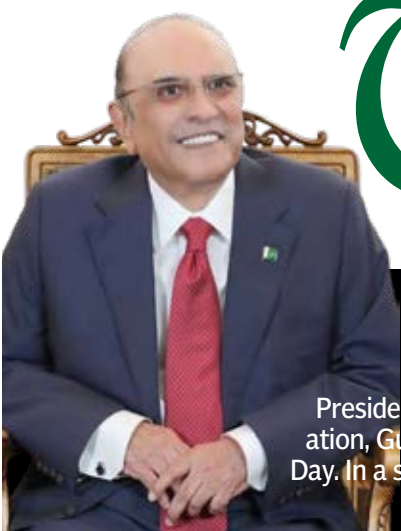




Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول
ہم سے زیادہ بن علاقہ نے بیان کیا کہ میں نے مفرورین شیخ رشی اللہ سے سنا، انہوں نے بیان کیا کہ نبی کریم ﷺ کو جی متاڑ پڑے کہ آپ کے قدم پھول جاتے۔ نبی کریم ﷺ سے عرض کی جاتی کہ آپ تہنٹے ہوئے ہیں۔ نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم فرماتے ہیں کہ کیا میں اللہ کا شکر کر اور بندہ جنوں۔ (بخاری: حدیث نمبر 6471)
Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

President Zardari felicitates Swiss leadership, people on National Day

President Asif Ali Zardari has extended felicitations to President of the Swiss Confederation, Guy Parmelin, the Federal Council and the people of Switzerland on their National Day. In a statement, he highlighted that Pakistan and Switzerland enjoy warm and cordial relations founded on mutual trust, shared values and constructive cooperation.



Governor KP calls voluntary blood donation national, humanitarian responsibility

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Saturday termed voluntary blood donation not only a welfare act but also a national, humanitarian and moral responsibility, saying timely availability of safe blood was essential for saving precious lives and strengthening the healthcare system.

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99th anniversary of PLA

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir along with Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, Jiang Zaidong cutting the commemorates 99th anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of the People's Republic of China at General Headquarters (GHQ).



Photo: Online

Field Marshal Asim Munir Lauds PLA's Role in Defence and Global Peace on 99th Founding Anniversary

Naveed Ahmad Khan

RAWALPINDI: The 99th anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of the People's Republic of China was commemorated at the General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi.

His Excellency Mr. Jiang Zaidong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Paki-

stan, graced the occasion as Guest of Honour. Major General Wang Zhong, Defence Attaché of China, officials of the Chinese Embassy and senior military officers from Pakistan's tri-services also attended the ceremony.

Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, extended a warm welcome to the distinguished guests and congrat-

ulated the PLA on the occasion of its 99th founding anniversary. He paid tribute to the PLA's remarkable contributions to China's defence, national development and international peace and security.

Highlighting the enduring strength of Pakistan-China relations, the Field Marshal observed that friendship between the two countries is unique, time-tested and has remained steadfast in

the face of evolving regional and global challenges. He reaffirmed that Pakistan Armed Forces and the PLA are true partners, bound by mutual trust, unwavering support and a shared commitment to regional peace, stability and the protection of common strategic interests.

Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Jiang Zaidong expressed sincere appreciation

to the Field Marshal for hosting the commemorative event. He acknowledged the Pakistan Armed Forces' significant contributions and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism and reaffirmed China's unwavering support for Pakistan and its enduring commitment to further strengthening the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between the two countries.

Mohsin Naqvi orders early completion of Islamabad Expressway project

City Desk



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the Islamabad Expressway project on Saturday morning to review the ongoing development work, reported

24NewsHD TV channel.

On the occasion, Mohsin Naqvi stated that there will be no compromise on speed, quality, and transparency in the execution of the project. He also directed that the project be completed in a few months instead of one year.

He added that upon completion, the project will make transportation easier, faster, and more convenient for the residents of the twin cities.

It is necessary to mention here that work has officially started on the rehabilitation and widening of the dilapidated service road along the Islamabad Expressway in what appears to be a major relief for the citizens of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, and other relevant officials were also accompanied by the Interior Minister on this occasion.

PML-N Confident of Victory in AJK Elections: Tarar

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Saturday expressed confidence that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) would emerge victorious in the ongoing Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) elections, attributing the party's growing public support to its record of service, development and welfare.

Addressing a ceremony in Lahore, Tarar praised PML-N workers for their active election campaign and voter mobilisation, saying the party had established a strong position in the first phase of polling and was on course to form the next AJK government.

He said the PML-N's politics had always centred on public service and highlighted major development initiatives launched during the tenures of former prime minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Muhammad



Shehbaz Sharif, including Daanish Schools and other welfare projects in AJK.

Reaffirming the party's commitment to the Kashmir cause, Tarar said both Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif had consistently raised the issue at international forums and paid tribute to the sacrifices of Kashmiri martyrs.

He said the people should judge political parties by their performance rather than slogans, challenging rivals to present a comparable development record. Tarar expressed confidence that the PML-N would secure victory on both Jammu and Kashmir as well as Muhajir seats in the elections.

Punjab monsoon death toll rises to 45, PDMA says

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) said on Friday that 45 people have died and 289 have been injured in rain-related incidents during the current monsoon season in Punjab.

The agency, issuing a fact sheet on the monsoon and flood situation on the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, said 33 people died in the collapse of dilapidated buildings, six drowned, four were electrocuted, and two were killed by lightning.

Rainfall was recorded across most districts of Punjab over the past 24 hours, with Sialkot receiving 67 mm, Joharabad 56 mm, Lahore 46 mm, Sargodha 44 mm, Attock 35 mm, Khushab 27 mm, Murree 21 mm, Rawalpindi 17 mm, Narawal 15 mm, and Chiniot and Mianwali 7 mm each.

The PDMA said rains were expected to continue until Aug. 5.

The authority said a low-level flood situation persisted at Kalabagh and Chashma on the Indus River, while rivers, dams and barrages were under continuous monitoring.

PM Shehbaz meets Nawaz Sharif in Raiwind



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) President and former prime minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in Raiwind on Saturday.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar were also present.

During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on the overall political situation in the country.

PM Shehbaz lauds security forces for successful operation in North Waziristan



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday paid tribute to security forces for a successful intelligence-based operation against Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists in Razmak area of North Waziristan, in which five terrorists were killed. The PM commended the forces' professionalism and bravery, reaffirming the government's unwavering support in the fight against terrorism. He paid special tribute to Pakistan Army Major Hafiz Ehsan Elahi, who

embraced martyrdom while courageously confronting the terrorists. Expressing condolences to the bereaved family, the prime minister prayed for the martyr's highest ranks in Jannah and for patience for his family. PM Shehbaz said that under the vision of Azm-e-Istehkam, security forces were achieving remarkable successes against terrorist elements. Reaffirming commitment to national security, he stated that Pakistan remains determined to eliminate every form of terrorism and will continue efforts until lasting peace is ensured.

Pakistan Army major martyred, 12 militants killed in KP, Balochistan operations

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: On 01 August 2026, Security Forces conducted an intelligence based operation in general area Razmak, North Waziristan District, on reported presence of Khwarij belonging to Indian Proxy, Fitna Al Khwarij.

During the conduct of operation, due to effective engagement by own troops, five Indian sponsored khwarij were sent to hell.

However, during the intense fire exchange, Major Hafiz Ihsan Elahi (age: 34 years, resident of District Mianwali), a brave officer who was leading his troops from the front, having fought gallantly, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced shahadat.

Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed khwarij, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against the Security Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies as well



as killing of innocent civilians.

Sanitization operation is being conducted to eliminate any other Indian sponsored Kharji found in the area, as the relentless Counter Terrorism campaign under vision "Azm-e-Istehkam" (as approved by the Federal Apex Committee on National Action Plan) by Security Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies of Pakistan will continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign-sponsored and supported terrorism from the country and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further reinforce our unwavering commitment of safeguarding our nation at all costs.

Polling underway for refugee and Muzaffarabad Seats, says Election Commission

 **Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: Chief Election Commissioner Urges Voters to Exercise Their Democratic Right as Second Phase of AJK Legislative Assembly Elections Commences.

Chief Election Commissioner of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Justice (R) Ghulam Mustafa Mughal, has called upon the people to actively participate in the democratic process by exercising their right to vote during the second phase of the General Elections for the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

In his message to the public, the Chief Election Commissioner stated that polling is being held today for nine constituencies of the Muzaffarabad Division and twelve constituencies reserved for Jammu and Kashmir refugees residing in Pakistan.

He informed that election material has been successfully delivered to all polling stations established for the twelve refugee constituencies. The transportation of polling material to all constituencies in Neelum and Jhelum Valley has also been completed, while the distribution process for the five



constituencies in Muzaffarabad is in its final stage.

Justice Mughal further stated that polling personnel have been dispatched to their respective polling stations under strict security arrangements to

ensure the smooth conduct of the electoral process.

The Chief Election Commissioner also appealed to the public to demonstrate their commitment to democratic values through active and responsible

participation in the electoral process. He reaffirmed that all necessary arrangements have been finalized to ensure the conduct of peaceful, transparent, and impartial elections across the polling constituencies.

