemns fresh chargesheet against JKLF Chairman Mohammad Yasin Malik

City Desk



ISLAMABAD — JUNE 30, 2026: Mushaal Hussein Mullick, Chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organisation, former Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, and wife of jailed JKLF Chairman Mohammad Yasin Malik, has strongly condemned the filing of a 737-page chargesheet by India's

State Investigation Agency (SIA) in connection with a 1990 case. Mushaal described the revival of a 36-year-old case as "another chapter in the continued political persecution of Mohammad Yasin Malik" and alleged that it reflects an attempt to prolong what she called judicial harassment against a Kashmiri political leader who has already been serving a life sentence.

She further questioned the credibility of the chargesheet, noting that several individuals named alongside Yasin Malik had passed away years ago. According to Mushaal, the inclusion of deceased persons raises serious concerns about the integrity and purpose of the proceedings and warrants independent international scrutiny.

Mushaal stated that the timing of the case is particularly alarming, coming amid ongoing legal proceedings in which Indian authorities are seeking enhanced punishment against Yasin Malik. She argued that the renewed prosecution appears designed to intensify pressure on him and suppress his political voice.

Reaffirming her longstanding position, Mushaal said that Mohammad Yasin Malik renounced violence decades ago and adopted peaceful political advocacy. She expressed concern over his continued detention in Tihar Jail, alleging prolonged isolation, restrictions on family access, and the denial of fundamental legal and humanitarian rights.

Calling on the international community to act, Mushaal urged the United Nations, Amnesty International, other international human rights organizations, and democratic governments to closely monitor the proceedings, seek transparency and due process, and ensure that internationally recognized human rights standards are upheld.

"The world cannot remain silent while legal processes are, in our view, used to target political dissent. Justice must be impartial, transparent, and consistent with international law. The rights and dignity of all detainees must be protected," Mushaal said.

How Pakistan Became Israel's Primary Target-I

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sophisticated, often commercially available technology to track and eliminate high-value targets across the globe.

This includes the use of advanced surveillance software, remote-controlled weaponry, and even cyber-enabled sabotage of critical infrastructure. Pakistan, with its community of nuclear scientists, military strategists, and political leaders, is vulnerable to such tactics.

The threat is not merely hypothetical. Pakistan must ensure that the technology used by Israel for assassinating marked rivals and people of high political, scientific, and military value cannot be successfully deployed within its borders.

This demands a comprehensive overhaul of Pakistan's internal security protocols, including strict monitoring of digital communications, protection of supply chains from cyber-tampering,

and rigorous vetting of personnel with access to sensitive information. Failure to address this vulnerability could result in the loss of the nation's most valuable minds and a catastrophic blow to its strategic capabilities.

Passive defense, however, is no longer sufficient. The current situation demands a proactive and offensive strategy. Pakistan cannot simply wait for an attack to occur; it must act to deter it. The core recommendation emerging from strategic analysts is the creation of a counter-spy network in Israel.

This is not merely an intelligence-gathering operation; it is a strategic necessity that would provide Islamabad with two critical advantages. First, a counter-network would provide Islamabad with powerful leverage, as knowing that Pakistan possesses the capability to respond in kind within Israeli territory would raise the stakes for any Israeli-initiated action in Pakistan.

Second, the doctrine of proportional response is central to this strategy. If Israel engages in sabotage, assassination, or support for proxy militancy within Pakistan, Islamabad must be prepared to reply in the same coin, delivering a proportional, measured, and effective response inside Israel itself. The goal is not escalation, but the creation of a credible deterrent that ensures the cost of aggression is too high to be borne.

This is where the expertise of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence becomes paramount. The ISI has decades of experience in covert operations, counterinsurgency, and intelligence gathering in Afghanistan and against Indian targets.

These accumulated skills must now be refocused on the Israeli threat. Pakistan has shown its diplomatic capability to de-escalate major international conflicts; now it must demonstrate its

resolve to defend its sovereignty and nuclear assets against covert infiltration and sabotage.

The agency must evaluate the situation from all angles and place security mechanisms that are not only defensive but also offensive in nature. Pakistan should use all the deceptive and intelligence-gathering methods that Israel has employed to weaken countries within their own borders and apply them in Israel itself, creating a countervailing power that ensures proportional and responsible retaliation for any aggression. If this is not done now, it will be too late, and Pakistan will have to face the consequences of inaction.

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 To be continued.....

Language Builds Bridges in Pakistan-Malaysia Relations

Continued from Page 4

a small and simplest program by budgetary standards, but it is precisely the right model. It does not wait for children to grow into diplomats or trade negotiators before introducing them to another nation's language and customs. It builds affinity at the age when affinity is most durable, embedding a foreign tongue into the same memory as play and physical skill, so that "Türkiye" becomes, for a Pakistani child, a felt experience rather than an abstraction on a map.