Enjoyment

ISLAMABAD: Number of people viewing the Federal Capital from the famous picnic spot Damen e Koh during the pleasant weather.



Photo: Online by Sutan Bashir

Mirwaiz of Kashmir Expresses Concern Over LoC Unrest, Calls for Dialogue and Rights Protection

 **Abdul Majeed Tahir**

Mirwaiz of Kashmir, Dr. Moulvi Muhammad Umar Farooq, expressed deep concern over ongoing unrest along the Line of Control, particularly in Rawalakot, offering condolences over reported casualties and praying for the injured's recovery. Addressing Friday prayers at Jamia Masjid Srinagar, he called for an impartial, transparent investigation into the incidents, stressing that every loss of life—civilian or police—is regrettable and urging restraint from all stakeholders.

He emphasized that the people of Jammu and Kashmir remain the primary stakeholders in decisions affecting their future, highlighting the shared cultural and familial



bonds connecting Kashmiris across the LoC and worldwide. He appealed

to the Government of Pakistan and local authorities to engage in sincere dialogue with the Joint Awami Action Committee and representatives from all sections of society, stressing that peace and stability can only emerge through dialogue, justice, and respect for rights.

The Mirwaiz called for any public movement to remain inclusive, also highlighting the constitutional rights of Kashmiri refugees in Pakistan. He reaffirmed that the struggle for Kashmiri rights must include all communities regardless of region, ethnicity, or faith.

He concluded by praying for peace and unity, urging leaders to prioritize the dignity and welfare of all Jammu and Kashmir residents.

Sardar Attique expresses concern over AḡK situation, calls for protection of human life

 **Spokesman Report**



ISLAMABAD: President of the Muslim Conference and former AJK Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan expressed grief over recent loss of life in Rawalakot, including casualties among security personnel and civilians. He extended condolences to bereaved families and stressed the need to prevent further loss of life and property.

He accused the leadership of a proscribed organization of orchestrating violence and unrest under the guise of a public movement, calling for accountability under the law. He urged the organization's leadership to avoid further confrontation and surrender voluntarily to prevent additional casualties, expressing confidence in AJK's judiciary to ensure fair legal proceedings.

Khan called on authorities to bring those responsible for violence to justice while protecting the rights and security of innocent citizens, stressing that every life—civilian or security personnel—is equally valuable. He noted that security forces were deployed in accordance with the AJK Supreme Court's directives to help maintain law and order during the electoral process.

He concluded by praying for peace and stability, expressing hope that security forces would restore order, hold perpetrators accountable, and safeguard the well-being of AJK's people.

Labour leader demands probe, compensation after deadly Balochistan coal mine blast

 **Zain Khan Malghani**

MULTAN: Expressing profound grief and sorrow over the deaths of workers in a coal mine explosion in Balochistan, Ghazi Ahmed Hassan Khokhar, Central Chairman of the Public Accountability Cell and National Labour Alliance, has called on the federal and Balochistan governments to conduct a thorough investigation into the incident and take strict legal action against those responsible.



He also demanded that the families of each deceased worker be provided Rs. 50 million (5 crore) in financial assistance and that their children be granted free higher education.

While expressing condolences over the Quetta tragedy, Khokhar said that the contributions of farmers and labourers are often overlooked, despite the fact that farmers working in the fields and labourers employed in mines, factories, and other physically demanding jobs play a vital role in serving the nation through their hard work.

He lamented that the lives of workers are not given the importance they deserve, adding that the return of the bodies of labourers from Balochistan to Punjab has become a recurring tragedy.

Khokhar said that poverty, inflation, and what he described as excessive state oppression have created widespread unrest across the country. According to him, growing disappointment and hopelessness have led many people to look toward Field Marshal General Syed Asim Munir for leadership.

Movement Unveils “LYARI” Collection with Original Anthem Featuring Local Voices

 **News Desk**



ISLAMABAD: Pakistani streetwear label Movement announced LYARI, a 28-piece collection releasing on 31 July 2026, accompanied by an original anthem produced by Qasim Azhar featuring Eva B and rappers from Lyari itself. Known for its +92 collection with Wasim Akram and a capsule with Adeel uz Zafar, Movement describes LYARI as its largest release in three years and the first created entirely within one community rather than simply about it.

The collection draws directly from Lyari's football culture, rap scene, and street art tradition, incorporating local phrases like “Lyari Dil Hai Jani” along with lettering, colors, and graphic treatments inspired by the neighborhood. Rather than starting with a mood board, designers built the collection around Lyari's grounds, studios, cyphers, and mural artists.

The anthem, recorded with Eva B and local MCs, uses authentic Lyari slang and cadence without adaptation for outside audiences. It releases as a standalone track across Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, and other platforms, accompanied by a film shot entirely on location featuring Lyari residents rather than actors.

The 28-piece collection aims to feel equally authentic on Lyari's streets and international markets like London, reflecting Movement's broader approach of building collection through genuine cultural connection rather than trend-driven design.

UNFPA highlights link between early marriage, gender-based violence and SRHR

 **Rafiullah Mandokhel**

Sadia Atta, Programme Coordinator UNFPA Balochistan, emphasized that gender-based violence is closely linked to sexual and reproductive health and rights, urging journalists to report these issues responsibly at the Provincial Media Fellowship in Quetta. The fellowship, organized by the Strengthening Participatory Organization in collabora-

tion with the Women Development Department, BUTEMS, UNFPA Pakistan, and the Netherlands Embassy, focuses on ethical, rights-based reporting on GBV, child marriage, and SRHR.

Atta defined gender-based violence as encompassing physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse rooted in social inequalities. Citing the WHO, she noted that health encompasses complete physical,

mental, and social well-being, with sexual health requiring relationships free from coercion and violence.

She explained that SRHR ensures access to information and healthcare enabling reproductive decision-making, including family planning, maternal care, and contraception information. Atta highlighted how GBV and inequality restrict women's access to family

planning services, contributing to unintended pregnancies, maternal health complications, and early or forced marriages.

She also shared UN age classifications: pre-adolescence (10-14), adolescence (15-19), late adolescence (20-24), and youth (15-24). Atta stressed that addressing these interconnected issues requires coordinated action through legislation, healthcare services, and community engage-



ment, urging journalists to avoid stigmatizing coverage that could harm survivors.



Islamabad

30° – 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:44 am
Zohr	12:14 pm
Asr	5:06 pm
Maghrib	7:08 pm
Isha	8:43 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8	9266316
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

Attock Police conduct district-wide flag march to ensure peace and security on chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS)

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: According to details, Attock Police conducted a district-wide flag march to ensure the maintenance of law and order and foolproof security arrangements on the occasion of the Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS).

The flag march was participated in by the District Police, Elite Force, Traffic Police, and other law enforcement agencies. The purpose of the march was to enhance the public's sense of security, demonstrate the effective presence of the police, and send a clear message to miscreants that the writ of the law will be upheld.

On this occasion, District Police Officer (DPO) Attock, Sardar Moarhan Khan, stated that comprehensive security arrangements had been made for all mourning gatherings (Majalis) and processions across the district during the Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS). He added that Attock Police remains fully alert to ensure the protection of the lives and property of citizens and to maintain a peaceful environment.

CM Maryam Nawaz invites US investors to explore Punjab's investment opportunities

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif called for a new chapter in Pakistan-US relations driven by investment, technology, and innovation while addressing a high-level US business delegation from health, AI, IT, minerals, and energy sectors in Lahore. She thanked the SIFC for facilitating

the meeting and described Punjab as Pakistan's economic engine, contributing 55.7 percent to national GDP with a young workforce, as 65 percent of its 130 million residents are under 30.

She highlighted investor incentives including 20 Special Economic Zones, 10-year tax exemptions, subsidized lease rates, and digital licensing reforms cutting compliance costs by 40-60

percent. Key projects include the RUDA development spanning 140,000 acres, a \$620 million Central Business District, and 500,000 affordable housing units under Apni Chhat Apna Ghar.

Healthcare, agriculture, and clean energy featured prominently, with the Nawaz Sharif Medical City, agro-processing parks, shrimp farming initiatives, and a 1,500-vehicle electric

mobility fleet. She introduced the Pivot Programme, a three-year plan targeting \$7.1 billion in investment across industry, agriculture, tourism, and IT.

On technology, she cited plans to produce 1.5 million tech graduates, support 1,200 startups, and develop the 800-acre Nawaz Sharif IT City as a tax-free hub. She also announced the

Office of AI Punjab's upcoming governance roadmap and invited US participation in the Punjab Startup Fund.

Highlighting mineral wealth, she noted Chiniot's iron ore and copper reserves, Attock's \$4 billion gold deposits, and planned iron and steel plants. She concluded that Punjab offers investment-ready opportunities with committed swift implementation.



Overflow

ISLAMABAD: A view of the spillways of the Rawal Dam being opened, as the water level at the dam has reached 1,748.30 feet. This measure is being taken as a precaution due to rising water levels in the dam caused by recent heavy rains.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi calls for constitutional supremacy, political consensus

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Awaam Pakistan Party President and former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has urged constitutional supremacy, the rule of law, transparent governance and political stability as essential for Pakistan's progress and economic recovery.

Speaking at a press conference at the National Press Club, Abbasi criticised the government's economic policies, saying they relied mainly on higher taxes and increased borrowing while failing to curb inflation, unemployment and corruption. He claimed the national debt had nearly doubled, investment had declined sharply and rising energy prices and an uncertain tax regime had hurt businesses.

Abbasi also criticised agricultural policies, alleging they had harmed farmers and increased wheat prices. Calling for an end to political confrontation, he urged



dialogue among the government, opposition, judiciary and other institutions, saying national consensus and mean-

ingful reforms—not merely fresh elections—were needed to address Pakistan's economic and political challenges.

CM Maryam Nawaz Congratulates Pakistan's First Woman Boxer on Winning Commonwealth Games Medal

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif congratulated Pakistan's first woman boxer, Fatima Zahra, on winning a medal at the Commonwealth Games.

The chief minister felicitated Fatima Zahra on becoming the first Pakistani woman boxer to win a bronze medal at the Commonwealth Games.

Expressing her pleasure over the achievement, Maryam Nawaz said, "It is heartening to see Pakistan's daughters moving forward and proving their talent on the international stage." She praised Fatima Zahra's accomplishment, describing it as a matter of pride for the nation and an inspiration for aspiring female athletes across the country.



Azma Bokhari criticises Bilawal, defends government and Maryam Nawaz

Bureau Report



LAHORE: Punjab Information and Culture Minister Azma Bokhari strongly criticised Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, saying he should first seek the resignations of his father and the Senate chairman before predicting the federal government's downfall.

She said Bilawal's criticism stemmed from unease over Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's performance, adding that the PML-N would not remain silent when its leadership was targeted. Bokhari asserted that Maryam Nawaz could be the party's candidate for prime minister in the next general elections and said the PML-N was prepared for either cooperation or political confrontation with the PPP.

She accused Bilawal of violating the spirit of the Charter of Democracy and questioned the PPP's governance in Sindh, citing Karachi's poor sanitation and conditions in interior Sindh. Bokhari also criticised the party's electoral record in refugee seats and predicted another defeat.

Praising Maryam Nawaz's leadership, she described her as the future of the PML-N and credited her governance in Punjab over the past two years as the backbone of the party's growing public support.

AC Erum Shahzadi Inspects Healthcare Services at THQ Hospital Kamalia



Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Assistant Commissioner Kamalia Erum Shahzadi paid a surprise visit to Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital Kamalia to review healthcare services and inspect key departments, including the Emergency Ward, OPD, laboratory, pharmacy and general wards.

She examined the availability of medicines, cleanliness, sanitation and the attendance of doctors, nurses and supporting staff. During the visit, she met patients and their attendants, sought feedback on treatment and hospital services, and directed officials to resolve genuine complaints promptly.

While expressing satisfaction with several arrangements, she stressed the need for continuous improvement, directing the administration to maintain high standards of hygiene and ensure an uninterrupted supply of government-provided medicines.

Erum Shahzadi said the Punjab Government, under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, is committed to providing quality healthcare and warned that negligence in service delivery would not be tolerated. Hospital officials also briefed her on facilities, patient load, medicine stocks and administrative matters.

Contract Signing Ceremony held at Headquarters Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) for Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)

News Desk

KARACHI: PMSA has formally signed the landmark contract for installation of Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) onboard Pakistani Fishing Vessels at HQ PMSA Karachi on 1 Aug 26, making it a historical event towards maritime governance and ensuring maritime security in the Pakistan's Maritime Zones and beyond. The project will have multifaceted benefits from ensuring safety and security of our fishermen to enhanced maritime domain



awareness and sustainable exploitation of marine resources. Secretary Defence Lt General (Retd) Muhammad Ali graced the occasion as Chief Guest. The ceremony was attended by representatives from Federal and Provincial governments as well as important stakeholders from maritime sector.

The signing of VMS contract underscores PMSA's firm resolve and capability to continuously adopt modern measures in safeguarding Pakistan's maritime interests and protecting vital marine resources.

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When Nature Withholds Its Sweetness: Multan’s Mango Crisis Is a Warning We Cannot Ignore

For generations, Multan has worn its reputation as the “City of Gift-Givers” with quiet pride. A box of mangoes exchanged between friends, colleagues, or long-separated family members has never been merely fruit — it has been a language of affection, a way of saying I remember you without uttering a word. This year, however, that language is faltering, and the reasons behind its decline should trouble far more than the growers of Multan and Muzaffargarh alone.

What we are witnessing is not simple bad luck. It is the visible, edible consequence of a changing climate. Growers describe a familiar and increasingly dangerous pattern: promising blossoms undone by sudden temperature spikes, pest infestations that resist repeated pesticide treatments, and windstorms arriving with unusual frequency and force. Each of these disruptions, taken alone, might be dismissed as seasonal misfortune. Together, they form a pattern that agricultural scientists have long warned about — erratic weather systems destabilizing crops that once thrived on predictable seasonal rhythms.

The human cost is not abstract. Over 15,000 mango growers in Multan depend on this harvest for their livelihoods, alongside laborers, transporters, and exporters whose incomes rise and fall with the quality of the crop. When a grower who once harvested 1,600 maunds finds himself with only 200, the loss is not just economic — it unravels a social fabric built on generosity and connection. Families who once filled crates without hesitation must now sift painstakingly through diminished harvests, anxious that a single blemish might be read as carelessness or disrespect.

This is the quieter, more intimate face of climate change — not melting glaciers or headline-grabbing disasters, but the slow erosion of small, cherished customs that give meaning to daily life. When Shahid Hameed Bhutta says he doubts Pakistan will meet its mango export targets this year, he is not merely reporting a market shortfall. He is describing the fraying of a tradition that has connected Multan to the rest of the country and the world for decades.

Yet there is resilience in this story too. Growers still search for the finest fruit they can find, still fill boxes with care, still uphold a custom too meaningful to abandon. That persistence deserves support — through better agricultural planning, climate-resilient farming practices, and investment in pest control and irrigation systems suited to an unpredictable future.

Multan’s mangoes have always carried more than sweet news. This year, they carry a warning. It would be wise for policymakers, growers, and citizens alike to listen.

Trump: The Emperor Is Naked

Former United Nations weapons inspector and U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer Scott Ritter describes the outcome of the Iran War bluntly: “We lost. Game, set, match.” His conclusion is severe, but the strategic evidence gives it considerable weight. The United States has inflicted enormous physical damage on Iran, yet it has failed to translate destruction into political submission, without realizing that war is not ultimately measured by the number of targets destroyed. It is measured by whether political objectives are achieved. Judged by that standard, Washington has not defeated Iran.

Ritter’s second argument concerns the decline of America’s ground-war capacity. During Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the United States deployed nearly 700,000 service members to the Persian Gulf. That force was possible because America had spent decades preparing for a major European war. Large formations were stationed in Germany, equipped, trained and ready for rapid movement. Strategic airlift, sealift and pre-positioned equipment supported deployment on an extraordinary scale.

By 2003, the available force was smaller, but Washington could still assemble approximately 200,000 personnel for the invasion of Iraq. It benefited from months of planning, deployment rehearsals and uncontested access to Kuwaiti ports, bases and airfields. American forces built up beside Iraq without facing missiles capable of destroying ships, ports, warehouses or troop concentrations.

Iran presents the opposite environ-

ment. It is nearly four times the size of Iraq, with difficult mountains, deserts, crowded cities, underground facilities and a population exceeding 90 million. Unlike Saddam Hussein’s isolated Iraq, Iran possesses ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, drones, naval mines, coastal defences and hardened command networks.

A ground invasion would require not merely landing troops, but protecting ports, airfields, fuel depots, ammunition warehouses, ships and supply convoys from continuous attack. The very concentration of forces necessary for invasion would create lucrative targets for Iran.

Ritter argues that occupying or forcibly disarming Iran could require between 800,000 and 1.2 million troops. Whether the exact number proved higher or lower, the central reality remains: today’s United States does not maintain a force prepared to generate, transport, protect and sustain an invasion of that magnitude.

For Ritter, this incapacity exposes the central illusion behind Washington’s threats. The United States continues to speak as though limitless military power remains available on command, but the trained formations, strategic lift, secure bases, protected shipping and industrial capacity required for another major ground war no longer exist in readily deployable form. In his blunt formulation, “the emperor is naked”: the appearance of unlimited American power remains, but the material capacity

to impose unconditional surrender on Iran does not.

In earlier Gulf wars, American bases provided secure springboards for military power. Aircraft flew from protected runways, ships unloaded at safe ports and soldiers assembled without enemy interference. The Iran War reversed that relationship.

American facilities in Jordan and across the Gulf became targets for Iranian missiles and drones. Even when attacks were intercepted, the United States and its partners had to expend sophisticated missiles costing vastly more than the incoming weapons. Some strikes penetrated the defensive umbrella, exposing weaknesses in supposedly protected installations.

Bases intended to reassure Gulf governments consequently became magnets for retaliation. Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates now face a difficult question: does hosting American forces guarantee their security, or does it place their ports, power stations, desalination plants, airports and commercial centres within Iran’s target structure?