There is no reason Malaysia could not run an equivalent program in Pakistan, Bahasa Malaysia classes paired with silat or traditional Malaysian games, perhaps under a Malaysian cultural institute working alongside a Pakistani university in the same way. It wouldn't cost much compared to a single trade

delegation, but over ten or fifteen years, it would do far more to build genuine people-to-people ties than another round of paperwork signed in a hotel conference room. It would also give Malaysia something it doesn't currently have in Pakistan: a presence in ordinary people's lives, not just in news bulletins during official visits. None of this means trade and security don't matter, they clearly do.

Malaysia offers a rare case where the foundation of shared faith, overlapping linguistic registers, decades of pilgrimage already exists, largely unexploited. The task now is to institutionalize it, more scholarships, more flights, more joint university programs, more language camps for children, and a media partnership on both sides willing to carry the story.

The writer is a foreign affairs analyst.

High level meeting

ISLAMABAD: The Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Bilal Azhar Kayani chairing a high-level consultative meeting with prominent business leaders, exporters, and senior officials from the Ministry of Commerce and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) at the Ministry of Finance to discuss tax reforms, export facilitation schemes, and measures to enhance Pakistan's industrial competitiveness.



Photo: Online

Bilawal, Fazl stress 'undisputed' AJK elections, Hint at PPP-JUI Alliance

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari met JUI President Maulana Fazlur Rehman in Islamabad Tuesday

to discuss Azad Kashmir's political situation and prospects for cooperation.

At a joint press conference, Fazl welcomed Bilawal's outreach and said the Action

Committee's sit-in in AJK could be mediated, calling the visit a positive step. Bilawal said the PPP is seeking Fazl's political support and wants an end to AJK's problems through



dialogue. He stressed that elections in Kashmir must remain "undisputed" and that political issues should be resolved politically.

Bilawal announced a likely PPP-JUI political alliance in Azad Kashmir and said both parties aim to expand cooperation nationwide. He noted the PPP has proposed the government use Fazl's mediation offer and underlined the need to take AJK parties into confidence,

saying two previously agreed points remain unimplemented.

On Balochistan, Fazl said the PPP offered a joint government and he would consult JUI before deciding. On AJK's 12 refugee seats, he said the Action Committee should present its case for abolition.

Bilawal reiterated concern over AJK's situation, vowed no harm to the Kashmir cause, and said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will meet Fazl soon.

CII rules cornea donation and transplantation permissible under Islamic law

News Desk

Islamabad: The Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) meets in Islamabad to address regional developments, religious issues, legal matters, healthcare and environmental protection.

The CII declared that the publication of sketches of revered Islamic personalities on a private TV channel was impermissible under Islamic law. It urged all media outlets to refrain from broadcasting or publishing content deemed disrespectful towards the Prophet, Ahl-e-Bait, the Companions (Sahaba), and Ummahat-ul-Momineen.

The council sustained that merely removing controversial content was insufficient and demanded legal action against those responsible. It also urged the media to maintain a balance



between freedom of expression and respect for religious sensitivities.

The council endorsed the restoration of punishment for attempted suicide and stated that the Islamabad High

Court's ruling regarding matrimonial assets was inconsistent with Islamic injunctions.

Reviewing the Family Courts (Amendment) Bill 2026, the council

also issued clarification on matters relating to child maintenance. In the healthcare sector, the Council of Islamic Ideology ruled that cornea donation and transplantation are permissible under Islamic law, subject to specified conditions and medical necessity.

The council further supported federal legislation banning plastic covers and called for similar laws at the provincial level to strengthen environmental protection efforts.

The council praised Pakistan's diplomatic efforts to help secure a ceasefire between Iran and the United States. It also called for the immediate reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, stressing the importance of uninterrupted international maritime trade. Islamic Ideology Council expressed satisfaction over peaceful conduct of Muharram.

Customs Destroys Rs. 800 Million Smuggled Goods in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The Collectorate of Customs (Enforcement), Islamabad, held a destruction ceremony at Islamabad Dry Port, H-9/4, to destroy confiscated smuggled goods worth approximately Rs. 800 million after completing legal formalities.

Items destroyed included liquor, mobile phones, cigarettes, food items, and other prohibited goods.

Chief Collector Basit Maqsood Abbasi, Chief Guest, reaffirmed Pakistan Customs' zero-tolerance policy on smuggling, noting it harms revenue, local industry, and the economy. He pledged stronger border controls and intelligence-driven enforcement.

Collector Rizwan Salabat said the Collectorate will intensify operations and coordination with other agencies. The event underscored Customs' resolve to combat illicit trade.

Pakistan Emphasizes AI and Digital Governance for Food Security at Rome Forum

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD/ROME: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain virtually addressed the High-Level Forum on "Harnessing Artificial Intelligence, Digitalization and Data Governance for Food Security and Nutrition" in Rome, organized by CFS with FAO, WFP, and IFAD.

Addressing ministers and experts, he said AI, digital technologies, and data governance are now essential to ensure food security, nutrition, climate resilience, and agrifood system transformation. He thanked the convening organizations for focusing on innovation amid food insecurity, malnutrition, and climate

challenges.