Ritter’s warning to the Gulf monarchies follows logically. If Washington cannot defend its own facilities reliably, it cannot offer absolute protection to its hosts. Continued participation in an American campaign may expose those countries to destruction without delivering victory. Their long-term security may therefore depend less upon

permanent confrontation and more upon reaching a regional accommodation with Iran.

Washington used the instrument in which it retains its greatest advantage: airpower. American aircraft and long-range weapons struck Iranian command centres, air defences, coastal surveillance systems, missile facilities and drone infrastructure. Yet Iran continued fighting.

The problem was not that American bombs lacked destructive force. The problem was that bombardment could not eliminate a dispersed military establishment embedded across a vast country. Destroyed launchers could be replaced, surviving missiles relocated and command responsibilities transferred.

At sea, Iran’s anti-ship missiles, drones and area-denial systems forced American commanders to consider the vulnerability of carriers, amphibious vessels and transport ships. Moving a large naval force close to Iran would place concentrated, expensive platforms within reach of comparatively inexpensive weapons.

Ritter argues that the United States cannot safely assemble the amphibious force required to seize Iran’s coast or control Hormuz. Ships carrying troops, vehicles and supplies would have to approach through waters covered by missiles, drones and mines. One successful strike could destroy not only a vessel but a substantial portion of the invasion force and its equipment.

Thus, America’s technological superiority has encountered an operational paradox: its most advanced platforms are too valuable, concentrated and vulnerable to risk casually against an adversary prepared for saturation warfare.

Continued on Page 7



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

Concession in New Delhi, Permanent Siege in Kashmir

When the Indian state deployed steel barricades, heavy water cannons, tear gas, and brutal baton charges against young citizens protesting systemic paper leaks at Jantar Mantar, it exposed a deeply authoritarian face to the world. For weeks, young students and activists faced the full power of the police force. They were beaten on the streets, dragged into police vans, and publicly vilified by political figures who weaponized labels like “parasites,” “terrorists,” and “anti-nationals” to silence their voices. Yet, despite this violence, the relentless pressure of the student movement, led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) under Abhijeet Dipke, forced a real political victory. On July 25, 2026, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan was forced to resign.

For the protesters in the capital, the physical toll, as painful and unjust as it was, achieved a clear result. Their suffering forced a reaction at the top levels of government, proving that even under heavy policing, public outrage in the capital can break official arrogance and force a minister out.

Yet, as the dust settles over Jantar Mantar, this victory casts a harsh and agonizing light on a far darker reality just a few hundred miles to the north. If a heavily broadcast protest in Delhi can eventually force a minister’s exit, what does it say about the plight of Indian-Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK)? In the occupied territory, Kashmiris do not merely ask for educational reforms, transparent examinations, or ministerial resignations. They demand their fundamental right

to self-determination, an intrinsic human right explicitly recognized under United Nations Security Council Resolution 47, which mandated a free and impartial plebiscite under UN supervision.

Instead of accountability or political concession, generations of Kashmiris are met only with deeper militarization, unbroken silence, and endless state violence. In Kashmir, suffering never leads to a resignation. Pain never forces a policy change. There is no official remorse, no public victory, and no political relief. There is only an unending, crushing agony passed from grandfathers to fathers, and now to children born under the shadow of heavy combat boots.

To ensure that Kashmiri anguish never creates political pressure in New Delhi, the state has built a total, ruthless wall of silence. The human rights defenders and journalists who risk everything to record this human tragedy for the world are systematically targeted and removed from public life.

A stark testament to this deliberate strategy is the case of internationally renowned human rights defender Khurram Parvez and journalist Irfan Mehraj. Both associated with the Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS), they committed no crime other than meticulously documenting state atrocities, extrajudicial executions, and enforced disappearances. For this essential humanitarian work, India’s National Investigation Agency (NIA) charged them under the draconian, anti-terror Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA). Though both were eventually granted bail after years of arbitrary, soul-crushing pre-trial detention, their freedom

is a bitter illusion. Trapped in administrative exile, forbidden from returning to their homes in Kashmir, barred from leaving the capital, and forced to surrender their passports, they remain effectively caged, with their crucial work silenced long after stepping outside a prison cell.

Without local chroniclers to record the bloodshed, the captive population of IIOJK is left entirely at the mercy of an unmonitored military occupation. Behind the impenetrable curtain of communications blackouts, internet blockades, and banned foreign media, international rights bodies, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), have laid bare a harrowing catalog of human suffering.

Protected by draconian laws like the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) and the Public Safety Act (PSA), which grant armed personnel complete legal immunity from prosecution, state forces operate with total impunity. Kashmiri families live in constant terror of brutal midnight raids, where homes are turned upside down and young boys are dragged away into dark detention centers. Mothers spend decades waiting outside army camps holding faded photographs of their forcibly disappeared sons, never knowing if they are alive or buried in one of the region’s thousands of unmarked mass graves. Entire neighborhoods endure mass cordon-and-search operations, where civilians are subjected to collective punishment, custodial torture, and staged encounters designed to pass off innocent youths as militants. Thousands of children and teenagers carry the permanent scars of metal pellets fired directly into their faces, their vision stolen before their lives have even begun.

Continued on Page 7

Bureaucracy issues

Iqra Liaqat

In Pakistan, the bureaucracy has its own issues. Thousands take the CSS examination every year in the hopes of being a part of the service. One current controversy that is dogging the test, which selects individuals to be a part of the machinery that runs the country, is that this year’s examinations are being conducted without the results of last year’s test being released. This would mean that candidates who may have failed last year’s examination and could have decided whether to attempt it again this year will not have this information. They will have to wait until next year to retake it.

A test based on a candidate’s merit indicates that the person has been selected for their knowledge and skills rather than for any other reason. In contrast, political appointees are selected because of their political views and their allegiance to a particular party. Unlike bureaucrats whose central purpose is to ensure that government institutions retain their power by the endless pushing of paper, it is in the interest of political appointees to get things done fast.

Indeed, in some countries, the emphasis is on trying to achieve the goals of the elected government as quickly as possible so that they will have something to ‘show’ voters when election campaigns start for the next term. However, political appointees, because they are selected for their allegiance to a party’s cause, often lack the technical knowhow to actually carry out tasks. Not all are career service officers.

It is hard to keep political appointees from destroying institutions.

One of the most crucial tasks of the government bureaucracy is the issue of revenue extraction, which in turn enables the government to operate. A number of people have lamented the state of the bureaucracy in our part of the world — among them political scientist Andrew Wilder, who described the steel frame of the civil services in Pakistan as “decidedly rusty” with over-politi-

cisation, corruption and lack of capacity rampant in its ranks.

It has also been argued that foreign aid, especially after the start of the US-led ‘war on terror’ in 2001, created further incentives for the decline of the bureaucracy. The easy availability of revenues extracted, not from the people but from other governments, meant that there was little incentive to improve the dismally low tax payment in the country. Second, bureaucratic interest in maintaining institutional legitimacy was undercut by an overemphasis on political appointees. Finally, widespread corruption within the bureaucracy delegitimised the institutions themselves in the eyes of the public. Even routine functions, such as issuing documents to the public, became more corrupt.

Ordinarily the balance between bureaucratic and political power is part of the delicate dance that allows democracy to be functional. The government sets the agenda, and bureaucratic institutions are tasked with carrying it out. When this balance goes awry through politicisation, bureaucrats no longer feel their positions to be secure in their roles as career civil servants. Meanwhile, political appointees, who owe their job to the patronage of this or that leader, spend their time enjoying government benefits and frittering away the taxpayers’ money. In the case of countries like ours, they may also ensure that they themselves don’t pay taxes.

The tension between the agenda for governance and the knowledge required to implement it, reveals the complexity of democracy. Both elements are essential. A large influx of money from external aid can handicap a country just as the inability of successive governments to enact the necessary reforms can cripple the development of a healthy and functional bureaucracy, one that makes the individual’s life better and dealing with the government easy. The mess in America — our own mess notwithstanding — reveals just how hard it is to make institutions work and keep political appointees from destroying them.

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Ghazi-e-Millat Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan: The Statesman Who Shaped Azad Kashmir



Analysis

Naveed Ahmad Khan

Every nation has leaders whose vision and sacrifices become inseparable from its history. For the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Ghazi-e-Millat Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan remains one such towering figure. Remembered as the First President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, he played a decisive role in the political struggle that led to the establishment of the Azad Kashmir government on October 24, 1947. Nearly two decades after his passing, his legacy continues to inspire generations of Kashmiris and Pakistanis alike.

a successful lawyer and emerged as an influential political leader. His legal training, political foresight, and commitment to public service soon made him a prominent voice for the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The partition of British India in 1947 transformed the political landscape of South Asia. Amid growing uncertainty over the future of Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Ibrahim became one of the leading advocates of the political aspirations of the Kashmiri people. On July 19, 1947, the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference adopted a resolution supporting accession to Pakistan, a move in which Sardar Ibrahim played a central role. Historians regard this development as a defining moment in the political history of the region.

His most enduring contribution came on October 24, 1947, when the Provisional Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir was established and Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan was chosen as its first President. At a time when the region was engulfed in conflict and uncertainty, he provided leadership and direction to a nascent administration struggling to organize governance and represent the aspirations of its people.



Political analysts often describe Sardar Ibrahim as one of the principal architects of Azad Kashmir's political identity. Historian Christopher Snedden, in his work on Kashmir's political history, identifies him as a key leader of the Poonch uprising and one of the most influential figures in the formation of Azad Kashmir. His role extended beyond politics; he became a symbol of resistance, determination, and national consciousness among Kashmiris.

The title "Ghazi-e-Millat" bestowed upon him by the people of Azad Kashmir reflects the extraordinary respect he commanded. Throughout his life, he remained steadfast in advocating the rights of Kashmiris and emphasizing their right to determine their political future. His political career spanned several decades, during which he served multiple terms as President of Azad Kashmir,



making him one of the longest-serving and most influential leaders in the region's history. Paying tribute to his services, former AJK Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan stated that Sardar Ibrahim's role in the Kashmir freedom struggle would be remembered for generations and described him as a leader who never compromised on his ideals despite numerous political challenges. Such acknowledgements reflect the enduring admiration he continues to enjoy across political divides.

Senior Kashmiri political leaders have frequently referred to him as the "Founder President of Azad Kashmir" because he headed the first government of the territory and helped establish its administrative foundations. His leadership during the formative years of AJK provided institutional continuity and political stability at a time when



both were desperately needed. Beyond politics, Sardar Ibrahim was known for his integrity, simplicity, and commitment to democratic principles. Colleagues and contemporaries often described him as a leader who remained closely connected to the people. He consistently emphasized education, political awareness, and unity among Kashmiris, believing that lasting progress could only be achieved through collective effort and responsible leadership.

Researchers studying the Kashmir freedom movement have noted that his political and social struggle contributed significantly to the establishment of the Azad Kashmir government and helped shape the political consciousness of

the region. His efforts brought together diverse communities under a common cause and provided a platform through which Kashmiri aspirations could be articulated.

When Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan passed away on July 31, 2003, tributes poured in from across Pakistan and Azad Kashmir. Political leaders, scholars, and ordinary citizens mourned the loss of a statesman whose life had been devoted to public service and the Kashmir cause. Yet his death did not diminish his influence. Today, his name is remembered with reverence in schools, universities, political institutions, and public gatherings throughout Azad Kashmir.

As Kashmir continues to occupy a central place in regional politics, the legacy of Ghazi-e-Millat Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan remains highly relevant. His vision, courage, and dedication continue to serve as a source of inspiration for those who believe in justice, democratic values, and the rights of the Kashmiri people. History remembers him not merely as the first President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, but as a statesman whose leadership left an indelible mark on the destiny of his people.

Martyrs of Sindh Police, The Price of Peace

Sabahat Sarwar

"Never say that those martyred in the cause of Allah are dead in fact, they are alive But you do not perceive it" (Surah Al Baqarah 2:154)

The foundation of peace is never created by accident; rather, it is built on the blood of those courageous sons who give their life to ensure future generations have a safe future. Police Martyrs' Day observed on August 4, honors those outstanding Sindh Police martyrs who wrote enduring stories of commitment, service and patriotism. The Sindh Police's history which spans

more than a century is filled with sacrifices. Whether it's fighting terrorism, eliminating street crime, combating drug traffickers and smugglers or upholding the rule of law, the Sindh Police has always been there, from the streets of Karachi to the riverine belt of Kashmore.

More than 2,600 martyrs have given their lives to uphold peace and order in the province demonstrating that "the death of a martyr is the life of the nation". The name of Martyr DSP Ahsan Zulfiqar will always be revered among these bright names. Ahsan Zulfiqar joined the Sindh Police in 1990 and because of his honesty

and bravery he held a renowned position in the force. He oversaw multiple successful operations against organized drug networks, ransom kidnapping and horrendous crimes while serving as a DSP in the Anti-Violent Crime Cell (AVCC). He suffered serious injuries on February 8, 2025, as the main suspect in the murder of Mustafa Amir was being apprehended.

On March 23, 2026, he accepted martyrdom after nearly thirteen months of fighting for his life. His sacrifice serves as a bright example of how all Sindh Police officers and constables are willing to give their lives in order to protect their mother-

land. The blood of all the Sindh Police martyrs, notably Martyr DSP Ahsan Zulfiqar represents a renewed determination to fight crime, terrorism and lawlessness to the fullest extent possible. The martyrs are the department's pride, the country's greatest asset and a source of inspiration for next generations.

The Sindh Police honors all of its ghazis and martyrs on Police Martyrs' Day and reaffirms its commitment to upholding the supremacy of the law, protecting the public's lives and establishing enduring peace in the wake of their sacrifices. Their sacrifices are our sacred vow, our pride and our strength.

Lake Saif-ul-Malook road closed as heavy rains trigger landslides, flooding across Upper Hazara

MANSEHRA: Authorities have closed the Naran-Lake Saif-ul-Malook Road to all types of traffic until further orders after heavy monsoon rains lashed the upper parts of Hazara Division, triggering landslides, flash flooding, and road blockages at several locations.

The precautionary closure was ordered in view of the ongoing heavy rainfall, the risk of cloudbursts, and weather advisories issued by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), and the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA).

The torrential downpour caused landslides and road obstructions along several mountainous routes in Upper Hazara, disrupting traffic and increasing the risk for commuters and tourists.

In District Mansehra, the River



Kunhar and several seasonal streams swelled due to heavy rainfall, with authorities warning of the possibility of flash floods in vulnerable areas.

Officials said the closure of the Naran-Lake Saif-ul-Malook Road was a precautionary measure to safeguard

tourists and local residents from potential hazards posed by adverse weather conditions and possible cloudburst incidents.

The Pakistan Meteorological Department has forecast that intermittent heavy rainfall is likely to continue

in Hazara Division over the coming hours. The department has warned that intense downpours may trigger flash floods in rivers and streams, urban flooding in low-lying areas, and landslides in mountainous regions.

District authorities have advised tourists to postpone travel to Naran, Lake Saif-ul-Malook, Kaghan Valley, Babusar Top, and other upper tourist destinations until weather conditions improve. Local residents have also been urged to avoid unnecessary movement, particularly near rivers, streams, and landslide-prone areas, and to strictly follow official advisories.

The administration said road restoration work would commence as soon as weather conditions permit, while the Naran-Lake Saif-ul-Malook Road will remain closed to all traffic until further orders to ensure public safety.

State of Palestine Condoles Pakistan Over Balochistan Coal Mine Tragedy

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the State of Palestine has expressed its deepest condolences to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan over the tragic coal mine explosion in Balochistan that claimed dozens of lives and left others injured. In its statement, Palestine conveyed sincere sympathy to Pakistan's leadership, government, and people, and especially to the families of the victims. The Ministry said Palestine shares in the grief of the Pakistani people in this painful affliction and prayed to the Almighty to grant mercy to the deceased and a swift recovery to the injured. The explosion at the Soranje coalmine near Quetta on July 30 killed at least 34 miners, with rescue operations still underway.



CDA eases parking requirement for high-rise commercial buildings in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has reduced the mandatory parking requirement for high-rise commercial buildings, allowing one parking space for every 1,000 square feet of covered area instead of the previous standard of one space per 750 square feet.

The decision was approved at the 10th CDA Board meeting of 2026, chaired by CDA Chairman and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Sohail Ashraf at the CDA headquarters on Saturday.

According to the authority, the revised regulation brings Islamabad's parking standards in line with those followed by regulatory bodies in other cities and is aimed at facilitating commercial construction and investment.

The board was informed that the previous requirement had posed challenges for builders and developers, who in some cases were required to excavate up to six basement levels to meet parking requirements, creating structural and safety concerns.

The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, along with the business community, builders and developers, had repeatedly sought a revision of the rule.

The new parking standard takes immediate effect and will also apply to commercial plots to be offered in the CDAs open auction scheduled for Aug 4-6, as well as future commercial plot auctions.

The authority said the auction terms and conditions would be amended accordingly.

The CDA said the revised policy would simplify the approval of commercial building plans and help boost construction activity in the federal capital.

New Administrative Units

There emerge moments on the horizon of history when the destiny of nations is decided not on the battlefield, but in the chambers of deliberation. Swords remain in their sheaths, ramparts retain their imposing presence, flags continue to flutter in their places, yet the soul of the state quietly falls into an anxiety that can neither be concealed by the thunder of cannons nor by the resounding acoustics of rhetoric. This is the stage when buildings remain standing, but their foundations grow weary; laws exist, but lack the warmth of justice; and the halls of power are inhabited, but the light of strategy which guides the vessel of nations through tempests to the shores of salvation begins to dim. It is to this very truth that the Divine Book refers in a profoundly eloquent manner: Allah does not change the condition of a people until they first resolve to change what is within themselves. History's wheel, therefore, is turned by character and system long before it is driven by the sword.

In such a juncture, if a confession

issues directly from the custodians of power that the bulk of state machinery is consumed merely in extinguishing the fires of crisis, it is not simply the weakness of a single government, but an announcement of the structural exhaustion of the entire governance mechanism. Pursuing crises is not wisdom; it is an index of helplessness. Prudent nations do not await catastrophes; they eradicate the causes that breed them. When a state steps out every morning in pursuit of a fresh crisis and returns every evening with a renewed sense of disquiet, one must realize that the ailment resides not in individuals, but has seeped into the very veins of the system.