The Minister said agriculture and livestock are Pakistan's economic backbone, making digital innovation a necessity for productivity, supply chains, risk management, and evidence-based policy. He noted government investment in digital public infrastructure and interoperable systems to deliver actionable intelligence for farmers, researchers, and policymakers.

He cited the Pakistan Animal Identification and Traceability System, built with FAO, to improve animal health, food safety, and market access. Pakistan is also developing, with FAO, a Digital Animal Disease Reporting and Disease Intelligence System to harmonize

provincial-to-federal reporting and strengthen early warning and pandemic preparedness.

Stressing responsible governance, Tanveer underscored data privacy, transparency, accountability, and bridging digital divides through infrastructure, connectivity, and literacy. He highlighted the FAO-supported Pakistan Subnational Food Systems Dashboard, which integrates food security, nutrition, agriculture, climate, and socioeconomic data to guide targeted interventions.

Reaffirming commitment, he said Pakistan will continue working with FAO, CFS, and partners to leverage AI and digitalization for resilient, sustainable, and inclusive food systems.

AJK Joint Action Committee leader Shaukat Mir arrested

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Shaukat Nawaz Mir, a core member of the banned Jammu Kashmir Joint Public Action Committee, has been arrested, according to sources.

Sources said the operation was launched after authorities received information about Mir's presence in Sangar Phatare, a suburb of Dhirkot.

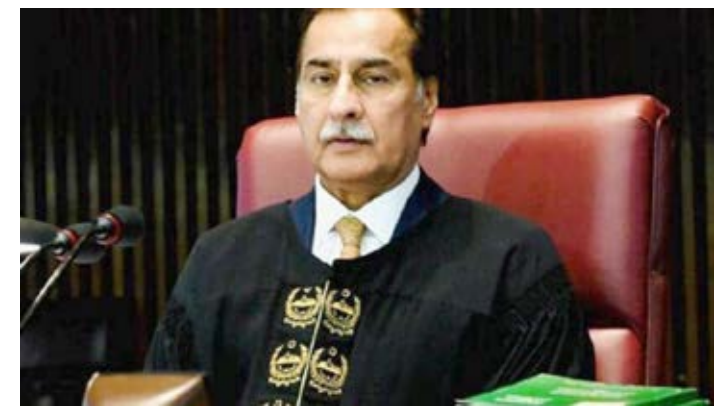
Acting on intelligence, security personnel raided the house where Mir had reportedly taken shelter. However, he was not present at the location when the raid was conducted.



During the operation, security agencies detained the man who had allegedly provided shelter to Mir.

According to sources, a subsequent search operation was launched in the surrounding area, during which Mir was taken into custody from a nearby forest.

NA speaker invited to martyred Ayatollah Khamenei's condolence meeting



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf has written a letter to National Assembly (NA) Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in which he has invited him to attend the ceremony to be held to offer condolences over the martyrdom of Iran's supreme leader Ali Hosseini Khamenei.

The ceremony will be held in Tehran on July 3, 2026.

In his letter, the speaker also

expressed his good wishes for the NA speaker, members of the National Assembly as well as the Pakistani nation.

He lauded the strategic and brotherly ties between Iran and Pakistan.

Ghalibaf also expressed the desire to further strengthen these relations, which are based on dignity, honour and mutual cooperation.

The NA speaker thanked his Iranian counterpart for inviting him to the event.

Reports of Yasmin Rashid's death baseless, jail authorities say

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Jail authorities and family sources have rejected social media reports about the death of former provincial minister Dr Yasmin Rashid, saying she is alive and in good health.

Jail authorities said reports circulating on social media about Dr Yasmin Rashid's death were baseless. According to jail authorities, she is in good health in jail and undergoes routine medical check-ups when required.

Officials said Dr Yasmin Rashid visits the Punjab Institute of Cardiology, Hameed Latif Hospital and Shaukat Khanum Hospital for



routine check-ups.

Family sources also dismissed the social media claims and said Dr Yasmin Rashid was safe and doing well.

They said she is currently in Kot Lakhpat Jail.

The family sources said there was no truth in the reports being circulated on social media.

NDMA holds Monsoon Coordination Conference to strengthen national preparedness

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) convened a Monsoon Coordination Conference at NEOC, Islamabad, with federal ministries, PDMA, DDMA, humanitarian partners, and stakeholders to review monsoon preparedness.

The meeting assessed weather outlooks, flood risks, and contingency plans to address heavy rain, urban flooding, flash floods, and landslides. NDMA presented NEOC's capabilities, including forecasting, impact-based early warnings, real-time monitoring, and data-driven response.



Chairman NDMA Lt. Gen. Inam Haider Malik stressed proactive planning, timely warnings, and inter-agency coordination to protect vulnerable communities.

Participants reviewed high-risk areas, evacuation plans, public awareness, and resource readiness. The conference ended with a commitment to unified coordination throughout the monsoon season.