Our real tragedy is not a scarcity of resources or an abundance of trials; our tragedy is that while time has moved forward, our statecraft remains frozen in place. The world has entered an era defined by knowledge, innovation, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and the digital economy, whereas we remain tethered to administrative frameworks designed by a colonial mindset to rule over subjects, not to serve free citizens.

Time has changed its questions, yet our answers remain locked away in the dust-covered files of the previous century. It is precisely within this gulf that nations fall behind the caravan of progress.

Economy, too, is a mirror reflecting the moral consciousness of a collective order. A state whose budget relies perpetually on debt, where borrowing is celebrated over production, and where the resources of future generations are squandered for present needs, holds a vision of prosperity no more real than a palace built on sand. If debt cultivates industry, research, education, and human capital, it transforms into an asset; but if it merely cools the fires of current expenditure, every installment becomes a fresh burden upon tomorrow's freedom. Economic sovereignty is not merely a figure on a ledger, but another name for national dignity, political autonomy, and collective self-confidence.

Hence, today's call for reform is not a matter of changing governments, but a renewal of the very philosophy of governance. When power concentrates excessively at the center, it forfeits its own momentum. A river imparts life only when its canals reach the fields. Likewise, a state gains strength only when authority, resources, and accountability are devolved to the doorstep of its citizens. Effective local governments, balanced administrative devolution, fiscal transparency, and institutional accountability are not merely the manifesto of a political party they are the indispensable foundations of a modern state. The fundamental question is not about drawing new maps, but about establishing a system in which citizens feel not like the subjects of power, but its active partners.

Throughout this landscape, the ultimate trust resides in the youth. It is this demographic whose arms possess the strength to build the future, yet it

is also the segment most deeply entangled in uncertainty. Temporary gifts may bring youth fleeting delight, but enduring trust is begotten only by justice. They require no charity, but the valuation of character; no political patronage, but merit; no hollow promises, but genuine opportunity. When knowledge is devalued, integrity rendered worthless, and merit turned away after knocking on closed doors, a silent turmoil breeds in the inner depths of society. History bears witness that monumental transformations always emerge from the depths of such silent turmoil, where hope and deprivation wage war against one another.

Today, the homeland stands in dire need of a national dialogue that rises above partisan boundaries and binds itself to the future of coming generations. Disagreement, when rooted in principle, refines nations; but when enslaved by ego, it hollows civilizations out from within. Political leadership, state institutions, intellectuals, economists, industrialists, the youth, and civil society must unite upon a shared national covenant, or else this chain

of crises will grow ever more intricate. The question is no longer merely about the transition of power, but about the restoration of trust, the supremacy of justice, and the renewal of the state's moral legitimacy.

The laws of nature never alter. Nations that recognized their wounds and treated them succeeded in raising new civilizations from the rubble; while those that contented themselves with painting over fractured foundations saw their glory buried beneath the dust of time. Pakistan stands at this very decisive crossroads today. If we privilege foresight over expediency, justice over temporary convenience, and structural reform over political gain, this crisis can become the starting point of a new era. But if we dismiss the call of reality as mere transient noise, then history, in its impartial court, will deliver a verdict against which neither the splendor of power nor the magic of rhetoric shall serve as a defense for time never demands an account of a nation's slogans, but of its systems.

(The columnist serves as President of the Karachi Chapter of PFUC.)



Analysis

Muhammad Mohsin Khan

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
176,094.11	175,547.98
Day's High	Day's Low
177,108.66	175,934.99
Index Value	Change
14,489,801,593	+ 546.13
Percentage	Time
+0.31%	31 Jul, 2026 4:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
10,868.05	- 29.22
Percentage	Time
0.27%	31 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT + 1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
52,472.32	+ 264.26
Percentage	Time
+0.51%	31 Jul, 1:19 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
64,362.02	+ 2,494.59
Percentage	Time
+2,494.59	31 Jul, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	194.44	198.25
Bahrain Dinar	742.21	752.68
Canadian Dollar	197.73	201.53
China Yuan	38.17	38.92
Danish Krone	42.70	43.37
Euro	319.25	323.75
Hong Kong Dollar	35.26	36.26
Indian Rupee	2.75	3.20
Japanese Yen	1.6999	1.7976
Kuwaiti Dinar	892.35	902.75
Malaysian Ringgit	67	68.15
NewZealand \$	161.48	163.95
Norwegians Krone	28.15	28.50
Omani Riyal	727.71	737.95
Qatari Riyal	75.88	76.35
Saudi Riyal	74.65	75.30
Singapore Dollar	216.03	219.05
Swedish Korona	28.35	28.95
Swiss Franc	342.17	346.37
Thai Bhat	8.60	8.95
U.A.E Dirham	76.55	77.5
UK Pound Sterling	373.65	379.47
US Dollar	278.75	278.95

Water level in
Tarbela Dam
recorded 11 feet
short of full level



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Following recent monsoon rains and floodwaters coming from upper districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), water level is continuously rising in Tarbela Dam.

The dam administration said on Saturday that the water level in the dam was only 11 feet short of the full level.

The water level in the dam was recorded at 1,539 feet, while the dead level is 1,402 feet and the full level is 1,550 feet.

The inflow of water in the dam stood at 236700 cusecs, while the outflow at 180000 cusecs.

The dam has 17 power-producing units, while presently the power generation stands at 4,888 megawatts against the total capacity of 4,980 megawatts.

Two weeks ago, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) had warned of an expected increase in water flow in the Indus River after the spillways of Tarbela Dam were opened.

According to the NDMA, releasing water from the spillways is expected to significantly increase river flows in downstream areas along the Indus.

The authority urged people to avoid recreational and tourism activities along the river, warning that strong currents could pose serious risks.

It also advised people to stay away from waterways and river channels during periods of high flow.

ICCI, Blood Chain Pakistan hold
annual blood conference 2026

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has said that voluntary blood donation is not merely an act of charity but a national, humanitarian and moral responsibility that can save countless precious lives.

He emphasized that ensuring the availability of safe blood is essential for strengthening Pakistan's healthcare system and fostering a compassionate society.

He expressed these views while addressing the Annual Blood Conference 2026, jointly organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and Blood Chain Pakistan, said a press release issued on Saturday.

He observed that thousands of patients, including victims of road accidents, children suffering from thalassemia, cancer patients and others facing medical emergencies, depend on the timely availability of blood.

"A single blood donation can mean the



difference between life and death," he remarked, urging citizens, particularly the youth, to actively participate in this noble

cause.

Governor Kundi appreciated the organization's focus on empowering young volunteers,

saying that Pakistan's youth possess the energy and commitment to transform society through organized community service.

He assured the organizers of his full support in expanding voluntary blood donation networks, strengthening awareness campaigns and promoting initiatives aimed at saving lives.

Speaking on the occasion, President ICCI Sardar Tahir Mehmood, said that saving one human life is equivalent to saving the whole of humanity, adding that regular voluntary blood donation is a social responsibility that every healthy citizen should embrace.

Reaffirming ICCI's commitment to public welfare, he announced that the Chamber would continue extending its full support to Blood Chain Pakistan by facilitating awareness campaigns, encouraging its members to participate in voluntary blood donation drives and providing its platform for future conferences and community initiatives.

The Governor, along with the ICCI President, SVP, VP and other also planted a sapling at the ICCI lawn.

Daily Wager

ISLAMABAD: A vendor selling balloons at the famous picnic spot Damen e Koh, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sutan Bashir

American Business Council Hosts
US Delegation to Strengthen
Pakistan-US Economic Ties



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The American Business Council (ABC), led by President Akram Wali Muhammad, hosted a high-level US business and congressional delegation for a strategic dialogue aimed at deepening trade, investment, and economic cooperation

between Pakistan and the United States. The engagement was facilitated by the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and the Government of Pakistan.

Speaking to the delegation, Muhammad urged the Pakistani diaspora to invest in the country's future, pointing to its expanding potential across key economic sectors. He

reaffirmed ABC's commitment to building stronger partnerships between American businesses and the Government of Pakistan.

The meeting represents another step in ongoing efforts to attract greater US investment, generate employment opportunities, and support Pakistan's long-term economic growth.

Faisalabad Traders
Seek Review of
EFS Policy, Lower
Business Costs

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The Executive Committee of the Faisalabad Dyes and Chemicals Merchants Association (FDCMA) expressed concern over rising business costs, the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), and challenges facing the textile sector during its monthly meeting chaired by President Nabeel Ahmed

Chohan.

Chohan said regional tensions, soaring chemical prices and the revised EFS policy had created difficulties for commercial importers. He urged the government to review the policy and provide greater support to the business community. He also highlighted inflation, climate change and water conservation as key concerns.



Group Leader Tajir Ittehad Muhammad Ayub Sabir called for resolving taxation issues and strengthening the association through effective leadership.

The meeting also approved the association's financial report, reviewed arrangements for a Murree tour, discussed new member welfare initiatives through MOUs with

healthcare and hospitality institutions, and urged greater participation in the Textile Asia Expo scheduled to be held in Faisalabad in December 2026.

Pakistan Economic
Summit Urges Long-
Term Reforms, Lower
Business Costs

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prominent industrialist and former FPCCI President Mian Muhammad Adrees called for structural economic reforms, lower energy tariffs and reduced business costs during the 1st Pakistan Economic Summit 2026, jointly organised by the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and the United Business Group (UBG) at the Jinnah Convention Centre.

As a key panelist, Adrees urged the government to adopt a long-term economic strategy instead of short-term measures, stressing that strengthening local industry is essential for boosting exports, stabilising the economy and creating employment opportunities.

ties. He also highlighted the need to improve Pakistan's global competitiveness by reducing production costs.

Participants from across the country strongly supported his proposals, describing high energy tariffs and interest rates as major obstacles to industrial growth.

The summit also endorsed a six-year economic roadmap aimed at sustainable development.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi acknowledged the concerns raised, emphasising the need for greater private-sector leadership and structural reforms. Delegates from various sectors expressed unity in addressing the country's economic challenges and pledged support for policies promoting industrial growth and investment.

Riyadh Air to launch
direct flights to
Islamabad, Lahore this
month

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia's new national carrier, Riyadh Air, is all set to begin flying to Pakistan this month, introducing direct services to Islamabad and Lahore and strengthening travel links between the two countries.

The airline opened bookings for both routes on July 30 and will operate the services using its Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft.

Riyadh Air will commence daily flights between Riyadh and Islamabad on August 14, offering seven flights a week between the two capitals.

The carrier will then launch its Riyadh-Lahore service on August 18, operating three flights per week.

The new services are

expected to make travel between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia easier, giving business travellers, tourists, overseas Pakistanis and pilgrims more direct flight options.

The launch also marks Riyadh Air's official entry into Pakistan, as the Saudi



carrier continues to expand its international network under the Kingdom's ambitious aviation plans.

With huge demand for travel between the two countries, the airline has added Islamabad and Lahore to its route map, boosting connectivity and offering passengers more choice on one of the region's busiest air routes.

Senate Chairman Gillani Condoles Death of MNA Malik Muhammad Iqbal Channar

Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani on Saturday expressed deep grief over the demise

of Member of the National Assembly Malik Muhammad Iqbal Channar, paying tribute to his parliamentary, political and public services. In a condolence message, Gillani

described the late lawmaker as a sincere, dedicated and people-oriented public representative who remained committed to democratic values and public welfare throughout his political



career. He said Channar's passing was a significant loss to the country and acknowledged his valuable contributions to Parliament and the democratic process. The Senate chairman also conveyed heartfelt condolences to Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Assembly Malik Zaheer Iqbal Channar on the death of his father and expressed sympathy with the bereaved family. He assured them of his solidarity during this difficult time. Gillani prayed to Almighty Allah to grant eternal peace to the departed soul and bless the family with patience and strength to bear the irreparable loss.

Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani meets Pakistani Professional Wrestler Ather Zahid

Kiran Asim

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani met internationally acclaimed Pakistani professional wrestler Ather Zahid at Parliament House Islamabad. Zahid is the first Saudi-born Pakistani wrestler to represent Pakistan on the international stage.

The Chairman congratulated Zahid on his achievements and wished him continued success, praising his dedication and his role in bringing recognition to Pakistan through international wrestling competitions.

Gilani said sports promote peace, friendship, and harmony among nations, noting that athletes act as ambassadors who inspire people and enhance the country's global image. He added that sports contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being, discipline, and resilience.

The Chairman stressed the need for collective efforts to nurture young talent, strengthen sports infrastructure, and create greater opportunities for Pakistani athletes to excel at regional and international levels.



CM Punjab Champions League Trophy Unveiled Ahead of August 3 Kick-off



Bureau Report

LAHORE: The trophy for the CM Punjab Champions League was unveiled at a colourful ceremony held at the E-Library, Nishtar Sports Complex, ahead of the tournament's launch on August 3.

Punjab Minister for Sports Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar, accompanied by Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chief

Operating Officer Sumair Ahmed Syed and captains of the 12 participating men's teams, unveiled the trophy and the official team logos.

Addressing the ceremony, Khokhar said the Punjab government was committed to making the province a national sports hub by providing world-class opportunities for athletes. The tournament will feature 12 men's

and four women's teams, with matches to be played in Lahore, Multan, Bahawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan, while the final is scheduled for August 9 at Gaddafi Stadium.

He said players had been selected on merit through a transparent process, with all matches to be played under floodlights and broadcast live nationwide. The PCB will oversee officiating

through umpires, match referees and scorers.

PCB COO Sumair Ahmed Syed described the league as a first-of-its-kind initiative aimed at identifying grassroots cricket talent. The ceremony was attended by senior Sports Board Punjab and PCB officials, former women's captain Nida Dar and prominent cricketers.

Officials Urge Timely Farmer Awareness Amid Monsoon, Flood Risks

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Additional Commissioner (Revenue) Multan Hafiz Muhammad Mudassar Nawaz visited the Kisan Sahulat Center and directed agriculture officials to enhance guidance and awareness for farmers, particularly in view of the ongoing monsoon season and flood threats.



Accompanied by Deputy Director Agriculture (Extension) Shahid Iqbal Cheema and Deputy Director Agriculture (Pest Warning and Quality Control) Syed Ismat Hussain Shah, the Additional Commissioner met farmers, listened to their concerns and reviewed the facilities available at the centre. He instructed staff to provide effective guidance on quality agricultural inputs and subsidised services.

Mudassar Nawaz stressed the importance of timely awareness campaigns to protect farmers and their families from loss of life and financial damage caused by heavy rains and flooding. He said the Punjab government and Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif were ensuring essential facilities for rural communities, while the district administration and the Punjab Disaster Management Authority remained actively engaged in flood preparedness and disaster response.

During the visit, he inspected advisory and stock registers, directing officials to maintain accurate and transparent records. He also visited the Agriculture Department's vegetable demonstration plot established under the Punjab government's Sanjhi Sabzi Programme, inaugurated the cultivation of winter vegetables, and concluded the visit by launching a plantation drive through planting a fruit tree at the office of the Deputy Director Agriculture (Extension).

Woman Rescued After Suicide Attempt in Canal Through Swift Response by Dolphin Squad

Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: A timely and courageous response by the Punjab Police Dolphin Squad saved the life of a woman who attempted to end her life by jumping into the Sikandri Canal late last night.



At approximately 10:30 p.m., Dolphin Team No. 08, led by Incharge Ali Ifukhar was on routine patrol near Head Sikandri Nala within the jurisdiction of Police Station Saddar Multan when the team heard people shouting for help after a woman jumped into the canal.

Demonstrating exceptional bravery and professionalism, Constable Muhammad Mohsin (3658/C) immediately jumped into the fast-flowing waters of the Sikandri Canal without regard for his own safety. He successfully rescued the woman* and brought her safely to the bank.

Following the rescue, Rescue 1122 was immediately notified and responded to the scene, where the woman was provided with first aid before being shifted for further medical treatment.

The prompt action, courage, and dedication displayed by the Dolphin Squad prevented a tragic loss of life and reflected the Punjab Police's commitment to protecting and serving the public under all circumstances.

Pakistan stage comeback to overcome South Korea 3-1 in second

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan produced a spirited second-half comeback to defeat South Korea 3-1 in the second Test of the Pakistan-South Korea hockey series at the Naseer Bunda Hockey Stadium here on Saturday.

After a closely contested first half, South Korea took the lead in the 30th minute when Son Dain scored a field goal to give the visitors a 1-0 advantage.

Pakistan responded strongly after the break. Abdul Rehman restored parity in the 33rd minute with a well-taken field goal before captain Abu Bakar Mahmood converted a penalty corner in the 52nd minute to put the hosts ahead 2-1.

The Pakistan skipper struck again in the final minute, converting another penalty corner to seal a convincing 3-1 victory for the national side.

Abu Bakar Mahmood, who scored twice, was named Player of the Match for his outstanding performance.

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi attended the match as the chief guest and witnessed the thrilling contest.

Speaking on the occasion, he welcomed the revival of international hockey activities in Pakistan and termed the successful hosting of the series a positive development for the country's hockey.

At the post-match ceremony, Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) President Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani presented a commemorative shield to Governor Faisal Karim Kundi.

Trump: The Emperor Is Naked

Continued from Page 4

The conflict has also exposed the limits of the American defence-industrial base. Modern wars consume precision weapons and missile interceptors much faster than factories replace them.

Recent fighting reportedly reduced U. S. Patriot inventories by approximately 65 percent and THAAD stocks by about 38 percent. The Pentagon disputes claims that it lacks sufficient ammunition, but it has requested \$67 billion to replenish military supplies.

The Army's new Patriot contract may be worth up to \$58.6 billion, yet expanded production will take years rather than weeks. Lockheed Martin

plans to triple output by 2030—not in time to transform the immediate battlefield.

As Ritter observes, there is no military "cheat code." Money appropriated today cannot instantly produce trained soldiers, ships, interceptors or precision missiles. Industrial capacity, skilled workers, supply chains and testing facilities must be developed over time.

Israel helped initiate the confrontation but has increasingly shifted its costs and risks onto Washington. The United States now finds itself directly fighting Iran, defending regional bases, protecting Israel, replenishing depleted interceptors and attempting to reopen Hormuz.

This is the strategic trap Ritter identifies. Israel's confrontation became America's war, while Israel retained the protection of the United States without possessing the capacity to end the conflict independently.

Washington must now decide whether continuing the war serves American interests or merely deepens a commitment from which Israel benefits while American troops, arsenals, finances and international credibility bear the strain.

The United States has not ceased to be a major military power, but power without an achievable objective becomes self-destructive. It cannot invade Iran at an acceptable cost, cannot bomb it into

surrender, cannot guarantee the safety of every regional base and cannot immediately replace the weapons being consumed. Iran, despite sanctions and destruction, remains standing and still controls the principal strategic question: Hormuz.

The rational course is therefore to end the war, withdraw exposed forces, restore diplomacy and allow Gulf governments to establish a security relationship with Iran based on coexistence rather than permanent American militarization. Such a settlement would also compel Israel to seek security through accommodation with its neighbours instead of relying indefinitely on U. S. power.

Ritter's verdict is uncom-

fortable but clear: Washington played its strongest military cards and failed to impose its political will. Iran has exposed the widening gap between the image of unlimited American power and the force Washington can actually mobilize and sustain against a determined adversary. The emperor is naked, and continuing to wager after the strategic hand has been lost will not conceal that reality—it will only increase the price. Game, set, match.

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.

Concession in New Delhi, Permanent Siege in Kashmir

Continued from Page 4

This is the heartbreaking double standard that the world chooses to ignore. When students in Delhi bleed, their wounds are broadcast on national television, their pain generates international headlines, and their collective outrage eventually breaks a minister's career. But when Kashmiris bleed, their tears fall in total darkness. Their cries are choked off by military blockades, their dead are buried in unmarked graves without a funeral, and their tormentors are awarded medals rather than facing accountability under international law.

proved that public endurance can conquer state arrogance when the world is watching. But for the helpless millions in Occupied Kashmir, living under a permanent siege behind closed doors, there is no media coverage, no political concession, and no justice. There is only an unending cycle of grief, where an entire population is condemned to suffer, decade after decade, while the international community looks the other way.

The author is a student of International Relations at International Islamic University, Islamabad and serves as a research associate at the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR).

Called on

ISLAMABAD: Chief Of the General Staff and First Deputy Defence Minister of Republic of Belarus, Maj Gen Pavel Muraveiko called on Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad on Saturday.



Naval Chief Naveed Ashraf meets Belarusian Military Delegation to discuss maritime security

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A high level delegation of Republic of Belarus led by Chief of the General Staff and First Deputy Defence Minister, Major General Pavel Muraveiko, called on Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad.

Upon arrival at Naval Headquarters, the dignitary was received by Chief of the Naval Staff. During the meeting, professional matters of

mutual interest, including defence collaboration were discussed. Admiral Naveed Ashraf emphasized that Pakistan greatly values its relations with Belarus and desires to forge a long-term, multi-dimensional cooperation with the country.

The visiting dignitary appreciated and acknowledged Pakistan Navy's efforts and commitment towards regional maritime security. Both sides agreed to further strengthen and diversify the scope of the existing bilateral defence relationship.

Overseas Pakistanis' Welfare Among Govt's Top Priorities: Imran Ahmad Shah



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Syed Imran Ahmad Shah has reaffirmed that the welfare of overseas Pakistanis and the delivery of efficient, accessible and people-centric public services remain among the government's highest priorities.

During a visit to the Consulate General of Pakistan in Chicago, the minister inaugurated a photo exhibition highlighting the rights and struggle of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). He stressed that Pakistani missions abroad should provide

timely, transparent and compassionate consular services while simplifying procedures and eliminating unnecessary delays.

Consul General Zaman Mehdi briefed the minister on initiatives to facilitate the Pakistani community across the American Midwest, including mobile consular camps, regular community outreach and improved access to services for those living far from Chicago.

Later, the minister met members of the Pakistani-American community, who shared suggestions for further improving consular services and the welfare of overseas Pakistanis.

Pakistan welcomes positive developments over Gaza peace plan

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Saturday welcomed the positive developments under the Board of Peace towards the implementation of the Gaza Peace Plan.

"Pakistan also appreciates the mediating countries, including the United States, Egypt, Qatar, and Turkiye,

for their sustained efforts and expects that these developments will result in the full implementation of all commitments under the Gaza Peace Plan," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson said in a statement.

The spokesperson said Pakistan trusts that these efforts will contribute to the realisation of the inalienable

right of the Palestinian people to self-determination through a credible, time-bound political process, consistent with international law, international legitimacy, and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

This process should culminate in the establishment of an independent, sovereign, contiguous, and viable State



of Palestine, based on the pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al Sharif as its Capital, the statement added.

Abbasi Seeks Turkish Partnership to Modernise Pakistan Railways

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi visited Türkiye's TÜRASAS in Sakarya and ASELSAN to explore cooperation in technology transfer, joint manufacturing and digital transformation aimed at modernising Pakistan Railways.

Leading a high-level delegation, Abbasi reviewed advanced railway technologies, manufacturing facilities and digital systems. The delegation was briefed by senior Turkish officials on modern developments in railway manufacturing, signalling, communications and smart transport technologies.

The Pakistani team inspected passenger coaches, locomotives, Electric and Diesel Multiple Units (EMUs and DMUs), freight wagons, research and development centres, quality control facilities and modern production



systems.

Abbasi said digital transformation, modern traffic management, fibre-optic communication and safe

railway operations were government priorities. He noted that advanced technology would support the ML-1 and ML-3 projects

and the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul freight corridor. Both countries agreed to expand cooperation in engineers' training, research, cyberse-

curity and technical expertise to strengthen Pakistan Railways' institutional capacity and regional connectivity.

PML-N, PPP Continue Talks on AJK Government Formation

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) on Saturday concluded the third round of negotiations on government formation and future political strategy in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), with consultations set to continue.

The 20-minute meeting, held at a private hotel, focused on the evolving political situation, possible post-election alliances and cooperation between the two parties. During the talks, the PPP raised concerns over alleged electoral irregularities in the Mirpur Division. Both sides agreed to urge their workers to remain patient during Sunday's polling and cooperate to help ensure a peaceful and transparent electoral process.

The meeting was attended by AJK Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, PPP leaders Qamar Zaman



Kaira, Nayyar Hussain Bukhari and Nadeem Afzal Chan, Prime Minister's Adviser Rana Sanaullah, Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs Amir Muqam, PML-N AJK leader

Tariq Farooq and other senior leaders. No joint communiqué or official statement was issued after the meeting. In the first phase of the AJK elections, held on July 27, the PML-N won nine of

13 Mirpur Division seats, while the PPP secured four. Political observers believe the ongoing talks could play a key role in shaping the next AJK government after the remaining phases of polling.

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Rana Mashhood Urges PML-N Workers to Ensure Strong Voter Turnout in AJK Polls

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister's Youth Programme Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan on Saturday urged Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) workers to carry out their polling day responsibilities with dedication during the ongoing Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) elections, describing Kashmir as an integral part of Pakistan.

Addressing a PML-N workers' convention in Lahore, he said the party's politics was based on performance and development, with a strong focus on creating opportunities for young people. Calling youth the nation's greatest strength, he rejected remarks referring to them negatively and said they should

instead be recognised as Pakistan's frontline force.

Rana Mashhood said democracy and the power of the vote were essential for sustainable national development. He added that the PML-N had worked for the country's stability and prosperity across all sectors.

Referring to regional affairs, he said the nation had remained united under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir despite India's hostile policies. He also credited the government with steering Pakistan away from default, stabilising the economy and improving international ratings. Earlier, party workers were assigned polling duties for the second phase of the AJK elections.

Mountaineer Nirmal Purja Among Climbers Killed in Broad Peak Avalanche

ISLAMABAD: Renowned British-Nepali mountaineer Nirmal Purja and several members of his international expedition were killed after a powerful avalanche struck Broad Peak in Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan region, his company Elite Expeditions confirmed on Saturday.

The avalanche hit on Thursday while the 10-member team was ascending at an altitude of around 6,600 metres during an attempt to summit the 8,047-metre peak. Contact with the climbers was lost shortly afterwards.

Rescue teams, supported by the Pakistan Army, recovered the remains of three climbers, including an American woman, an Omani woman and a Nepali man, who were flown to a

hospital for formal identification. Search and recovery efforts continued on Saturday despite difficult weather and challenging terrain.

Purja, 43, was celebrated worldwide for setting multiple mountaineering records, including climbing all 14 peaks above 8,000 metres in just over six months in 2019. He was also attempting to become the first climber to summit all 14 "eight-thousanders" twice without supplemental oxygen.

Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah paid tribute to Purja and the other victims, calling their courage and achievements an enduring inspiration. Broad Peak, the world's 12th-highest mountain, is regarded as one of the most technically demanding climbs in the Karakoram range.